

# Furze Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101203
<b>Local Authority</b>	Barking and Dagenham
<b>Inspection number</b>	376523
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jane Chesterfield

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	466
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Glenda Paddle
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gary Wilder
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25–26 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	Bennett Road Chadwell Heath Romford RM6 6ES
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<b>Age group</b>	3–7
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	24–25 November 2011
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 15 lessons, taught by 14 teachers. They held meetings with pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school policies and documentation, safeguarding records, pupils' work, assessment data, monitoring records, strategic planning and the minutes of governing body meetings. Questionnaires completed by staff and 150 parents and carers were analysed.

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

- The impact of strategies to improve attainment and progress throughout the school, especially for White British boys and for higher attaining pupils.
- The extent to which improvements have been made in the quality of teaching since the last inspection, particularly in challenge, expectation, and behaviour management.
- The impact of leaders at all levels in improving outcomes and provision for pupils.

## Information about the school

Furze Infant School is a large school serving a residential area of Greater London. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average. About two thirds of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and nearly half speak English as an additional language. These figures are high compared with the national picture. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is in line with the average. These needs relate mainly to speech, language and communication difficulties. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is offered in the school's Nursery and Reception classes. The school holds a breakfast club each day, which was looked at as part of the inspection. After-school care is organised by a private provider and there is a children's centre run by the local authority on the school's site. Both of these are subject to separate inspection arrangements. The school has gained Healthy Schools status and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. In September 2010, the school became part of a hard federation with the local junior school following the retirement of the previous joint headteachers. The headteacher of the junior school became executive headteacher of the federation, and heads of school were appointed to run each school on a day-to-day basis.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Furze Infant School is a satisfactory school which is improving after a period of uncertainty over the leadership arrangements for the school. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and their progress is beginning to improve. They enjoy coming to school, and this is clear from their above-average attendance. Parents and carers are pleased with the school and what it offers their children. One parent commented, 'I am greatly pleased with the friendly staff, and there has been lots of improvement since the hard federation was formed'. Another said, 'My child looks forward to school every day, and everyone always makes her feel welcome and comfortable'.

Good pastoral care and partnerships with outside professionals mean that pupils feel safe at school and know that staff will help them if they have a problem. There has been a strong focus on improving pupils' behaviour since the last inspection, and this is now consistently good throughout the school. Pupils themselves commented on this improvement in discussions. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They know the difference between right and wrong, and show consideration for others. Relationships are good, and pupils are interested in and respectful of the different backgrounds and beliefs of others. They have a good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle.

Since the school became part of the hard federation, there has been an increased drive to improve the quality of provision and raise achievement. Good new systems for tracking progress have shown that not enough pupils are reaching the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics, so extra programmes of targeted support have been introduced to address this. Similarly, the school has identified that White British boys are not doing as well as other pupils, and so is reviewing the curriculum in order to ensure that their needs are being met. These initiatives are at an early stage of development, but are beginning to have an impact on achievement.

New, effective systems for regular monitoring of teaching and learning mean that senior leaders are aware of the strengths and areas for development in the classroom. Teachers consistently manage behaviour well, so that pupils are willing and able to learn. However, teachers' introductions to lessons are often too long, with the result that pupils do not spend enough time applying their knowledge and developing their skills independently. Teachers do not always check pupils' understanding of what is being taught sufficiently well, and this means that sometimes work is not well enough matched to their capabilities, and expectations

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are not high enough. Support staff are often effectively deployed to promote the learning of different groups of pupils, but this is not consistent in every class. Senior leaders are addressing these issues through good new processes for teachers' performance management.

The energetic yet measured approach of senior leaders means that much has been achieved in a short period of time in identifying weaknesses and setting up rigorous systems to deal with them, backed by the whole school community. Behaviour issues highlighted in the previous inspection have been thoroughly tackled, and staff are eager to be guided to improve their practice and so raise the achievement of pupils. The school development plan is realistic, accurate and ambitious, and self-evaluation systems are working well. The governing body has shown its good judgement in pursuing and creating the hard federation. The role of middle leaders has not been sufficiently developed, and this has been recognised as one of the school's priorities for development. Nonetheless, the school has a satisfactory capacity for further continuous improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise attainment and improve progress in reading, writing and mathematics, especially for higher attaining pupils.
- Raise the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school by:
  - improving assessment during lessons, so that expectations and challenge are more closely matched to the needs of the pupils
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to learn independently
  - ensuring that support staff are consistently well deployed to promote pupils' learning.
- Develop the role of middle leaders so that they play a full part in improving provision and outcomes for pupils.

