

Camp Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117136
Local Authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	358090
Inspection dates	18–19 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Tusha Chakraborti

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	239
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Doyle
Headteacher	Louise Cornock
Date of previous school inspection	14 April 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 13 lessons taught by nine different teachers in the eight classes in the school. Meetings were held with the headteacher, groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, checked arrangements for safeguarding and scrutinised a range of documentation including; development plans; records of pupils' progress; the monitoring of teaching and learning; and minutes of the governing body's meetings. They also scrutinised responses to the inspection questionnaires from 117 parents and carers, 98 pupils and 27 staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following;

- Do all groups of pupils, including the higher-attaining pupils, make good enough progress in all subjects?
- Do all members of staff make effective use of assessment information to plan activities that challenge and motivate all groups of pupils?
- How well is the data used to track pupils' progress and to set challenging targets?
- How rigorous and effective is the school's self-evaluation in identifying the quality of leadership and management and the steps for further improvement?

Information about the school

This is an average-size primary school with a higher-than-average proportion of pupils from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Almost half of the pupils are White British and about one quarter come from Sylheti Bangladeshi families, while the rest represent a wide range of ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is much higher than average and many of these are at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher took up their posts a year ago. The school holds Healthy Schools status.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Nursery and the Reception classes. The Nursery class serves schools across an area and almost two thirds of the children who join it move to Reception classes in other local schools. Consequently, the majority of children in the Reception class are new to the school.

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

The school provides a good quality of education. A strength of the school is the extent to which leaders and staff work together to ensure an excellent level of care for all pupils. Central to the school's work is the way it supports pupils to develop good personal and social skills and to grow up as confident learners. The staff works very efficiently in close liaison with parents and carers, engaging them successfully with their children's learning and the school's work. Comments such as, 'My son feels nurtured and I respect the way the staff truly care for his educational and social needs' and 'The nurture and support provided for my daughter have really given her so much self confidence' reflect parents' and carers' trust and confidence in the school's work. Pupils thoroughly enjoy attending this school and are proud of their involvement in making decisions. They behave well and their understanding of how to keep themselves safe and to lead a healthy lifestyle is exemplary.

Children make satisfactory progress during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Starting from a below-average base, pupils make good progress in English and mathematics in Years 1 to 6. Standards are improving and are now broadly average by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress.

The teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work. Members of staff have good relationships with the pupils, praise their efforts and make good use of interactive white boards and other resources to support learning. The most effective teachers are clear about what they want the pupils to learn and how this will be achieved, matching work well to individual needs. However, information gained from assessment is not used consistently to plan lessons to meet the varied needs of all the pupils. More-able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently to ensure that they achieve as well as they can. A new assessment system for tracking pupils' learning is beginning to address this issue, but has yet to be embedded. The teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but do not always ensure that pupils understand how to improve their work.

The headteacher and her deputy provide a clear direction for the school and ensure that the staff, governors and parents and carers share a common vision for the good of the pupils. Supported by senior leaders, they have re-evaluated the school's performance and revised the school improvement plan in order to drive further improvement. There is clear focus on developing the roles of the subject leaders. However, the leadership role in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not developed sufficiently to ensure greater progress for all children. At present, the monitoring role of the leaders for this age group is not effective enough in evaluating children's attainment and progress to ensure appropriate actions for further improvement. An action plan for community cohesion is being implemented, with a strong focus on the school's involvement within the local community.

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Self-evaluation provides a secure basis for development planning. The governing body is very well engaged in all aspects of the school's work and has a very clear understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement. The school has a good capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 by:
 - ensuring that the more-able pupils are challenged consistently so that they achieve as well as they can
 - making better use of assessment information to plan lessons to move the learning of all pupils forward.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning further by:
 - establishing a programme whereby teachers can improve their skills by observing best practice
 - ensuring that teachers support pupils' learning more effectively by suggesting how they can improve.
- Extend the roles of the Early Years Foundation Stage leaders in monitoring and evaluating children's attainment and progress more effectively to ensure that children develop their skills faster in all areas of learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children enter the Nursery class with skills and experiences that are well below those expected for their age. Standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly average and the overall trend shows an improving picture. Teacher assessments are confirmed from the scrutiny of pupils' work and observations of lessons. The assessment data and inspection evidence show that, starting from a low base, all groups of pupils make consistently good progress in both key stages in reading, writing and mathematics. Recently, progress in writing has been accelerated because of the school's strong focus on developing good writing skills over the past year. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls.

The pupils thoroughly enjoy learning. They listen carefully to their teachers and concentrate on the tasks they are set. They are increasingly applying their writing skills across the curriculum successfully. They enjoy reading a wide variety of books and writing stories or persuasive accounts, expressing their own opinions. This was seen in a Year 4 lesson when they demonstrated their understanding of the effective features of an advertisement. In mathematics, they enjoy investigative work and apply their numeracy skills well to solve practical problems.

The pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident in their good behaviour around the school and their contribution to the school community. The pupils respect others' values and beliefs. They undertake jobs around the school responsibly, such as peer mediation, Eco group work, or when representing others on the school council. They are involved well in planning and organising a wide range of school events and fundraising activities. Pupils from Key Stage 2 run a Credit Union Children's Bank successfully. Attendance is average and improving.

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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	2
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

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

How effective is the provision?

