

Heathfield Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102890
Local Authority	Richmond upon Thames
Inspection number	355278
Inspection dates	9–10 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Carole Skinner

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	272
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joan Gibson
Headteacher	Paul Clayton
Date of previous school inspection	8 July 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 18 lessons taught by 11 teachers, in addition to brief observations in a number of lessons as part of a joint 'learning walk' with the headteacher. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of school documentation, including the school's self-evaluation form, monitoring records, the school action plan, pupils' progress records and safeguarding procedures. Questionnaires from 169 parents and carers were received and analysed.

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

- The effectiveness of the school's actions to raise attainment and accelerate progress, especially in mathematics, in order to eradicate any remaining underachievement.
- The impact of strategies to reduce the gaps in attainment and achievement between different ability groups and to raise the attainment of boys, especially White British and those who are eligible for free school meals.
- The seeming mismatch between the school's assessment that teaching is good in most classes and the evidence from national data of apparently satisfactory progress, with a particular focus on the quality of teaching in mathematics.
- The impact of leadership, management and governance in driving improvements in mathematics and eradicating any remaining underachievement.

Information about the school

Heathfield is a larger than average junior school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Just over half of the pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is much higher than usually seen, as is the percentage who speak English as an additional language. In total, 24 languages other than English are spoken by pupils at home. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is well above average because the school manages a local authority designated unit which offers places for 10 pupils with speech, language and communication needs. At the time of this inspection, nine pupils were on roll, all of whom attend part-time and are educated in their own schools for the rest of the week. The school has gained Healthy Schools recognition and an Activemark award. Breakfast and after-school clubs are run privately by a charity and did not form part of this inspection.

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

Pupils, parents and staff have exceptionally positive views of this good and rapidly improving school. This is due in no small measure to the forthright but very caring leadership of the headteacher and senior staff who demonstrate a passionate commitment to providing the best possible all-round education for every pupil. Since the last inspection, they have raised the quality of teaching and inspired staff to create an increasingly rich and varied curriculum which fully engages all pupils in learning and promotes good progress. The school's journey from inadequate to good over the past four years is testament to the strong teamwork, rigorous self-evaluation and shared vision which drive its strategic development and indicative of its good capacity for sustained improvement in the future.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy learning and contribute much to the daily life of the school. Outstanding care, guidance and support ensure that every pupil's needs, both academic and personal, are known to staff and actions taken to address them. As a result of excellent relationships and effective safeguarding procedures, pupils feel exceptionally safe and know exactly who to turn to if they have concerns. Behaviour is generally good, and often outstanding in lessons, although there are occasional disruptions by a few pupils who find it hard to maintain the high standards expected by the school.

Lessons are fun, motivational and take good account of pupils' previous different starting points. ♦ As a result, most pupils make good progress and achieve well. Some older pupils are still working to overcome gaps in their learning from previous years, when teaching was less consistently good, especially in mathematics. A whole-school focus on raising attainment in mathematics is bearing fruit because teachers are developing pupils' abilities to use and apply mathematical skills and knowledge in a range of meaningful, real-life contexts. As a result, the current Year 6 pupils are on course for above average attainment in the subject for the first time in five years. Progress in mathematics is, nevertheless, still not as rapid as that in English in some classes because the planned learning does not meet the needs of all groups accurately enough. The quality of pupils' writing has also improved since the last inspection, especially that of boys, and there is much evidence of well-structured, imaginatively written prose and poetry on display around the school.

Senior leaders have successfully enhanced the leadership skills of other staff, particularly those who lead year groups and subjects. These staff play a significant part in checking pupils' progress and in evaluating the quality of learning that is taking place. Senior leaders and governors maintain a comprehensive overview of the school's performance and everyone is held accountable for the progress pupils make.

