

Galleywood Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114887
Local Authority	ESSEX LA
Inspection number	311741
Inspection date	20 March 2008
Reporting inspector	John Paull

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	141
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sue Saunders
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Manning
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2003
School address	Barnard Road Galleywood Chelmsford Essex CM2 8RR
Telephone number	01245472686
Fax number	01245 473056

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the approach of the school's leadership to planning improvement, with particular emphasis on achievement in mathematics
- whether what the school provides and teaches is producing an impact on pupils' own choices about their lives and lifestyles, and
- the results and impact of the school's Vision Day (a day spent consulting staff, governors, pupils, parents and other stakeholders about its future direction and provision).

Evidence was gathered from discussions with the headteacher, other senior leaders, teachers, pupils, representatives of the governing body including the Chair of Governors, observations in classrooms, pupils' work, an analysis of school data used to track progress and standards, and parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspection found no evidence to contradict the school's own judgements given in its self-evaluation and these have been included in the report where appropriate.

Description of the school

Galleywood Infant School is a little smaller than average. Children enter the Reception class in the September prior to their fifth birthday. The percentage of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is below average as is the number with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those with a statement of special educational needs. Attainment on entry is broadly average. While the proportion of pupils drawn from minority ethnic backgrounds is lower than in most schools nationally, a range of different groups is represented.

The school has recently received the Sport Council's Active Mark and a Healthy Schools award.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Galleywood Infant School is a good school, which achieves good value for money. One parent summed it up well with the comment, 'This is a lovely, warm and caring school. The staff endeavour to make sure every child reaches their potential...' The headteacher, staff and governors lead and manage effectively, constantly monitoring the school's provision and pupils' performance. Their evaluations are accurate and result in strong capacity for further improvement. Their aim is to achieve excellence and they have already reached it in some areas. Notably, partnerships with parents, other schools, the local college and other services are excellent. Systems for looking after pupils, both academically and personally are outstanding and this is contributing much to pupils' very strong enjoyment of school and above average attendance. Pupils are very willing to help staff with routine jobs, so everything runs smoothly, and their full-hearted acceptance of guidance about eating healthily and exercising frequently is equally remarkable. Academic achievement and progress are good and standards by the end of Year 2 are above average.

The school has done well since its last inspection. In 2003, pupils' reading was not as good as other parts of their work. Since then, curriculum changes and teaching methods have rectified this and pupils now achieve very well in reading. Writing is also a strength. However, the headteacher and senior staff have correctly identified that, while results in mathematics are above average, they do not quite match those in reading and writing. As part of a drive to adapt what is taught, also bringing it more closely in line with a new national strategy for teaching young pupils, improvements are underway. For example, from the Reception classes onwards, pupils are being given increased opportunities to take part in drama and role-play exercises that focus on solving problems. The aim is to improve mathematical thinking successfully, while maintaining challenge and development of pupils' vocabulary, so that all subjects move on even further. The school's careful monitoring of progress indicates promising early signs for this strategy, although there has not yet been an opportunity to judge its full effectiveness in national assessments. Pupils who find learning harder than others and those with particular gifts and talents thrive in the school's climate of individual care, support and encouragement. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and different social groups also make good progress. Taken together with their good social skills, understanding of what is right or wrong and good behaviour, this means that pupils are well prepared for their future lives.

Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and ideas for looking after themselves are good. They are tolerant towards each other and respect ideas and cultures different from their own. For example, they have clearly shown considerable interest in a recent 'Chinese week', which is evident from their strong recall and enthusiastic explanations. They know about the dangers of busy roads and explain that it is always best to cross with an adult. They know that they should not go out of school alone or go home with anyone whom they are not expecting to collect them. They are very proud of their School Council and are particularly willing to help raise funds for those less fortunate than themselves. A recent notable achievement was raising enough to buy farm animals for a school in Tanzania.

Consistently good teaching and careful planning of the curriculum are contributing well to the good progress made by all groups of pupils. Extra-curricular clubs and outings are relevant to pupils' needs and support their progress. Teachers form a strong team with teaching assistants and all other support staff. As a result, pupils do not slip through the net. Whenever a pupil seems to be falling behind, someone is on hand to help and intervene. All this happens because

leadership, management and governance are good and, despite strong provision and good results, there is no hint of complacency. For example, a 'vision day' resulted in the staff's renewed emphasis on ensuring that everyone interprets and applies policies in similar ways. It was also recognised that the curriculum, as it stood, did not sufficiently match the new national strategy for primary schools. The decision was taken to redesign what is taught, basing it on themes similar to those used in the Reception classes. At the same time, teachers plan to steadily increase the depth and difficulty of required skills as pupils grow older. In this way, a better, smoother transition for all pupils from Reception classes into the National Curriculum in Years 1 and 2 is expected. This initiative has begun, although it is not yet fully established in the content of lessons.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Standards and provision in the Reception classes are good. Provision is very well managed and young children benefit from good teaching based on a well planned curriculum. This includes all required areas of learning for the age group. From broadly average starting points when they enter school, children make good progress. Achievement is therefore good and, by the end of the year, nearly all of them achieve their expected goals. Resources inside the classrooms and in the outside space fully support learning in all aspects, so that what children do outside reflects and extends their indoor activities. Their progress in personal, social and emotional development and children's emerging skills in writing are particularly strong. Strong management of provision in the age group is also producing improvements in mathematical development. This is contributing much to easier transition into Years 1 and 2.

What the school should do to improve further

- Complete and consolidate improvements in teaching mathematics, so that standards match those achieved in reading and writing.
- Ensure that current initiatives and improvements to curricular planning are reflected fully in the content of lessons.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

25 March 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Galleywood Infant School, Galleywood, CM2 8RR

Thank you for all your help and good behaviour when I visited your school. I enjoyed meeting you, coming to your classrooms and seeing your work. It was good to hear so many of you say that you like school a lot. Your attendance is better than in most schools, which helps to show that this is the case. I particularly enjoyed meeting your school councillors and it was pleasing to hear their reasons for saying that Galleywood is a good school. I agree with them; it certainly is.

Here are some important reasons why I agree that Galleywood is a good school.

- Your work is better than the work I see in many other schools and your writing is particularly good.
- Your teachers teach you well. They treat each of you as an individual, ensuring that what you are taught is just hard enough for you, without being too hard, so you are learning well all the time.
- All the adults in your school look after you very well indeed. This makes you feel safe and, in return, you behave well and are very helpful, doing lots of jobs and trying hard.
- You know a great deal about keeping healthy and you try very hard to put what you know into practice.
- Your headteacher and senior staff, together with the governors, lead and manage the school well and have good ideas to make it even better.

Here are some ways for your headteacher, staff and governors to make Galleywood even better than it is already.

- Carry on and complete the changes that they are making in mathematics lessons, so your work in this subject becomes as good as your written work.
- Make sure that what happens in lessons fully matches all the new ideas about what you should be taught.

You can help with these improvements by keeping up your good behaviour, assisting your teachers and working as well as you do now.

Yours sincerely

John W. Paull

Lead inspector