

Garden Suburb Junior School

Childs Way, London NW11 6XU

Inspection dates

3–4 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have addressed key priorities to raise standards, particularly in writing.
- Staff are proud to be part of the school. The headteacher has created a culture where every person is valued and respected. Training needs for staff are well planned and enable staff to develop their skills effectively.
- School leaders encourage staff to take on responsibilities. They do so with enthusiasm. However, roles are not specific enough to ensure staff are held clearly to account.
- The school's rich curriculum enables pupils to develop a wide range of skills and interests. They have opportunities to study a variety of subjects and the creative arts are promoted well.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge, clear explanations and skilful questioning to help pupils move on in their learning.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points. However, lessons do not consistently challenge pupils, particularly the most able and middle-attaining pupils.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.
- Progress and attainment in reading and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 is well above the national average. Disadvantaged pupils do better than other pupils nationally.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Their needs, however complex, are well supported and the school ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities to do well.
- Pupils have a very positive attitude to learning. They behave well in lessons and participate fully in school life. Pupils feel secure and well cared for. Bullying of any kind is rare.
- Leaders have improved pupils' levels of attendance. Effective strategies have been put in place successfully to ensure that no groups of pupils are disadvantaged by persistent absence.
- The school's new system for assessing and tracking pupils' progress and attainment is developing. However, the information is not used consistently well across the school.
- Governors are supportive of the leadership team. They challenge appropriately and are committed to improving the school further.
- Safeguarding is effective. The school makes sure that the well-being of pupils has the highest priority.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Clarify roles and responsibilities to ensure that leaders at all levels are driving improvements and holding others to account.
- Develop the assessment system so that it is used accurately across the school.
- Ensure that levels of challenge are consistently high in lessons so that all pupils, particularly middle- and high-attaining pupils, can achieve high standards in their work.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The leadership team has maintained a good quality of education for all its pupils since the last inspection. School leaders have provided stability in a time of change, managing staff turnover well and implementing new systems across the school.
- Leaders know the school well and have an accurate picture of its performance. They share this information with all staff to ensure a team effort in moving the school forward. Staff are happy and proud to work at the school and feel well supported by leaders. Leaders are ambitious in their development plans and have set measurable targets.
- The headteacher develops her staff so that they can effectively take on leadership responsibilities. This builds capacity to sustain improvement in the school. The middle leaders in the school ably support the senior leadership team, demonstrating themselves to be innovative and reflective leaders. However, some leaders are unclear about their roles and responsibilities, leading to confusion over who is accountable for what.
- Senior leaders are swift in providing feedback and guidance to teaching staff and middle leaders. Regular checks are made on the quality of teaching and learning, which lead to appropriate support and training. Performance management targets tie in with whole-school priorities so that all staff are working together to drive improvement. Leaders acknowledge that the monitoring of performance management could be improved so that it is explicit how pay progression is assessed.
- The broad and balanced curriculum is a strength of the school. Leaders are determined to give pupils a well-rounded education in a range of academic and creative subjects. Cross-curricular topics interest and motivate pupils. For example, Year 4 work on the Victorians inspired them to create artwork based on a painting by L S Lowry, and Year 5 pupils' learning in history helped them write their own versions of a speech by Henry VIII. Specialist teachers, such as in music and Spanish, ensure that pupils receive high-quality education in these areas.
- Leaders make very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn about life and culture in other countries and are knowledgeable about different faiths from religious education lessons. They raise money and resources for different charities, which helps pupils consider others less fortunate than themselves. British values, while not taught explicitly, are threaded through the curriculum so that pupils treat each other with respect.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively to provide interventions and activities that improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders measure the impact of this through the good, and at times rapid, progress that disadvantaged pupils are making.

- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well led and managed. Parents speak very positively about the support their children receive and all pupils have equal opportunities to achieve well as a result. The school works closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils who have complex needs receive specialist support to help them participate fully in school life. Additional funding is allocated appropriately so that pupils are making good progress.
- The physical education and sport premium funding is used in a variety of ways to improve the provision of physical education in school. Through membership of the local sports partnership programme, staff receive specialist training and pupils attend a variety of sporting events and competitions. The funding is also used to purchase new sporting resources and pupils benefit from dance lessons delivered by a specialist teacher. While funding is used effectively, leaders acknowledge that better planning would ensure that it is used to even greater effect.
- Systems for tracking pupils' progress and attainment are developing. Leaders have recognised that these need refining to ensure that the information is used well consistently. Leaders use progress meetings with staff to identify how well pupils are achieving so that the right support is given. Teachers use the information to identify and address gaps in pupils' learning.

Governance of the school

- The governors are knowledgeable and highly experienced. They support the school well and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Governors, in particular the chair of governors, receive and challenge information about the school's work. They use assessment information to question the school's effectiveness and make valuable contributions to action plans.
- Governors visit the school regularly to assess how well pupils are achieving. They are fully involved in the life of the school. Governors are knowledgeable about how the different additional funding is used, but acknowledge that this could be analysed more sharply.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Procedures to check the suitability of adults working with children meet statutory requirements. All staff have received training and are up to date with the most recent policy and guidance on keeping pupils safe. Increased training has made staff vigilant about child protection matters, including radicalisation and extremism. Risk assessments are compliant and reviewed regularly by leaders.
- Staff follow the school's safeguarding procedures if they have any concerns about a pupil's welfare. Leaders act swiftly to use external agencies to provide help and support and follow up referrals until they are satisfied that all has been done to secure pupils' welfare. All parents who responded to the online questionnaire or who spoke to inspectors felt sure that their children are safe at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching across the school is consistently good.
- Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge. Their consistent modelling of subject-specific vocabulary develops pupils' literacy skills and deepens their understanding. In a Year 5 music lesson, for example, pupils confidently used a range of musical terms to help them read a detailed musical score. In computing, pupils are well versed in technical language, which prepares them for project work.
- Teachers use skilful questioning to reinforce pupils' learning, encouraging pupils to justify and explain their thinking. When there are misunderstandings, teachers challenge pupils to identify their errors and use their prior knowledge to resolve problems.
- Established classroom routines ensure that pupils know what is expected of them. Consequently, pupils work well together and listen attentively to each other's ideas. Pupils are well trained in assessing their own and other's work and they know how to improve their work as a result.
- Teachers plan writing tasks so that pupils are well prepared and understand how to structure their writing. As pupils make progress in their writing, they use increasingly sophisticated language, a wide range of punctuation and complex sentences. Teachers guide and encourage pupils effectively to make improvements to their work.
- The improvement in writing across the school ties in with pupils' development in reading. Class reading texts inspire a variety of writing tasks across a range of genres, giving pupils a deeper understanding of the books they study. Pupils talk enthusiastically about reading and they read widely for pleasure. Consequently, the majority of pupils are confident, expressive and fluent readers.
- In mathematics, teachers ask pupils routinely to apply their skills to problem solving. This extends into other areas of the curriculum, such as the regular 'science challenge'. As a result, pupils are curious learners and can transfer their learning from one subject to another.
- Additional staff are well used. They support groups of pupils as well as individuals, adapting class tasks as necessary to help pupils learn. Occasionally, their subject knowledge is not accurate and can cause misconceptions. Leaders are aware of this and are planning extra training to ensure that additional staff are as effective as possible.
- Tasks are explained clearly so that pupils know exactly what they have to do. Teachers offer guidance as pupils work through tasks, moving pupils on in their learning appropriately. There is challenge for the most able pupils, but it is not always consistent across the school. This is also true for middle-ability pupils. At times, their learning is held up as teachers explain tasks that they already know how to do.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and they are keen to show off the school. They have very good social skills and are articulate and confident. Parents say that their children are well cared for, and as one said, 'it is a happy school'.
- Pupils from different backgrounds and faiths get along well together both in lessons and in the playground. They told inspectors that bullying is rare and they understand how to get help if needed. They use the 'worry box' or talk to teachers if they have any concerns. Pupils know about different types of bullying, including cyber bullying.
- Pupils seize opportunities to take on responsibility, such as members of the school council, house captains and monitors. They take these roles very seriously and know that they have duty to do a good job.
- Pupils care for each other and show support if someone needs a helping hand. All Year 3 pupils are 'buddies' for Year 2 pupils coming up from the adjoining infant school. Pupils appreciate this scheme and say that it really helped them make friends.
- Leaders make sure that pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. Pupils understand 'stranger danger' and are very aware of potential risks when using different social networks. The school also encourages parents to be vigilant about online safety.
- Pupils benefit from a rich programme of extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and after school. Pupils can attend sports clubs, such as those for football, dance and gymnastics, and can develop other skills at clubs such as those for Spanish, film, chess, gardening and art. Music is an important feature of the school and pupils enjoy taking part in the orchestra and different choirs.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are friendly, courteous and respectful to each other and adults.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere as a result. They are eager to get on with their work and do so without disruption. Any occasional instances of off-task behaviour are dealt with quickly.
- Pupils conduct themselves well when moving between lessons and at playtimes. However, behaviour at the start of the day is not managed particularly well. Pupils come into school noisily and cloakrooms are congested.
- Attendance has improved and leaders have reduced significantly the numbers of pupils with persistent absence. The school's welfare officer monitors attendance closely and is swift to act on any concerns.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes for pupils have been consistently high in reading and mathematics since the previous inspection. In 2016, pupils' progress and attainment in these subjects by the end of Year 6 were well above average.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, do better than other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics.
- Currently, pupils enter the school in Year 3 with below-average starting points. Their progress is consistently good across the school and in a range of subjects.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress as a result of well-targeted support.
- Pupils' work in books is of a high standard and shows clear evidence of good progress over time. Tasks are appropriate to the age and ability of pupils and a range of topics is covered in depth. It is evident that pupils take a lot of pride in their work, and books are generally well presented.
- Progress in writing overall in 2016 was in line with the national average. For disadvantaged pupils, their progress was significantly below average. The school has analysed these outcomes and worked with other local schools to test the accuracy of their teacher assessment. As a result, they are more confident in the new assessment criteria.
- Leaders have focused on improving writing outcomes across the school this year and the impact is positive. Standards of writing are high in all year groups and pupils are making at least good progress. Expectations of writing are consistent in other subjects, not just in English. The proportion of pupils achieving greater depth in writing is set to improve, including for disadvantaged pupils, but leaders acknowledge that there is more work to be done in this respect.