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Community cohesion, which has not been at the forefront of development priorities in recent years, though good at school and local level, is less effective in the national and global dimensions.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics so that it is consistently good in all classes and year groups by:
 - ensuring that teachers do not spend too long explaining concepts and tasks to the whole class so that pupils have enough time to practise and develop skills independently
 - fine-tuning tasks so that they are appropriately challenging for all groups in the class
 - ensuring that marking is consistently helpful in showing pupils how to improve their learning.
- Strengthen the school's contribution to community cohesion by giving pupils more opportunities to learn about life in other parts of the United Kingdom and abroad.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In two of the last three years, attainment in the national tests has been broadly average. Two years ago, when fewer pupils had learning difficulties, it was above average. Recent assessments show a marked improvement in attainment in Years 5 and 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. Analysis of the progress made by pupils in each year group indicates good progress overall, but shows that fewer pupils exceed the expected rates of progress in mathematics than in English in some year groups. Pupils made good progress in most of the lessons seen. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils competently calculated flight times while taking into consideration time differences between London and South America. In many lessons, pupils' outstanding behaviour and attitudes to learning enable them to work at a very productive pace, both independently and collaboratively. Pupils with special educational needs made good progress in understanding subtraction in a small group session where they 'bought' items and calculated change. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress due to well-planned support in class and additional intensive teaching from a skilled higher-level assistant for those who need it. ♦♦♦♦♦♦

♦ Pupils' good understanding of the key factors necessary for a healthy lifestyle are reflected in the high take-up of the freshly-cooked lunches, which pupils say are delicious, and their enthusiastic participation in the wide variety of sports clubs and activities on offer. The school's good efforts in this respect are recognised in the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards. Pupils are equally keen to take on responsibilities as house captains, pupil parliamentarians, eco-warriors and school councillors. They make an important contribution to the local and wider community through activities such as litter-picking, bulb-planting in community spaces and raising funds for national and international charities, for example by growing and selling vegetables. Pupils show respect for each other and are growing into mature and reflective young people who are well aware of their future role in society. Although attendance has been broadly average over the last

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three years, recent initiatives to encourage regular attendance and punctuality are paying dividends. Attendance rates are improving strongly, though a few families occasionally take extended leave to visit their home country.

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	2
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	2
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?

Pupils say they very much enjoy the 'think links' topics that combine different subjects effectively. For example, around a medieval theme, pupils learned about knights, jesters, peasants and lords, made healthy medieval bread and wrote imaginatively in a range of genres. Teachers are continually seeking ways to make these evolving links more meaningful in order to further enrich pupils' learning. The school is very well equipped with laptops, and computer skills are given high priority. Year 5 pupils were confidently exploring the new systems to support their learning at home. High-quality displays of pupils' work reflect the good quality and breadth of the curriculum, from eye-catching art in the style of Jackson Pollock to imaginative poetry writing about ice and snow. The curriculum is greatly enriched by a wide variety of well-attended clubs and fascinating visitors and visits which expand pupils' horizons and increase their love of learning.

Good teaching was observed in a wide range of subjects across the school. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, the teacher's excellent knowledge of each pupil's level of understanding enabled her to adapt the tasks precisely to their needs as the lesson progressed. This instinctive awareness of pupils' conceptual understanding is not always

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evident in mathematics lessons, so that occasionally pupils do not make sufficiently rapid progress. On occasions, lesson introductions directed at the whole class take too long and do not allow enough time for pupils to work independently at their own level. Generally, teachers promote good learning through astute questioning that demands precise responses using appropriate subject-specific language. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and teachers encourage pupils to be resourceful and resilient learners. The quality of marking is higher in English than mathematics, where it does not always show pupils what they need to do to improve.

Carefully planned provision for pupils with a wide variety of additional needs, including those in the speech and language unit, addresses their needs effectively, as seen in a one-to-one session in the unit where a pupil was sensitively supported in reading aloud and answering questions about the text. Excellent provision for pupils who are learning to speak English includes a weekly group to help their parents provide effective support at home. Highly effective links with the infant school and secondary schools prepare pupils very well for the next phase of their education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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 headteacher's enthusiastic and determined leadership motivates and inspires staff, governors and pupils to aspire to excellence. Together, they have created an ethos of mutual respect, hard work and enjoyment of learning that is driving the school forward and ensuring pupils receive a good quality all-round education. Rigorous self-evaluation leads to the accurate identification of underperforming groups. Action is taken promptly to tackle underachievement through the provision of additional resources and new teaching initiatives. As a result, the school is successfully accelerating the progress of lower attaining White British boys and those who are eligible for free school meals. Pupils of widely different backgrounds and ethnicities are treated equally and get on well together.

