

# Harlesden Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101499
<b>Local Authority</b>	Brent
<b>Inspection number</b>	355010
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 May 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joy Considine

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	232
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Narinder Nathan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Linda Perrier
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 May 2008
<b>School address</b>	Acton Lane London NW10 8UT
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 15 lessons taught by eight teachers. They held meetings with senior leaders, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at school development plans, pupils' assessment and tracking information, minutes from governing body meetings, school policies and other documentation relevant to the inspection. Additionally, they analysed questionnaires received from 145 parents and carers as well as those from staff and pupils.

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

- Actions the school is taking to reduce the variations in attainment and progress of different groups of pupils in English and mathematics.
- How effectively the Early Years Foundation Stage meets the developmental needs of children.
- The effectiveness with which senior leaders monitor the work of the school and the appropriateness of the priorities they set for improvement.

## Information about the school

The school is about the same size as most primary schools and serves pupils from the local community. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than usual. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is well above average. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. There is provision for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery and Reception classes. There is a breakfast club and an after-school club for pupils at the school which is managed by the governing body. The school has gained a number of awards including Healthy School status and Sportsmark.

There has been some significant staffing disruption since the last 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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for pupils. Pupils make satisfactory progress in English and mathematics as they move through the school, reaching average standards by the end of Year 6. Girls do better than boys. However, work seen during the inspection and assessment information held by the school indicate that the gap is narrowing, particularly in mathematics. Attainment in writing throughout the school is lower than in reading and mathematics. This is because there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write independently and at length. Additionally not enough use is made of high quality texts to show pupils how they can make their own writing better.

Pupils feel safe in school and they are confident that adults will listen to them and address their concerns. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. There is a wide range of sporting activities available for pupils, many of which make an effective contribution to their good understanding of the need to adopt healthy lifestyles. The school has gained the awards of Sportsmark and Healthy Schools status in recognition of its work in this area. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils get on well together and they appreciate the opportunities they have to work and play with those from other backgrounds and cultures.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but good in a minority of lessons. Where teaching is most effective, teachers use assessment information to plan lessons that are well matched to the needs of the pupils. In less effective lessons, teachers do not provide activities that meet the differing learning needs of pupils and this has led to some variation in the progress made by different groups of pupils.

The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is good. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are good. There are secure procedures and systems in place, including good partnerships with parents, carers and external agencies to support the specific needs of pupils. Parents and carers appreciate the work of the school, with one commenting, 'You feel part of a family in this caring atmosphere.'

Although the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory, there is evidence to show that the acting leader has introduced changes that are beginning to improve the provision for children. She has introduced new systems to observe and to assess children's progress so that staff can now prepare activities that are better matched to the needs of children. There is also more consistency in the quality of planning between the Nursery and the Reception classes and so children now make sound progress in their learning.

School leaders are ambitious and they are determined to bring about required improvements. They monitor the work of the school but this is not as systematic as it could be and some areas of underperformance are not always quickly identified and

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addressed. Despite this school leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have developed an appropriate school improvement plan. Better systems to record and track pupils' progress resulting in the closing of the gap in attainment between boys and girls, particularly in mathematics, shows that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in all areas of the school from satisfactory to good by:
  - making better use of assessment information to plan lessons that are well matched to the learning needs of all pupils
  - informing pupils about what they need to do to improve their work when marking their books
  - raising teachers' expectations about what pupils can achieve.
- Improve attainment and progress in writing for all pupils by:
  - explicitly teaching basic skills of writing including spelling, punctuation and handwriting
  - providing pupils with models of high quality texts to show them how to improve the quality of their writing
  - providing pupils with more opportunities to write at length, both in literacy lessons and other subjects.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - making leaders at all levels accountable for standards by introducing systematic procedures for monitoring the quality of the work of the school
  - developing action plans for literacy and mathematics which show specific targets linked to the intended outcomes for pupils.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils make satisfactory progress although this varies between classes and year groups with most progress being made by pupils in Key Stage 2. Pupils' attainment in writing is generally lower than in reading and mathematics, particularly at Key Stage 1. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that their skills in spelling, punctuation and handwriting are underdeveloped according to their abilities. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory and occasionally good progress throughout the school. This is because they receive additional support from highly skilled teaching assistants. Pupils enjoy their lessons and say that teachers make learning fun. This was particularly evident in one lesson in which pupils had to act out the story of Little Red Riding Hood using puppets for prompts. However, some pupils, particularly those who are more-able, say that the activities they are expected to do are sometimes too easy and this slows the progress they make.

Pupils are polite and friendly, they say there is no bullying and that racist behaviour is rare. They have a good understanding of right and wrong and they behave well at all

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times, even in the less effective lessons. Pupils' contribution to their school and wider community is good. There are plenty of opportunities for them to take on responsibilities and they will often initiate fund raising activities for charities. Older pupils enjoy their role as 'blue hats' whereby they help and support other pupils at break times. School council members proudly point to the new playground equipment for which they helped to plan and raise funds. The good development of pupils' personal skills together with their satisfactory achievement and broadly average attendance prepares them adequately for their future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?

During the inspection, the quality of teaching was variable. In the better lessons, the pace was brisk and effective questioning by teachers engaged the interest of pupils. For example, in one lesson, the teacher skilfully questioned pupils to develop their understanding of using interesting connectives to join together two separate sentences. Most teachers plan their lessons with clear learning objectives and success criteria so that pupils know what they are expected to learn. However, some teachers do not always make enough use of assessment information to plan learning activities that are matched to the different needs of pupils. Scrutiny of pupils' books shows that although teachers mark their work regularly, many of the comments they make do not provide pupils with enough information about how they can improve their work. In a minority of lessons,

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teachers have low expectations of what pupils can do and there are few opportunities for pupils to record their work independently.

