

Hillbrook School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101057
Local Authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	354936
Inspection dates	10–11 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Susan (Sue) Rogers

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	458
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr A Damon
Headteacher	Mr R Brading
Date of previous school inspection	23 June 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors who made 16 part-lesson observations in 26 lessons, seeing 17 teachers altogether. In addition, inspectors visited each class several times to scrutinise planning, talk to pupils and look at their work. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and school leaders. Inspectors also looked at school documentation such as safeguarding records, monitoring files and the school development plan. They met some parents and carers at the school gate and analysed 65 questionnaires from parents and carers.

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

- Do all groups of pupils make consistently good progress and what is the impact of the school's actions on the attainment of White British pupils?
- What has been the impact of the school's work to improve teaching and learning?
- Are leaders and managers now driving improvement effectively at all levels, especially middle leaders?
- Has the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage improved since the last inspection?

Information about the school

This is a large primary school with a maintained nursery unit that includes a specialist resource base for pre-school children with social and communication disorders. Alongside is a children's centre, managed by the school, which was separately inspected at the same time. An independent nursery also occupies the site.

The vast majority of pupils are from minority ethnic heritages, with more than 30 different nationalities represented. The largest groups are Asian British, mainly Pakistani and Somali, White British and Black British, and Black Caribbean. Almost two thirds of the pupils speak English as an additional language, with about 15% in the earliest stages of learning English. Urdu, Bengali and Polish are the main languages spoken other than English. Several major faiths are represented, including Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is double the national average, while the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is about average. Special needs include moderate learning difficulties, speech and language problems, dyslexia, behaviour and autism. The number of pupils who leave and join the school at other than the usual times is very high compared to other schools, and rising. The school holds the Primary Quality Mark for basic skills.

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

Hillbrook is a good school characterised by a very harmonious atmosphere. Pupils of all races and creeds play and work happily together and staff collaborate successfully to ensure rapid improvement. Parents and carers rightly have very positive views of the school and made comments such as 'a happy school experience for our child' and 'The teaching staff are warm, have a deep understanding of our children's needs and support parents.' Pupils' personal development is good because relationships are very strong and they are well taught and cared for.

Pupils' needs are carefully analysed and their progress are tracked very well. As a result, by the time they leave the school in Year 6, all groups of pupils, including the many who initially spoke little English, have made good progress. Most attain at the levels expected for their age in English and mathematics. Through careful analysis, leaders have identified the fact that White British pupils do slightly less well than other groups, particularly in English. The school has begun to address the issue by, for example, bringing in male role models to encourage boys to read. They have also recognised the need to set up a programme to involve all groups of parents and carers, including White British, in school life. Strong liaison with the children's centre has been helpful in welcoming parents and carers into school.

Pupils' progress has improved rapidly over recent years because senior leaders have determinedly set about improving teaching. Teaching is now good overall, although not consistently so across the school. Where it is good, teaching is characterised by respectful relationships with pupils, clear explanations and an emphasis on meeting individual needs. Some teachers are also good at making sure that pupils are very clear about how they are getting on and what they have to do to improve. However, this is not yet the case in all classes.

Pupils, parents and carers agree that school is generally an enjoyable experience. However, attendance has been an ongoing problem. Attendance figures are still below average, although the school has worked very hard to spread the message that long holidays in term time are not acceptable, and leaders have been successful in reducing the number of persistent absentees. Pupils report that most of their lessons are fun, but are right in saying that occasionally their tasks could be more interesting. The school already plans to review the curriculum, building in opportunities to study English and mathematics in other subjects.

Leadership and management have been strengthened since the last inspection and the school's self-evaluation is honest and accurate; the school's capacity for continued improvement is good.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment for all pupils by:
 - ensuring that by July 2012 all teaching is good or better and that teachers consistently let pupils know specifically what they have to do to improve, especially in Key Stage 1
 - improving attendance to 94% over the school year by July 2012
 - ensuring that the curriculum includes opportunities for the development of pupils' English and mathematics in all subjects by April 2012
 - increasing the involvement of parents and carers in their children's learning by providing more opportunities for them to visit the school from December 2011.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children enter the school in the Nursery and Reception classes with skills and knowledge that are generally below that typically expected. Their English skills are particularly weak, as many do not speak English when they arrive. Pupils' progress is subsequently a little uneven, reflecting inconsistencies in teaching, but it is never less than satisfactory and at times it is exceptionally good. Reported assessment results in English and mathematics at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 have improved steadily over the last three years. Pupils' average levels of attainment at the end of Year 6 show that pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next stages of their education.

Pupils' behaviour is good. They are polite, have very good attitudes to their learning and collaborate effectively, so that all groups of pupils make equally good progress. Pupils who have difficulties learning language progress well because all pupils' learning is individually tracked and interventions are carefully planned. Pupils with other special needs do equally well because of good targeted support.

Pupils know about healthy lifestyles and about keeping themselves safe. They enjoy helping others in the community, collecting money, for example, for several charities, including the local hospice. The members of the school council are enthusiastic about helping to improve behaviour and lessons, although consultation does not yet always involve the whole-school community. Pupils have a good cultural and ethnic understanding as the school frequently builds in opportunities for pupils to learn from each other about their different beliefs and customs. For example, Somali parents from the children's centre recently talked to an assembly about their way of life. Consequently, pupils show a sensitive interest in the world around them.

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

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	2
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	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?