As a result of some previous staffing issues, the pace of improvement in the teaching of mathematics has been slower than hoped for but, under the expert leadership of the deputy headteacher, it is now accelerating. The impact of a recent review of the curriculum and the use of mathematics resources can be seen clearly in the rapidly rising attainment, especially in Years 5 and 6.

The governing body maintains a good overview of the school's performance and discharges its responsibilities well. Governors are becoming increasingly confident in asking challenging questions and gathering first-hand evidence to inform their understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Safeguarding

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procedures are thorough and meet all requirements. Health and safety checks are rigorous and the arrangements for protecting pupils from harm are reviewed regularly.

The school works well in partnership with parents and carers and with a range of external agencies and other schools. Parents are kept well informed about their children's achievement and particularly appreciate the presence of the headteacher and deputy headteacher on the playground in the morning and their welcoming and friendly demeanour. The school is developing ways to involve parents and carers more productively in their children's learning, such as a mathematics evening. ♦

Leaders have analysed the ethnic, religious and socio-economic diversity of the school and have successfully created a cohesive community in which pupils show tolerance, respect and understanding for each other and are productively involved in the local community. The school is in the early stages of extending its work to promote community cohesion in national and global contexts, for example by forging links with schools further afield.

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	2
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

Just over 60 per cent of parents responded to the inspection questionnaire, which is much higher than usually seen. Their responses were overwhelmingly positive. Several wrote in praise of the improvements that have been made under the current leadership. As one parent commented, 'The overall standards and expectations of the school have vastly improved.' Parents were unanimous in agreeing that their children are kept safe, that the teaching is good and that the school helps them to support their children's learning. Very few parents expressed any concerns. A very small minority feel that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors saw very few instances of poor behaviour because teachers have exceptionally good relationships with pupils and expect

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the highest standards of behaviour at all times. The school has clear and consistent procedures for dealing with poor behaviour and most pupils feel these work well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

The inspection team received 169 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 272 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	100	59	65	38	4	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	102	60	67	40	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	99	59	68	40	2	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	84	50	81	48	1	1	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	90	53	77	46	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	86	51	83	49	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	84	50	80	47	5	3	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)	68	40	96	57	0	0	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	73	43	93	55	2	1	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	69	41	90	53	8	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	57	34	103	61	4	2	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	92	54	72	43	2	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	95	56	70	41	2	1	1	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

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">■ 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.



11 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Heathfield Junior School, Twickenham, TW2 6EN

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school and for talking to us about your work. You are very polite and helpful and get on very well with each other and with your teachers. Most of you and your parents told us that you think Heathfield is a good school and we found exactly the same. These are some of the main things that your school does well.

- You all make good progress because the teachers make learning interesting and fun for you and in most lessons give you some good challenges.
- Almost all of you behave well in lessons and around the school and this helps you to learn well.
- You all feel really safe at school because the staff look after you exceptionally well.
- Lots of you told us how much you enjoy the 'think link' topics and we can see from your work that they capture your imagination and make you think.
- The school leaders keep a close eye on how well you are doing and organise extra help for those of you who need it. They have very high expectations of you and set challenging targets for you.

We have asked the school to do two things to help you make even better progress.

- Make sure you all make rapid progress in mathematics by giving you all plenty of time to work at your own level and showing you exactly what you need to do to improve.
- Give you a better understanding of what life is like in different parts of the United Kingdom and around the world, for example by linking up with children in other schools.

We were pleased to see that your attendance at school is improving. This is very important, so keep up the good work!

Yours sincerely

Carole Skinner

Lead inspector

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