

Weald Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102215
Local Authority	Harrow
Inspection number	355151
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Barnard Payne

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	348
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Finbar McCarthy
Headteacher	Sue Jones
Date of previous school inspection	18 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons taught by 11 teachers, intervention activities for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and an assembly. Inspectors held meetings with a group of pupils, members of the governing body, staff, a parent and two representatives from the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at a sample of pupils' work books from across the school as well as the school's plans and policies, including those for safeguarding. They also scrutinised the responses to the inspection questionnaire returned by 122 parents and carers and 31 members of staff.

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

- The school's capacity for sustained improvement under the current leadership and management arrangements.
- The involvement of governors in strategic decision making, monitoring, evaluation and holding the school to account.
- The school's success in raising attainment in reading and in improving attendance.
- Whether improvements to the monitoring of teaching are leading to greater consistency in quality.

Information about the school

Seventy-three per cent of pupils attending this large infant and nursery school are from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. Fifty per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language and most of these join the school at an early stage of English language acquisition. A high proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average and the proportion with statements of special educational needs is average. The school's provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a Nursery and four Reception classes. The school has gained the Activemark, Healthy School status and the Artsmark Gold award.

The headteacher has been absent from the school since late January 2011. At the time of the inspection a National Leader of Education was acting as an associate headteacher, with day-to-day leadership and management by an acting headteacher, who is normally the acting assistant headteacher. The governing body has agreed a return to work plan for the substantive headteacher to begin shortly after the 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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to safeguarding, governance, use of financial resources and leadership and management.

While the interim arrangements, under the effective leadership of the National Leader of Education and the acting headteacher, have led to improvements over the past six months, the track record in recent years is one of inadequate leadership and management. There has not been effective monitoring and evaluation in place. The governing body does not undertake its role effectively and does not hold the school to account. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are inadequate. Unexplained financial surpluses for the past two years indicate that there are weaknesses in financial management. Consequently, parents and carers show growing concern and staff have lost confidence in the school's substantive leadership. Parents and carers have a high regard for the current leadership arrangements and for teaching in the school. As one parent comments, 'It may take some time for us as parents to rebuild trust. The acting headteacher and the executive headteacher have been very efficient and reassuring• our child's teachers have worked really hard and our child enjoys school.'

Despite inadequacies in strategic management, the school functions well at classroom level. Teaching is good, and has continued to improve under the interim leadership arrangements. Pupils' are interested and engaged in lessons and their achievement is good. They reach the national average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2, which represents good progress given their starting points. Pupils feel safe in school and trust that the adults, who work with them on a daily basis, will look after them. Their behaviour is good and pupils from a wide range of backgrounds get on well together. They show a good level of willingness to adopt healthy lifestyles, for example by taking part enthusiastically in physical activities. They make a satisfactory contribution to the school and wider community. Pupils develop a satisfactory level of skills to help them in the future, including in information and communication technology (ICT). Attendance has improved over the past year and is in line with the national average.

The National Leader of Education and acting headteacher have brought about a range of improvements in the past six months. They have won the trust and confidence of staff, parents and carers. They have established far more robust self-evaluation systems than existed previously, including monitoring of teaching and learning. However, capacity for sustained improvement is inadequate. All such improvements are fragile because of the temporary nature of the current leadership in the school, which is soon due to change.

