

Chadwell St Mary Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114900
Local Authority	Thurrock
Inspection number	378952
Inspection dates	10–11 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Kathy Hooper

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	185
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lea Tyler
Headteacher	Frances Cooper
Date of previous school inspection	14 October 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 13 lessons and eight teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, governing body and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and lunch and break times. They examined pupils' work, analyses of their progress, teachers' planning of work, minutes of meetings and other records. They scrutinised 88 questionnaires from parents and carers, 101 from pupils and 17 from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Have standards improved for all pupils in writing, phonics and mathematics?
- Have teachers raised their expectations for higher attaining pupils and put in place appropriate strategies, for example for teaching phonics, to secure effective learning for all pupils?
- How well have senior and middle managers developed their monitoring procedures to address underperformance, for example in writing and girls' mathematics?
- Have the good standards in Reception been maintained and what impact do they have on Key Stage 1?

Information about the school

The school has increased in size in the last three years but remains smaller than average. There is a higher-than-average proportion of boys, pupils who are known to be entitled to free school meals and pupils with special educational needs and/or difficulties. The school has increasing and slightly higher-than-average proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those whose first language is not English. About a third of pupils have joined the school at other than the usual times. There is a range of after-school provision and a breakfast club. The school has Healthy Schools status, and has awards for Activemark, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Primary Science Quality Mark Bronze and Foundation Level International Schools.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school that is rapidly improving because good monitoring procedures have improved the quality of teaching. From very low starting points on arrival in Reception, attainment is comparable with similar schools nationally by the end of Key Stage 1, and slightly above average in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. Although improving, pupils' writing is not as good as their reading and mathematics. All pupils achieve well because they enjoy lessons and value the support they receive from staff. This is evidenced in their increasingly good attendance and in comments from parents and carers such as, 'Our daughter has settled brilliantly and the teachers have encouraged her educational gifts and recognised her talents.' There is an inclusive ethos and every pupil is well known to all staff. Pupils feel exceptionally secure and understand how to keep themselves safe, because they are supported by robust safeguarding procedures. Pupils' excellent knowledge of health issues is demonstrated in the high take-up of school meals and their engagement in physical activities. Older pupils contribute well to maintaining the school's supportive family ethos. Pupils learn how to work with others and treat each other with respect, but their first-hand experience of different cultures and communities is limited. Pupils' skills in information and communication technology are not fully developed because they do not have regular enough opportunities to use these to support their learning in different subjects.

Pupils concentrate and try hard in lessons because of well-conceived teaching. In the best lessons, pupils are actively engaged in investigations, with teachers promoting insights through very skilful questioning. Good interactions between pupils, and between pupils and staff, in these lessons generate animated discussion. In some lessons, learning objectives are too general and limit accurate assessments of progress. Marking is regular, but does not always indicate to pupils how they might improve their work. The curriculum is relevant, and recent developments make it increasingly exciting and integrated. A determined focus on phonics has raised levels of reading throughout the school.

The quality of the care, guidance and support pupils receive is outstanding. Any difficulties they have in learning are promptly addressed through a good range of interventions. The needs of those pupils joining the school at other than the usual time are quickly identified. Pupils with a history of failure in other schools, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those with English as an additional language thrive and blend well into the school community. The school makes great efforts to support pupils and their families and the breakfast club is well attended on an ad hoc basis. As a result, all pupils make good progress, and for some their

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progress is outstanding. This is echoed in a comment from a parent or carer, 'My children changed school on a recommendation and I am very pleased with their progress and happiness.'

The leadership team's strong focus on improving standards is reflected throughout the school. Middle and senior managers successfully use robust and rigorous monitoring systems to provide a clear picture of progress for individuals and groups and identify where pupils are underachieving. The rise in standards since the previous inspection is impressive and indicates the school's good capacity to maintain improvement. Well-targeted, ongoing professional development ensures teachers continue to develop their practice. The governing body is new, and well-poised to generate robust systems for holding the school to account. However, school development planning does not provide sufficient detail to support the governing body in monitoring the school in depth. Parents and carers are increasingly well represented at all school functions. Although there are good links with the local community, those further afield are less well developed.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing throughout the school by reinforcing pupils' improving skills across the curriculum.
- Improve teaching and learning by:
 - breaking down lesson objectives into measurable skills and knowledge
 - ensuring that all marking helps pupils to improve their work
 - extending the use of information and communication technology in lessons to better support learning.
- Improve the quality of whole-school development planning to support the monitoring role of the governing body.
- Develop links with the wider community to support pupils' improved cultural understanding and promote community cohesion.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils achieve well and an increasing proportion of them attain the higher levels in tests at the end of Key Stage 2, particularly in mathematics. The underperformance of girls in mathematics has been addressed. The improved achievement of Key Stage 1 pupils is well supported by the good standards in Reception. Standards throughout the school show marked improvements and, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils reached those expected nationally for the first time this year. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils learned the difference between, and application of, 'mean' and 'median' when measuring each other's body dimensions in order to investigate who was the alien from another planet. They asked questions and drew conclusions, prompting one to

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exclaim 'Wow!' when struck by a significant insight. Pupils whose first language is not English make rapid strides in their learning, especially in mathematics. Their understanding is often promoted by translations provided by other native speakers when support staff cannot find appropriate vocabulary. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of well-focused interventions and sensitive questioning by staff. Pupils' reading is improving and increasing numbers are beginning to enjoy books. While pupils' writing overall is improving, it is still lower than expected. Nevertheless, the gap between reading and writing is reducing, particularly in Key Stage 1.

