

Garden Suburb Junior School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	101281
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	376537
Inspection dates	31 January–1 February 2012
Lead inspector	Sarah McDermott

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	356
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julia Sanitt
Headteacher	Eileen Bhavsar
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 July 2007
School address	Childs Way London NW11 6XU
Telephone number	020 8455 3269
Fax number	020 8457 5199
Email address	office@gsjs.barnetmail.net

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Sarah McDermott

Additional inspector

Richard Capel

Additional inspector

David Radomsky

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The team observed 17 lessons taught by 15 teachers totalling 8.5 hours. The inspectors held meetings with governors, members of the senior leadership team and several groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work and scrutinised school documentation including school development planning. They also investigated procedures for keeping pupils safe, scrutinised behaviour logs and analysed responses to pupil and staff questionnaires as well as 189 returned by parents and carers.

Information about the school

Garden Suburb Junior is larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Nearly three quarters of pupils are of minority ethnic origin, with no dominant faith or ethnic group. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average, with a small but growing number at the early stages of learning English. About a fifth of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is above average. These mostly relate to behaviour, emotional and social difficulties or speech, language and communication needs.

The school meets the current floor standards related to English and mathematics (minimum standards expected by the government). An after-school club on site is managed privately and was not part of the school's inspection. The school holds the Healthy Schools award and the Sustainable Travel award.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Garden Suburb Junior is a good school where pupils year on year attain high standards in English and mathematics by the end of year 6. Almost all make rapid and sustained progress from their starting points and make very good use of their literacy and numeracy skills across all subjects.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs make similar progress and often reach the levels attained by pupils with no special educational needs.
- The small but increasing number of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English are making good progress and the gaps with their peers are closing rapidly because of effective strategies introduced by the school.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy reading and many competently read books aimed at much older age groups.
- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. Lessons proceed smoothly without disruption from inappropriate behaviour. Pupils move around the school in a sensible and self-disciplined way.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in the school's care. Incidents of any type of bullying are rare. Pupils say they know they can turn to adults if they are worried, confident that they will address any problems.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers give very clear explanations and involve pupils extremely well in assessing their own and their classmates' work. Occasionally, activities are not adapted well enough to fully meet the needs of the few pupils at the early stages of learning English.
- A lively and interesting curriculum engages all learners extremely well and promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively.
- The headteacher leads a very committed staff team with determination and high expectations. She and her senior leadership team have an accurate view of what the school needs to improve.
- Middle managers are taking on their new roles with enthusiasm, but are not yet all spending enough time observing lessons so they can confidently identify how the quality of teaching can be improved to maintain outstanding outcomes.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - ensuring teachers are clear how to adapt lesson activities to fully meet the needs of pupils at the early stages of learning English and that all learning support assistants are knowledgeable about pupils' specific needs
 - ensure that the most able pupils are always given sufficient opportunities to get on with challenging work at an early stage of lessons.
- Develop the role of the middle managers by providing more opportunities for them to observe learning so that they can be instrumental in ensuring a consistently high quality of teaching.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils arrive at the beginning of Year 3 with standards of attainment generally above national averages. By the time they leave at the end of Year 6, almost all have made rapid and sustained progress, resulting in attainment that is consistently high. There is no noticeable variation between the progress of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs also make rapid progress because teachers have high expectations of their abilities. Most pupils who fluently speak English as an additional language make similar progress. The progress of pupils at the early stage of English is rapidly improving and gaps with their peers are closing.

Pupils perform particularly well in reading because a big emphasis is placed not only on learning the mechanics of reading but also on encouraging a delight in literature. As a result, attainment was very high in 2011, with a large majority of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in reading. Parents and carers are correct in their belief that the school is unquestionably helping their children to develop skills extremely well in communication, reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons. They are very clear about class routines and settle down to work extremely quickly. Excellent collaboration with their classmates through paired discussions helps them to spark ideas off each other and extend their learning. Pupils are proud of their achievements, producing neat, tidy and good amounts of work in their exercise books. They are thoughtful and resilient, always willing to have a go at tackling difficult exercises before resorting to help from adults. Pupils with special educational needs or who speak limited English are well integrated into lessons, often helped by their classmates with vocabulary or grammar. At the end of lessons, pupils accurately evaluate their learning, honestly identifying if they feel they need to have more practice. Pupils, parents and carers justifiably believe that pupils learn a lot in lessons and are well prepared to be independent and self-motivated learners of the future.

Quality of teaching

Teachers have a very good relationship with pupils. One staff member spoke for many: 'The excellent behaviour, support and family atmosphere make teaching here a real pleasure.' Teachers organise their lessons very well, ensuring resources are to hand, so learning can get off to a prompt start. High expectations of what pupils can achieve permeate all lessons, benefiting the whole range of pupil ability. Teachers accurately pinpoint support for pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language. Pupils who arrive with little or no English are given a warm welcome and quickly integrated into the English school system. Effective strategies ensure that they acquire the necessary tools to catch up with their peers. Occasionally, teachers are not as adept at finding appropriate activities and at deploying learning assistants to fully meet the needs of these pupils.