School details

Unique reference number	101281
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10023769

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Junior deemed primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	353
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Francoise Wagneur
Headteacher	Eileen Bhavsar
Telephone number	0208 4553269
Website	www.gardensuburbjunior.co.uk
Email address	office@gsjs.barnetmail.net
Date of previous inspection	31 January–1 February 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Garden Suburb Junior School is a three-form entry junior school. It is larger than the average-sized junior school.
- The school shares its site with Garden Suburb Infant School. The schools share a governing body but are led and managed as separate schools.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in all classes and in a range of subjects. Some of these lessons were visited jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, governors, middle leaders, teaching staff and support staff to evaluate the impact of their work. The lead inspector had discussions with two representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their learning in lessons and met with a group of pupils to discuss their experience of the school. Inspectors had informal discussions with pupils in the playground and around the school.
- The inspection team reviewed pupils' progress over time through a scrutiny of pupils' books across the curriculum.
- Inspectors evaluated documentation provided by the school, including current assessment information, self-evaluation, improvement plan, attendance and behaviour records, monitoring records of teaching and learning, and safeguarding documentation.
- Inspectors considered the views of 193 parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Inspectors also spoke to some parents during the inspection. They took into account 22 responses to the pupil questionnaire as well as 23 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Jude Wilson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sarah Bailey OBE	Ofsted Inspector
Lando Du Plooy	Ofsted Inspector
Nik Cook	Ofsted Inspector

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