The planned curriculum is broad and balanced but in some subjects such as literacy, medium term plans do not show how pupils are to develop their skills sequentially and this slows the progress they make. Learning is enriched by a wide range of educational visits and visitors to enhance their learning, although there are too few occasions when pupils can use their literacy skills to write about these experiences. Pupils are able to learn French and specialist tuition gives pupils the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument. Visits have included those to the Science Museum and the Hindu Temple. School leaders make good use of significant partnerships to provide exciting experiences for pupils. For example, following a visit to Brunel University as part of a science and technology project, older pupils arrived back at school announcing, 'We can't wait to get to university.'

Pupils, parents and carers appreciate the good care, guidance and support, especially for those whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable. Although attendance is currently broadly average, the school is working hard with parents and carers and external partners to improve this. Pupils and their families are known well and good support is given to meet their individual needs. The school can point to some good examples of where they have reached out to some parts of the community to help parents and carers to support their child at home. One parent commented, 'I like this school because they keep in touch with parents and they provide training for parents.' The breakfast club provides pupils with a good start to the day and the wide range of activities available at the end of the day provides good quality care for pupils. Effective one-to-one support has led to those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities making similar and sometimes better progress than their classmates, particularly in mathematics and reading.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

School leaders share a common aim for all pupils to achieve 'higher than most'. With this ambition in mind they have put into place new initiatives to improve provision for pupils but owing to the disruptions to the staff team these have not yet been fully embedded across the school. Initiatives to improve the quality of teaching have had some success with the introduction of better systems to record and track pupils' progress. However, these are not yet being used consistently across the school. The school improvement plan has been created in consultation with staff and members of the governing body and has

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appropriate priorities for improvement. Although middle leaders have developed action plans to raise attainment in English and mathematics, these lack specific targets linked to pupils' attainment. The governing body provides a satisfactory balance of challenge and support and governors are aware that there needs to be a more consistent focus on raising attainment.

Procedures and policies are in place to ensure pupils are safe at all times. All staff receive up-to-date training from the child protection officer and all visitors to school are thoroughly checked. The introduction of better systems to track pupils means that the school has more relevant information about the performance of different groups and although equality of opportunity is central to the school's ethos, the variable progress made by pupils' means that this is satisfactory rather than good. The school promotes community cohesion adequately but often there are missed opportunities to capitalise on the backgrounds of pupils to enhance their understanding of the faiths, beliefs and lives of others in more diverse parts of the United Kingdom and the wider world.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Although the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory, there are signs that it is improving strongly. The acting leader has introduced new practices which are already having an impact on children's progress and learning. Although children's literacy skills are below the levels expected for their age, they are now making better progress in this aspect of their development. This is because the acting leader has introduced new systems to assess children and to track their progress so that staff can set suitably challenging activities to meet their individual needs. Staff work closely as a team and provide good support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.



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Staff have created a delightful environment in which children can learn and play safely indoors and outside. There is a good balance of activities that are led by adults and those that children can select for themselves. For example, some children were weaving while others were measuring liquids and another group were sharing books. This has led to them developing good learning skills such as cooperation, resilience and independence. They get on well together and are able to share and take turns. Parents and carers are now being provided with more information about what they can do to help their child at home and this has strengthened the quality of these relationships. The acting leader has a good understanding of what needs to be done and has developed an action plan showing how this is to be achieved.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
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

A total of 145 questionnaires were received from parents and carers, which is above the average usually received. Most parents and carers are happy with the school and believe it is well led and managed. Most feel that the school provides a welcoming and nurturing atmosphere and that the school reaches out to parents and carers. A few parents and carers feel that their child is not making enough progress and that the school does not always meet their child's needs. Inspectors found that generally pupils' make satisfactory progress overall but that more pupils could make better progress in writing.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Harlesden Primary 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 145 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 232 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	88	61	56	39	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	85	59	55	38	2	1	2	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	76	52	60	41	7	5	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	63	43	67	46	11	7	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	72	50	57	39	10	7	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	60	41	70	48	10	7	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	53	37	78	56	12	8	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)	48	33	73	50	15	10	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	32	73	50	17	12	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	58	40	70	48	10	7	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	43	30	70	48	18	12	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	57	39	63	43	11	7	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	77	53	55	38	9	6	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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



31 May 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Harlesden Primary School, Harlesden NW10 8UT**

Thank you for making my colleagues and me so welcome when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed meeting you all and listening to what you had to say about your school.

We found your school provides you with a satisfactory standard of education. Your teachers and adults care very much for you. The school is bright and attractive and the outdoor area is very well equipped with a wide variety of activities for you to do at break times. You told us that you feel very safe in school and that you understand about the need to eat healthy foods and to take plenty of exercise. Some of you also told us that you find some lessons too easy. We found that some of you could be doing much better, particularly in writing and this is what we have asked your school leaders to do to improve your school.

- Use assessment information to plan lessons that are better matched to your learning needs and to give you more guidance on what you need to learn next.
- Help you to develop your writing by teaching you how to improve your spelling and punctuation, and sharing with you some good examples of books and stories. We have also asked them to give you more opportunities to practise your writing when studying other subjects.
- Develop more systematic methods to check how well the school is doing in improving your learning and plan more effectively how to improve your progress in literacy and numeracy.

You can help your teachers to make your school better by asking them for harder work and by asking them how you can make your work better and what you need to learn next. I am sure you will do all you can to help your school leaders to make your school even better and I wish you all the very best in the future.

Yours sincerely

Joy Considine  
Lead inspector

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