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

**3**

The work seen in lessons and in pupils' books confirms that attainment is broadly average at the end of Key Stage 1, and that pupils achieve satisfactorily from broadly average starting points. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress from their various starting points, as do those who are learning English as an additional language. Pupils of all abilities settle quickly in class and are keen to learn. In a Year 2 design and technology lesson, for example, almost all were eager to answer the teacher's questions and say what they knew about the most suitable fruit for making a fruit kebab. Pupils enjoy having the opportunity to tackle independent work, though they often lack the confidence to persevere with it.

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In a Year 1 mathematics lesson, for example, they settled happily to pursue their different tasks, but while some sailed through their work, others floundered and were uncertain about asking an adult for help.

Pupils behave well throughout the school, and only occasionally have to be reminded to pay attention or work more quietly. They have a good understanding of how to be safe, and show this through their considerate behaviour in the playground. Most pupils make sensible choices in their school lunches, and enjoy being active. This is reflected in the Healthy Schools status. The school has recognised the need to work more closely with families to ensure that pupils bring in healthy packed lunches. Pupils are happy to take on responsibility, for example as school councillors, though opportunities for pupils to play an active part in the life of the school are limited. They have a good awareness of other cultures, respect others and mix harmoniously. They sometimes lack opportunities through the curriculum for spiritual reflection and development of a fuller awareness of culture and the arts. Pupils are prepared satisfactorily for the next stage in their education, as a result of their good social skills, above-average attendance and average attainment.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

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

**How effective is the provision?**

Teachers are beginning to make good use of improved tracking systems to plan work to meet the needs of the different ability groups in their classes, but they do not always check pupils’ understanding sufficiently well in lessons to ensure that pupils are making good gains in their learning. They have good relationships with their

<sup>1</sup> 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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classes, and make clear their expectations for behaviour. Good use is made of resources, particularly modern technology such as interactive whiteboards and visualisers, to add interest to lessons. The pace of lessons is sometimes too slow, because teachers spend too much time introducing the lessons, so that pupils become restless waiting to get on with their tasks. Support staff assist pupils well during group work, but are often underused during the introduction to the lesson. Marking in pupils’ books is positive and encouraging, but sometimes errors in mathematical calculations or spelling books are not corrected, so pupils do not know what they have done wrong.

The curriculum gives pupils a secure grounding in literacy and numeracy. This is reflected in the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The school has introduced a new commercial scheme of topic work to cover the rest of the curriculum, which ensures that nothing is missed out. However, this has not yet been well enough adapted to meet the needs of all pupils or to give them sufficient opportunities for practical, active and independent learning. The school has made a start to this by increasing strategies for encouraging boys’ interest in literacy through selecting more boy-friendly themes. This is beginning to have an impact on their engagement with their work.

The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is good, particularly for pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable. Since the introduction of the hard federation, transition procedures have been greatly improved, so that pupils are able to settle quickly into life at junior school. Good use is made of outside partnerships to support pupils’ needs, particularly through the federation. The behaviour coordinator from the junior school, for example, has worked closely with the infant school to set up systems for rewards and sanctions which have had a significant impact on the quality of pupils’ behaviour and the consistency with which it is managed. Good work has been done on improving and maintaining above-average levels of attendance since the previous inspection. The breakfast club provides good care for pupils before school, and they are offered healthy, well-balanced meals at lunchtime.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Senior leaders are committed to ensuring rapid improvement to provision and outcomes at the school, and have been successful in gaining the support of the whole staff team for a programme of intensive strategies for improvement. Morale is

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high, and this was evident from the responses to the staff inspection questionnaire. One member of staff commented that they were ‘fiercely proud’ to work at the school. The governing body has a good grasp of the school’s strengths and weaknesses, and is confident about challenging the school and holding it to account. Procedures for safeguarding are robust and staff training is up to date. Required checks on adults who come into contact with pupils are carried out promptly, and risk assessments are thorough. The school promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination satisfactorily. It has correctly identified and tracked lower performing groups, but realises that the achievement of all groups of pupils needs to be raised.