Teachers keep a very good eye on how each pupil is progressing, quickly stepping in to redirect any who have misconceptions or posing challenging questions as extension activities. Work is marked with encouraging comments and hints on ways to learn even more. Most teachers lead learning along at a good pace, but on rare occasions, whole-class introductions mean more able pupils who already understand what to do are not given the chance to start work earlier than others.

Teachers make learning interesting by incorporating other subjects into literacy and mathematics lessons. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to gain a deeper understanding of social and moral issues and extend their cultural knowledge. In an excellent English lesson, for example, pupils progressed in leaps and bounds in their comprehension because they were captivated by a historical text of Queen Victoria's childhood. Many had prepared very well for the lesson by taking the excerpt home the previous evening to highlight key vocabulary. Parents and carers rightly believe that their children are well taught. A few have concerns that homework does not allow them to support their children's learning. However, inspectors agreed with pupils who say that their homework 'learning logs', although not the traditional homework method, are helpful in reinforcing their learning. Together with homework accessed via the school website, parents and carers have opportunities to develop pupils' learning well independently of classwork.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils report that in lessons, behaviour is typically outstanding and they can always get on with learning without disruption. They have extremely positive and enthusiastic attitudes to learning, cooperate willingly with teachers' directions and enjoy using their initiative to take responsible decisions. In corridors and out at play, pupils are always courteous and considerate. They move around with self-discipline and a very good awareness of others. Pupils are cheerful and greet visitors with politeness and interest. Pupils feel that any rare instances of low-level misbehaviour are dealt with fairly and swiftly. They appreciate the school's behaviour management systems, knowing that reprimand by removal of 'golden minutes' is consistently and effectively applied.

Questionnaires indicate that a few parents and carers are worried about incidents of bullying. Following an extensive range of interviews and informal discussions with pupils, the inspection team is convinced that any type of bullying is extremely rare. One pupil commented, 'There's no bullying in school – a few children just have bad

moods.' Staff quickly follow up any concerns pupils may have and prevent any isolated name calling from escalating into anything more serious. Pupils are adamant that they all get on extremely well, whatever their language or cultural background. The vast majority of pupils report that they feel secure at school and this is wholeheartedly supported by parents and carers. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe and avoid hazardous situations through good quality personal, social and health education lessons and visits from the police, fire service and officers from Transport for London. Attendance is improving well and is now above average for all groups of pupils.

Leadership and management

The headteacher is a very effective leader of a school where high expectations have been sustained over many years. She and her senior leadership team have a keen understanding of what the school does well and where improvements need to be made. From interrogating thorough tracking data, they move quickly to introduce new strategies should any particular group of pupils seem likely not to achieve as well as they should. For example, pupils in Year 5 have recently been arranged into ability sets to boost their achievement. Middle managers are developing their roles but are not yet sufficiently involved in observing learning and identifying how to support their colleagues in consistently delivering the best quality teaching. Already, training and mutual support are being planned to develop their professional expertise. The school has not only maintained the high standards of pupils' attainment noted at the last inspection but has also taken positive steps to improve pupils' behaviour from good to outstanding. These successes demonstrate that the school has continuing capacity for future sustained improvement.

The relationship between the governing body and the headteacher is of trust and rigour. Governors put a high priority on the safety of the pupils and are justifiably proud of the way pupils from all walks of life play and work so well together. Safeguarding meets all legal requirements. The school ensures no pupil is discriminated against and all have an equal opportunity to achieve similarly. It has good relationships with parents and carers, who appreciate all it does for their children. One commented, 'It's a friendly and caring environment in which children are well taught and flourish both as individuals and as members of the local community.' An outstanding curriculum promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development particularly well. Pupils excel in music, are very proud to be the national primary school champions in chess and greatly benefit from Spanish lessons. Recent awards demonstrate that pupils have a keen awareness of healthy living and the impact of travel choices on the environment.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.

2 February 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Garden Suburb Junior School, London NW11 6XU

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school. Garden Suburb Junior is a good school. You make rapid progress and leave school with very high attainment in English and mathematics. You enjoy school and feel you learn a lot in lessons. We judge teaching to be good because teachers give very clear explanations and ask good questions to improve your learning, but sometimes lessons do not move along quickly enough for some of you to achieve your best. The headteacher and her team of senior teachers lead the school well. They work well together and know what needs improving. You enjoy a wonderful range of activities in and out of lessons. Congratulations on winning the primary school chess championship!

You all feel very safe at school and know how to look after yourselves. Your behaviour is excellent. A few of your parents expressed concern about incidents of bullying, but you have told us you have no worries about any types of bullying, confident that teachers will sort out problems. Your attendance has improved. Last year it was average and so far this year it is higher. Well done!

To make your school even better, we have asked your headteacher and teachers to do two things.

- Make sure that teachers and learning support assistants help the few pupils who speak very little English to make as fast progress as the rest of you. We have also asked them to make sure that those of you who find learning a bit easier have every opportunity to work on challenging activities.
- Arrange for senior teachers to spend more time observing your learning so they can give good advice to teachers on how to improve the way they teach.

We certainly enjoyed our visit to your school. We know that your teachers and their assistants make your school a very special place for you. All of you can help by always trying to do your best, continuing to behave extremely well and making your families and the school proud of you.

Yours sincerely

Sarah McDermott
Lead inspector

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