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Executive Headteacher ✓

Chair of Governors ✓

QUALITY ASSURANCE VISIT REPORT

Name of School: Ardleigh Green Infant School				
Executive Headteacher: Mr John Morris OBE			Reporting Inspector: Grahame Smith	
Date of Visit: 13 th October 2021 (on site) 25 th January 2022 (virtual)			LA Category: 1↑	
Present: John Morris, Verity Hoffman (DHT), Bill Jennings (Chair of Governors – via Zoom in October)				
School's Self-Evaluation:				
Overall Effectiveness	<i>Quality of Education</i>	<i>Behaviour and Attitudes</i>	<i>Personal Development</i>	<i>Leadership and Management</i>
1	1	1	1	1
EYFS				
1				
LA Evaluation of Overall Effectiveness:				
<p>There has been a great deal of work and development in the school since the infants was federated with the junior school – and significant further improvements have been made to an already effective school – including the development of an ambitious curriculum following a review and the focused enhancement of Early Years provision.</p> <p>The Local Authority is therefore confident that Ardleigh Green Infant School continues to provide a highly effective educational experience for its children and that the Quality of Education remains Outstanding.</p> <p>The school is popular and significantly over-subscribed. Its vision and ethos is palpable and the broad range of experiences offered in the curriculum during the pupils' 'learning journey' ensures that pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education in the junior school.</p> <p>Historically, attainment has been consistently above or well above average by the end of KS1 and current monitoring from senior staff, in the absence of validated national data, confirms that these standards have been maintained – and may even be higher in the EYFS than previously. Leaders note that the quality of the teaching in the school is consistently effective.</p> <p>The school benefits from experienced and inspirational leadership and the senior leadership team of the federation are a highly effective group. The governing body also forms a very experienced team and regularly reviews the best options for the schools in a changing educational landscape.</p>				

*School's Response to Covid-19

The federation's approach has ensured that the school has provided effective and agile support to pupils during the pandemic – both academically and in terms of pupils' well-being. Remote learning was well managed and communication with parents and the Local Authority was timely and clear. Leaders have been quick to ensure that any required recovery is in place, with a particular focus on Reading, Inclusion and pupils' wellbeing. A focus on the more precise use of language has also been a priority.

The Ardleigh Green Learning Federation served their community extremely well during the pandemic and the lockdowns.

1. Quality of Education:

■ **Intent** (includes curriculum plans and teaching policies)

The school's vision and ethos have been enhanced even further since the federation with the juniors and underpins the school's success. Despite this, school leaders continue to evolve and innovate to meet current circumstances. Standards, expectations and culture are clear to all – including staff, governors and pupils. The concept of a 'learning journey' from entry to the federation to transfer to secondary school is evident in the infant school's plans and procedures – with the metaphor extended eloquently through the 'Pupil Passports', their 'Boarding Passes' and each Year Group's 'Learning Journeys' for each curriculum subject. This ethos begins early, with the Prospective Parents' Meeting and the close working with local nurseries.

Recent curriculum developments have included a more explicit shift from 'coverage' to a clear mapping of skills progression across subjects. The school's website showcases the curriculum impressively with each subject displaying a landing page which outlines Intent, Vision, Values, Implementation and Impact. The school has seen improvements to the computing and PE curriculums recently.

■ **Implementation** (includes quality of teaching)

Subject leaders have a secure and confident grasp over their areas and they are empowered to truly lead. School leaders recognise that the interface between their intentions/plans and their teaching is key to effective learning. They report that the teaching force is strong and that teachers provide a consistently good or better experience for their pupils right across the school leading to rapid progress in both EYFS and KS1.

The recent introduction of 'BLINK' as an evaluation tool (**B**ehaviour, **L**earning, **I**nstruction/**I**ndependence, **K**nowledge, **S**kills and **U**nderstanding) has shown early promise for both leadership monitoring and teacher self-evaluation.

■ **Impact** (includes attainment and progress and all other outcomes)

The school has achieved consistently high outcomes by the end of KS1 over many years, with attainment typically above or well above the national average. Pupils make swift progress during their time in the school and leaders are confident that outcomes in 2022 will return to pre-pandemic levels.

The school identified that pupils required additional support for Reading and social and emotional wellbeing following lockdowns. The school has also developed an effective Inclusions Team recently to reflect the increasingly diverse intake, increasing numbers of high needs pupils and a larger intake of EAL learners. Pupil Premium numbers are rising steadily.