The school has built good relationships with parents and carers, and encourages them to be involved with their children’s learning. Outside partnerships and consultants are used well to support pupils’ welfare and to promote school improvement. Through the federation, the school is able to draw on expertise from the junior school and spread good practice across both schools. This has already been successful in improving behaviour. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. It is a harmonious community with close local links, particularly with other schools. The different cultures within the school are celebrated and respected. Thanks to the close links with the juniors, the school is developing links with other schools nationally and globally to help pupils understand what life is like for children living and learning elsewhere.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage from broadly average starting points. Relationships between adults and children are very supportive, so that children feel safe and secure. Staff provide a full range of

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activities for children, promoting all areas of learning indoors and outside, but access to the outdoor activities is sometimes limited. The school has identified that some children, particularly boys, achieve less well in reading, writing and calculation, and has begun to increase the range and appeal of activities in these areas. Boys enjoy the chance for role play in a shop, for example, and like doing sums involving footballs or racing cars. This is already beginning to have an impact in Nursery, where a trend of improved achievement is evident.

Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Leaders have a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve the provision, but have not yet had the chance to implement their ideas fully. Activities are sometimes too directed by adults to allow children enough opportunities to learn independently, including writing for their own purposes. Sometimes, adults do not engage sufficiently with children during their independent learning, for example by listening to their ideas and asking questions, to help them make good progress. Relationships with parents and carers are good, and they are involved well in their children’s learning and development.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

**Views of parents and carers**

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire was in line with the national average. They were very pleased with the school and what it offers their children. All parents and carers who responded felt that their child enjoys school. Almost all were happy with their child’s experience at the school, and believe that the school keeps their child safe, that it is well led and managed, and that it helps their child to have a healthy lifestyle. A few felt that the school does not keep them sufficiently informed about their child’s progress, and a number made comments about inconsistent use of the home–school contact books in different classes. The inspection team found that reports to parents and carers are informative and comprehensive, but has asked the school to investigate how effectively contact books are used across the school. Several parents and carers also contacted the inspection team to express concerns about parking and road safety outside the school, and have been advised to report these concerns to the local authority.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Furze Infant 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 150 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 466 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	116	77	32	21	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	98	65	46	31	0	0	2	1
The school informs me about my child’s progress	64	43	64	43	13	9	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	80	53	57	38	10	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	75	50	62	41	5	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	72	48	60	40	8	5	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	71	47	69	46	3	2	1	1
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)	53	35	74	49	4	3	1	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	57	38	75	50	4	3	4	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	55	37	68	45	4	3	6	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	52	35	79	53	5	3	5	3
The school is led and managed effectively	71	47	64	43	5	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	75	63	48	32	2	1	2	1

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](http://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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



28 November 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Furze Infant School, Chadwell Heath RM6 6ES**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently, and for helping us with the inspection. We really enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and sharing your lessons.

We found that Furze Infant School is giving you a satisfactory start to your education. There are many good things going on, and a number of things which could be better. These are some of the things we liked about your school.

- You enjoy coming to school and your attendance is above average.
- You feel safe at school because you are well cared for.
- You behave well in lessons, in the playground and around the school, and you have a good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle.
- You have good relationships with one another and with your teachers, and you show a great deal of respect for the different backgrounds of others.

To help the school improve, this is what we have asked the staff to do.

- Make sure that you all do as well as you can in your reading, writing and mathematics.
- Give you plenty of opportunities to work on your own or in groups on tasks that make you think hard, and give you the support you need to do them.
- Enable more teachers to play a part in making sure the school runs smoothly and that your learning is as good as possible.

You can help by telling your teachers if there is anything you do not understand in your lessons, and by letting them know if your work is too hard or too easy.

Yours sincerely

Jane Chesterfield  
Lead inspector

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