Teaching has improved because of the rigorous support given to teachers and the attention paid to detail by the school's leaders. Pupils are very positive about their teachers and especially grateful that they are always willing to help or give advice if they have a problem. These good relationships underpin the orderly, industrious school environment. Teachers go to a great deal of trouble to prepare lessons and to challenge pupils. Occasionally, they pitch the learning at slightly the wrong level, but work is generally well matched to the abilities of all pupils and their differing needs. Pupils have targets that they refer to regularly, but feedback on day-to-day achievement is less systematic. Assessment is good in some classes, but in others pupils do not always understand exactly what it is they are expected to be learning or know enough about how to improve.

Staff have worked especially hard to develop English and mathematics teaching, with corresponding success. Leaders know exactly which areas in these subjects they still need to work on. The school covers the required curriculum, but this concentration on basic skills has meant that other subjects are sometimes not taught so often and that lessons are a little flat at times. As a result, the normally good behaviour can deteriorate slightly as pupils struggle to concentrate. In addition, although pupils have regular access to computers, there are missed opportunities to practise technology skills. Pupils say that

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they enjoy their clubs but they would prefer a wider range to practise their skills and take up challenges. The school has already recognised the need to review the curriculum.

All pupils are guided successfully and support staff are effectively deployed to help pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, particularly those with behavioural problems. There is good communication between staff to ensure that pupils cope with transition through the different phases of their education. Good collaboration through a multi-agency approach means that vulnerable pupils are well supported. New pupils settle in very quickly, because of the careful analysis of their needs and good pastoral care.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

School leaders have worked very well together to move this school up to a good overall grade. The headteacher and the two deputy headteachers effectively complement one another, with responsibilities sensibly allocated according to aptitude and experience. Middle managers have been well trained and now shoulder a considerable amount of the monitoring work. Monitoring itself is robust, and there is copious information both in the form of pupil data and teachers' continuing professional development records, but the school does not yet pay quite enough attention to the impact of its initiatives.

The governing body is developing its ability to challenge and support the school. It is well led and there is now a full complement of governors to help them move forward. Governors and school leaders have ensured that the safeguarding of pupils is good, that all within the school community have equal opportunities to succeed and that there is no discrimination. Community cohesion is strong within the school, but is not yet fully developed in terms of national and global links.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Since the new, knowledgeable leader took up post in September, the Early Years Foundation Stage has become one of the most rapidly improving areas in the school. Learning is exciting and inviting and children quickly become independent learners, exploring the stimulating environment. Teaching, including the use of support staff, is consistently good in all the Reception and Nursery classes. Good planning ensures that all children's interests are met, enabling them to explore their ideas in depth. Assessment observations are carefully and accurately carried out and findings analysed to feed into future planning. Questioning is skilfully used to develop pupils' understanding and expectations for all activities are made clear. There is thoughtful transition between classes which is improving year on year and especially helping children to settle into Year 1. The leader knows that there is further work to be done on involving parents and carers more in children's learning and in developing the outdoor environment.

Parents and carers are right to praise the work of the nursery resource base. Teaching is very sympathetic to the needs of these children with social and communication disorders. They are so well supported that many are able to transfer into mainstream education at the end of the year.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The large majority of parents and carers who responded by returning questionnaires shared the inspectors' views of the school. They were particularly confident of the school's ability to keep their children safe and to teach them to have healthy lifestyles. ♦ Only a few questionnaires carried written comments. All the positive comments referred to the nursery resource base, which is clearly held in very high regard. There were only a few disagreements with any of the statements in the questionnaire. There was no consistent theme in any of the critical comments and, although they were all carefully considered, inspectors could find no evidence during this inspection that there was any concern they needed to take into account when making their judgements.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

The inspection team inspectors received 65 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 458 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	69	17	26	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	63	23	35	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	38	58	25	38	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	45	27	42	7	11	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	29	45	33	51	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	38	32	49	6	9	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	49	32	49	0	0	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)	25	38	28	43	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	26	42	65	4	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	34	38	58	3	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	34	37	57	3	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	20	31	39	60	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	51	30	46	0	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



12 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hillbrook Primary School, Tooting SW17 8SG

I am writing to thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school to carry out our inspection. We were very impressed by your good manners and keenness to talk us. We especially liked the way that you all get on together so well and look after each other. 'Thank you' to those of you who filled in questionnaires and special thanks to those of you who gave up time to talk to us.

We agree that yours is a good and improving school and you all make good progress in your lessons. Most of you now get the expected results in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6. However, we think that your progress is a little uneven across the school. This is because most lessons are good, but not all of them.

We also found that you are very well cared for and that you learn how to stay safe and healthy. It was good to hear that you always have someone to talk to if you have a problem. Behaviour is generally good, and it was very helpful to hear that you all enjoy school so much, and that you like the teachers and think teaching is good. A few of you said you would like to know more about how well you are doing. We were also concerned that some of you do not come to school regularly enough.

We have asked your teachers to:

- make sure that all lessons are good or better, paying special attention to making sure that you all know exactly what you have to do to improve
- help you to improve your attendance
- plan lessons that are always as interesting as possible and ensure that you get lots of chances to practise your English and mathematics
- encourage your parents and carers to become more involved in school life and in your learning.

Keep doing your bit to help Hillbrook get even better by making sure that you come to school every day unless you are ill, and by working as hard as you can.

Yours sincerely

Sue Rogers

Lead inspector

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