The teachers have good subject knowledge. They plan a range of activities that interest and motivate pupils, although assessment results are not always used effectively enough to inform planning. Good relationships provide a secure learning environment, enabling pupils to make consistently good progress. The teachers know the pupils well and use questioning effectively to engage them in learning. For example, in a good mathematics lesson, the brisk pace and good questioning ensured that all groups of pupils gained a good understanding of how to use a scale to read intervals accurately. The teaching assistants support learning skilfully, especially that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils at the early stages of learning English are also supported well. The teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but do not always suggest how it might be improved. In a minority of lessons, more-able pupils are not challenged sufficiently in order to achieve as well as they can.

The curriculum is well organised and provides pupils with good quality learning experiences. A wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as clubs, trips and visits, enrich and enhance pupils' enjoyment of learning. The curriculum contributes effectively to pupils' personal development and well-being. For example, it extends their understanding of the cultural diversity within the British society and the importance of equal opportunities for all pupils in school through different topics and the school's personal, social and health

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education programme. The use of allotment areas for each class promotes pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles and Eco issues.

The school provides a very happy and welcoming learning environment for all its pupils. The school works efficiently with parents and carers and outside agencies to support the learning and the well-being of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified early and provided with good support from staff. Carefully targeted interventions for pupils with particular needs are implemented very well through a whole-school approach. The arrangements for transferring children between the key stages within the school, as well as between Year 6 and the secondary schools, are very effective.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
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?

The school has undergone some recent changes at the leadership level. The headteacher and deputy headteacher, ably supported by other leaders and the governing body, are successfully driving improvement. They have put in place strategies by which they can develop the expertise of teachers and consistently raise pupils' achievement. A thorough analysis of data enables the school to identify the action that is needed to sustain recent improvements. A revised assessment system is being used to raise standards. However, this system is just becoming embedded into the work of the school and it is too early for it to have impacted on standards across the school. Members of staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in driving the school's improvement forward, although the leadership role in the Early Years Foundation Stage is yet to develop more effectively. Members of the governing body hold specific responsibilities for monitoring the work of the school, particularly pupils' progress and well-being. As a result, there is a good, shared understanding of the priorities of the school's improvement plan and a high commitment to the actions necessary for them to be realised.

The school is highly committed to promoting equality of opportunity in raising and sustaining improvement in the performance of different groups of pupils. It has established excellent partnership with parents and carers, engaging them successfully in all aspects of its work. Safeguarding procedures illustrate good practice. Clear policies and strategies, ensuring that pupils are safe, are monitored regularly. There is a robust action plan for promoting community cohesion and it is being implemented well. This is reflected in the harmonious environment within the school where pupils work well together and develop a clear understanding of different cultures in British society. The school is successful in liaising with outside agencies and local schools, including the contributory

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play groups and secondary schools. It manages its budget efficiently and provides good value for money.

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

A significant proportion of children in the Nursery class do not continue into the Reception classes at the school, resulting in the majority being new to the school at this stage of their education. Children make satisfactory progress and reach standards that are below average by the end of the Reception year.

The staff form warm relationships with children. They are skilled at promoting the children's personal development and providing them with a secure environment in which to learn. The children settle in well and enjoy learning. There is a satisfactory balance of adult-led sessions and opportunities for children to choose their own independent activities. The children develop good coordination and personal skills as they explore the activities in indoor and outdoor areas. They respond well to adults and are eager to share ideas. A wide range of practical activities is planned to stimulate the children's imagination and to extend their speaking and listening skills. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to extend the children's language skills while they are engaged in role-play or other group activities.

The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are not sufficiently developed to address the difficulties that arise due to the very high mobility of children at the beginning of the Reception year. The monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the provision and the assessment of children's progress are not sufficiently rigorous.

The children's welfare and safety is given the highest priority. The school ensures good relationships and close contact with families throughout the Nursery and Reception years.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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 responding to the inspection questionnaire was high. They are almost unanimous in reporting that their children enjoy school and they are very pleased with their children's experience in this school. They appreciate that their children are helped to develop an excellent understanding of how to become safe and how to live healthy lifestyles. A small minority of parents and carers feels that they are not sufficiently informed about their children's progress. The inspectors looked into these concerns. They found that the school works extremely well in partnership with parents and carers and keeps them fully informed about their children's progress and well-being.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Camp Primary and Nursery 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 117 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 239 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	76	65	41	35	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	78	67	37	32	2	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	56	48	55	47	3	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	55	47	53	45	7	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	70	60	43	37	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	61	52	49	42	4	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	61	52	54	46	2	2	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)	57	49	49	42	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	60	51	46	39	1	1	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	54	46	55	47	1	1	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	60	51	42	36	2	3	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	64	55	45	38	1	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	72	62	44	38	1	0	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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.



20 October 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Camp Primary and Nursery School, St Albans, AL1 5PG

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school and being so friendly and helpful. We were pleased to see how much you enjoy school. We agree with you that your teachers take good care of you. You behave well and are always keen to help each other. You carry out your duties, including the special jobs as peer mediators or school council representatives, responsibly. Thank you also for the questionnaires that you filled in for the inspection and sharing your views with us.

Your school is providing you with a good quality of education. As a result, you make good progress and the majority of you reach the standards expected by the time you leave Year 6. To improve your school further, we have asked the headteacher and the staff to:

- check how well you understand the tasks you are given to do
- make sure that the work provided for you is just a bit harder to move your learning forward as rapidly as possible
- help you to understand how you can improve your work further
- make sure that the teachers with special responsibilities in the Nursery and Reception Year help you achieve even better.

We are sure that you will work hard and attend regularly to help the school make these improvements. We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Tusha Chakraborti

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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