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Apart from the developments made under the present leadership arrangements, improvements since the previous inspection have been inadequate.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Establish effective and sustainable leadership and management.
- Establish robust safeguarding procedures by ensuring that:
 - the school site remains safe
 - the effectiveness of all statutory policies and the logging of accidents and incidents are regularly monitored by the governing body.
- Establish high quality management and deployment of financial resources to ensure maximum impact on pupils' learning and well-being.
- Improve governance by:
 - agreeing clear terms of reference
 - setting out roles and responsibilities regarding the governing body's strategic function, monitoring and evaluation and how it holds the school to account.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils find the range of activities in lessons interesting and engaging. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils retold the story of Hansel and Gretel, using digital photographs of themselves dressed as characters from the story; this led to lively involvement and good progress as pupils sequenced the pictures and the more-able added speech bubbles. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils used different techniques to solve word problems in mathematics; effective support by the teacher and teaching assistant ensured good progress by all ability groups. Pupils are not always so secure in the way they apply and extend their knowledge, for example in their use and application of tables and number bonds in mathematics to help them to develop strategies to complete more complicated sums. Children start school with low levels of skills, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Their books show that many acquire a love of writing, with examples of extended pieces of writing even by Year 1 pupils. Attainment in reading has been lower than that in writing and mathematics in recent years and the school has introduced strategies to improve reading. The impact is not yet evident in assessment results at the end of Year 2, but, for example, the use of the Reading Recovery approach in Year 1 is enabling pupils to accelerate their progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress because staff give them the strategies and confidence to use and enjoy language. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress, but their rate of progress is improving rapidly due to the much improved support and intervention over the past six months.

The work of the school in achieving the Activemark, Healthy School status and the Artsmark Gold award has had a direct impact on pupils' enjoyment and their development of healthy attitudes. In an outstanding physical education lesson in the Nursery, children were given the opportunity to choose their own method of travel, developing a high level of independence and enjoyment in physical activity. Pupils have many opportunities to use ICT independently; during the inspection, they used it in reading, writing, mathematics

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and geography lessons and showed a good level of capability. An active school council has been involved in decisions regarding the playground and improvements to the school's reception area, enabling pupils to contribute to their school community. Pupils' ability to mix easily and work well together as well as their levels of interest, curiosity and reflection show their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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	3
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	3
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?

Teachers plan effectively to engage all groups of pupils, using a wide range of resources. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils undertook a variety of activities related to reading, using ICT, writing book reviews and taking part in group reading with adults. The brisk pace and effective classroom management were typical of the lessons seen. Teachers mark and assess pupils' work regularly; all pupils have personal targets that they understand. Teachers' grasp of assessment is good, and this is reflected in the way assessment is used to pitch work at the right level for each group. However, on occasion pupils' involvement in assessing their own and others' work is rushed, which reduces its impact on learning. Teachers' effective planning includes links between subjects; this provides purposeful contexts for activities and learning. This is underpinned by the school's adoption of the International Primary Curriculum. The school evaluates this programme of work well to identify any possible gaps in learning so that these can be closed. For example, the science element was found to be weaker, which led to a science week and a trip to an

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environmental centre. Overall, pupils have a wide range of opportunities and experiences, including other themed weeks, for example on safety or the arts. They have specialist music teaching and a good range of activities at lunchtimes and after school. Staff are well deployed, caring and know the pupils well; this means that pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are identified early. The systems are now in place to enable them to make good progress. The management of special educational needs and/or disabilities has improved over the past six months, but these improvements are overshadowed by inadequate safeguarding at a strategic level. Consequently, the effectiveness of the school's care, guidance and support is inadequate.

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	4

How effective are leadership and management?

While the work in classrooms continues to be good and the interim leadership is effective, there is no evidence that, in the longer term, the school has the capacity to drive and secure improvement. The temporary leaders have instilled purpose and drive, but the school is in a precarious position and the frameworks recently put into place are too new to survive without effective future leadership and management. Teaching and support staff are proud of their school and committed to pupils' progress and welfare. They have been frustrated by past inadequacies in strategic leadership and management. The monitoring systems implemented by the temporary leaders, the teachers who themselves work effectively as teams and support one another, all contribute to the satisfactory leadership and management of teaching and learning. Engagement with parents and carers is satisfactory, because the school makes regular contact and parents and carers find it easy to engage with the teaching staff.