Pupils' personal development is promoted through a shared approach to learning across the school. They feel safe and understand dangers beyond school. Their understanding of health issues is evident in their explanations of the content of lunch boxes. Attendance at a wide range of after-school physical activities is high and many pupils cycle or walk to school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Strategies, such as 'Chadwell Choices', help to promote excellent relationships between pupils and they support each other well. The breakfast club provides pupils with a good start to the school day. Pupils say one of the best things about their school is that other pupils are kind. Whole-school activities, where learning and achievements are shared, generate a very strong sense of community. While pupils know about different religions and cultures, their experience beyond the immediate community is limited.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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Teaching is supported by clear plans for lessons that appeal to the experiences and interests of the pupils. Teachers use a good range of active strategies to engage pupils, for example, hot seating to understand characters in books. Pupils say they have fun lessons every day, and that their school is ‘smart’ because they are well challenged. In the best lessons, higher ability pupils are given tasks that promote their thinking. However, the success criteria relating to learning objectives are occasionally too general to ensure that every pupil’s needs are fully met. Pupils learn to assess their own learning and that of others and many understand the level at which they are working, through target setting. However, marking does not always identify pupils’ strengths and areas for development to help them to improve. A very small minority of Key Stage 2 pupils indicated they did not know how well they were doing.

An increasingly relevant and wide curriculum engages all pupils very well. They have many memorable experiences, such as painting a picture while listening to Holst’s Planet Suite, supported by parents. Flexible and accurate setting across years in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 enables pupils to be well supported, stretched and challenged. Individual barriers to learning are promptly addressed and late entries into school quickly integrated. Great emphasis is placed on working with families to ensure that pupils’ needs are appropriately met. The before- and after-school activities are well run and provide pupils with good opportunities to mix with others and enjoy a range of activities.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

A period of continuous leadership by a determined headteacher, supported by a committed staff and supportive community, has generated a positive and successful school atmosphere. The school’s robust systems for monitoring pupils’ progress ensure that leaders make good use of this information to identify gaps in their learning; consequently equal opportunities are promoted well. This information also provides the evidence needed by staff to continually improve standards. The school development planning identifies appropriate priorities, but tends to be too general to enable rigorous monitoring by the governing body. The new governing body is very knowledgeable but has yet to establish ways of working that will ensure good oversight of the school. Nevertheless, safeguarding procedures are good because staff and governors are thorough in their monitoring, and frequent training enables

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them to identify and pre-empt issues. The enthusiasm and support of a growing number of parents and carers was evident during an excellent presentation by Year 2 pupils about the Fire of London. The school has conducted an audit of its provision for community cohesion but its plans for links beyond the school and its immediate community are at an early stage of development.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress from very low starting points because staff work closely with their parents and carers to identify and meet their needs. They make particularly good progress in communication, language and literacy, and in their problem-solving, reasoning and number. The school’s strong emphasis on children’s personal, social and emotional development enables them to settle quickly, adapting well to the school’s routines. Children with English as an additional language make good progress and are supported by signing and visual timetables. Children with barriers to their learning, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are quickly identified and supported to achieve well.

A rich and stimulating environment provides for indoor and outdoor play and a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Teaching is well matched to children’s needs, but planning is occasionally too general. Assessments of progress are exceptionally rigorous, but occasionally lead to an under-estimation of children’s achievements.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A higher-than-usual proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires and these were overwhelmingly positive. The most positive areas of agreement were related to their children’s safety, their enjoyment and the leadership and management of the school. Although there was hardly any disagreement, the inspection team looked into the few concerns raised. They found safeguarding to be robust, high levels of enjoyment among pupils, and strong leadership and management.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Chadwell St Mary Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 88 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 185 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	62	70	22	25	3	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	66	75	20	23	0	0	1	1
The school informs me about my child’s progress	54	61	28	32	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	59	67	25	28	3	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	63	72	22	25	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	57	65	27	31	2	2	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	53	60	30	34	5	6	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	45	51	36	41	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	49	56	36	41	1	1	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	51	58	32	36	2	2	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	41	47	37	42	4	5	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	59	67	27	31	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	63	72	23	26	2	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



14 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chadwell St Mary Primary School, Grays, RM16 4DH

Thank you so much for making us very welcome when we visited your school this week. We thoroughly enjoyed seeing activities, looking at your work and talking to you and your teachers.

We found your school to be good. You all make good progress in your lessons. Your school has a great family atmosphere. You clearly enjoy coming to school and it was good to see you taking great care of each other. We very much enjoyed the class assembly taken by Year 2, and to see your growing enjoyment of books and mathematics. It was great to see so many of your parents in school, for example those working with Year 5 on their paintings.

In order to make your school even better, we have asked the headteacher and staff to do four things.

- Help you to make your writing as good as your reading and mathematics.
- In lessons, be more specific in what they want you to learn and how you can improve your work, and give you more opportunities to use your information and communication technology skills.
- Develop how the school plans for the future to help the governors check how well it is doing.
- Increase partnerships and links beyond the local community.

You can help them by taking greater care with your writing, and asking for help when you do not understand what to do, or do not know how to improve your work.

Yours sincerely

Kathy Hooper
Lead inspector

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