The school is also rightly proud of pupils' achievements outside of the core subjects and its provision for their personal development and SMSC. Leaders also point to the recent positive developments in Reading, EYFS, the Maths Mastery programme and the Inclusion practices as evidence of impact.

2. Behaviour and Attitudes:

- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are excellent – including high needs pupils. Pupils display curiosity and enthusiasm for school and they are highly engaged in lessons right across the year groups. They are polite and courteous to their peers and to adults. A learning walk across the school during this QA visit confirmed high levels of enjoyment, engagement and participation and no misbehaviour.
- Attendance is consistently above the national average and Persistent Absence is low.
- The EHT reported some issues with punctuality for a small minority of pupils.

3. Personal Development:

- The school places a high premium on pupils' personal development so that they are successful, accomplished learners, ready to transfer to the junior school. Reports back from the juniors confirm that pupils from Ardleigh Green Infants are well prepared for life and learning in Key Stage 2.
- The federation approach to Passports and Boarding Passes provides pupils with a journey of entitlements right through their primary education.
- The school's investment into its innovative Family Centre underlines its commitment to its community and this is used twice weekly by the infant school. A Breakfast Club and After-School Clubs are also available.
- The school's delivery of the new RSE curriculum is on track and fits in with the broader PSHE programme (Jigsaw).
- The school typically offers a wide range of enrichment activities to support personal development and gain cultural capital. These have been adapted recently due to Covid but there remains an impressive offer, including: Hyde Hall, Museum of London, Chalkwell Beach, theatre groups, police, fire-fighters, art and dance groups. Leaders report that these events impact positively on personal development.

4. Leadership & Management:

- Rapid improvements have been made to an already effective school in the last few years. Senior leaders are highly visible and regarded as supportive by staff and parents.
- The school benefits from a highly experienced and widely respected Executive Headteacher who has led the school with energy, enthusiasm and commitment for many years. His leadership and love for the school community means that despite its success over many years, the school never stands still.
- The Executive Headteacher is ably supported by an experienced and capable Deputy Headteacher – and both note how well their strengths complement each other. The wider leadership team is also an effective group, giving support and direction to their colleagues across the school
- The Governing Body has benefitted from the recent Federation with the Junior school – with the new single body drawn from an experienced group from both governing bodies. The Chair of Governors is passionate about the school, having also served for many years. They provide challenge and support – for example around future governance and succession planning – but they also operate with professional trust for proven school leaders. The EHT noted that the leadership and governors are the strongest teams he has had for many years.
- Middle and subject leaders benefit from a clear 'template' on how they should plan and prepare the curriculum. The detailed approach means that expectations are explicit and the approaches are consistent. Middle leaders in the infant school are aware of their roles,

responsibilities and accountabilities.

- There is an established staff team in the school and strong leadership too of support teams.
- The school has a detailed and evaluative Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) and a comprehensive School Improvement Plan, setting out the future priorities in key areas.

5. EYFS

- Significant improvements have been made in recent years and leadership, curriculum and provision are all strong. EYFS leaders anticipate that these improvements will impact positively in 2022 and future EYFS outcomes.
- The new EYFS Framework is being implemented and staff are aware of the principles and spirit of the revised 'Development Matters'.
- The outside area was enhanced a few years back and now provides a strong learning environment.
- Evidence Me is used for ongoing pupil assessment in the Early Years.

6. Safeguarding Arrangements:

- Safeguarding approaches are effective. Senior staff have had the advanced training and accreditation, as required.
- The schools will have a full external S175 Audit in February 2022.

7. Head Teacher & Staff Well-Being:

- Leaders report that they are committed to the well-being of all staff and have made good progress in promoting this in recent years. Ardleigh Green is a 'happy ship.'
- The DHT reported that the Chair of Governors checks in regularly on her well-being.
- The EHT and DHT both reported that they had an improved work-life balance.
- The EHT noted that the Coaching Bursary from the Havering Academy of Leadership / Local Authority had been welcomed.

8. Partnerships & Support:

- The EHT and other leaders are currently providing effective support to another primary school in Havering having been commissioned by the Local Authority. The EHT and school have a long track record of providing school improvement support at different sites over the years.
- The EHT sits on the Board of the Havering Academy of Leadership and also works with the London District East Teaching School Hub.

9. Any Other Issues:

- Leaders spoke of their desire for an Ardleigh Green Nursery provision.

Priorities or Recommendations:

The school identified the following priorities:

1. Maths Mastery
2. Computing across the Curriculum
3. Strategic planning to future-proof the federation
4. Consolidation of the BLINK initiative, implemented in January 2022.

Signed: *Grahame Smith*

Post: Quality Assurance Inspector