The school has developed good partnerships through local and national links and these have had a positive impact on curriculum development. It is through the partnership with a local school that the current leadership arrangements are in place. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good. The school has achieved the International School award, and also has good local community links, which support pupils' personal development and contribute to its arts and sports curriculum. The school gives pupils a satisfactory understanding of differences across the United Kingdom, but has not developed the national dimension of provision for community cohesion to the same level as other aspects. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. There is no discrimination and teachers ensure the equality of experiences of all groups of pupils. There are no significant gaps when comparing the progress of different ethnic groups. While there has been significantly improved provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities

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in the past six months, their progress prior to this was affected by inadequacies in leadership and management and they are still making up lost ground.

Governance is inadequate. The governing body's terms of reference are not clear and there is no established understanding of governors' roles and responsibilities. Though day-to-day safeguarding of pupils has been secured by the interim leadership in the school, the governing body has not adequately established its role in monitoring site safety, safeguarding policies and accidents or incidents. Overall, while outcomes for pupils are good, shortcomings in financial management and lack of accountability mean that the school provides inadequate value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of skills that are much lower than those usual for their age. By the end of Reception, although still attaining lower than average standards, they have made good progress. They learn to work well together and initiate their own activities. Children feel safe, care for one another and mix well. They use literacy, numeracy and ICT with confidence. Work is well planned to ensure good progress by all abilities. For example, the more-able can construct simple sentences and use their knowledge of phonics to attempt longer words; children of average ability have a sound grasp of letter sounds and use these to write words; and those of lower ability learn to form letters and are given good opportunities to write. Adults promote positive attitudes and plan a wide range of activities to engage the children, using a variety of teaching methods. In a Reception lesson, the children discussed what they could put on a beach; the teacher gave them opportunities to develop ideas using open questions. These children used speaking and listening well, and decided to build a pirate ship. Adults use their assessments to plan activities, although next steps in learning are not always clear

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enough in planning. Learning outdoors is more limited in developing independence. Day-to-day welfare is secure. The inexperience of the leadership and management of this provision, results in it being no better than satisfactory. However, this is improving following support from the National Leader of Education.

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	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

An average proportion of questionnaires was returned. Most responses indicate that parents and carers are happy overall with their children's experience at the school. A third of the returned questionnaires included written comments. These were predominantly regarding:

- concerns about leadership and management
- concerns about behaviour and bullying
- lack of information on children's progress.

Inspectors found that, while the current, temporary leadership and management of the school have led to improvements. However, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is inadequate because the current leadership is due to end and there is a track record of inadequacies in recent years. Inspectors found that behaviour is good and that information to parents and carers is satisfactory.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Weald Infant 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 122 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 348 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	69	57	47	39	6	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	46	38	63	52	11	9	2	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	37	30	67	55	12	10	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	25	77	63	9	7	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	43	35	67	55	8	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	27	68	56	14	11	4	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	25	79	65	8	7	1	1
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)	18	15	68	56	14	11	4	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	18	83	68	10	8	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	21	64	52	16	13	8	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	26	59	48	13	11	7	6
The school is led and managed effectively	29	24	59	48	12	10	12	10
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	39	55	45	13	11	3	2

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.



8 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Weald Infant and Nursery School, Harrow HA3 7DH

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school. We know that you enjoy school and you make good progress in your reading, writing and mathematics. This is because your teachers know you well and make the lessons interesting and enjoyable. You get on well together and behave well. The school gives you lots of opportunities to learn new things and helps you to be fit and healthy. Even though you do well in lessons, we have found that there are some things the school is not doing well. We know you feel safe and that the adults who work with you in class look after you, but the school should be doing more to ensure you are always kept safe. There have also been changes in who leads your school over the past six months, and these have worked well. However, in the past the school has not been run so well and we want to make sure that the school continues to be run well in the future. This is why we have given the school a notice to improve. We have asked the school to:

- put effective, permanent leadership in place
- make sure that everything in school is safe and that this is checked regularly
- make sure that the governors, who oversee the school, understand their roles and responsibilities
- make sure that the school spends all of its money well to help you make even better progress.

These things are mostly to do with the adults who run the school. But you can help by carrying on working hard in lessons and behaving well.

Yours sincerely

Barnard Payne

Lead inspector

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