

Hurst Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101446
Local Authority	Bexley
Inspection number	376566
Inspection dates	29–30 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Jane Chesterfield

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	615
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Hodges
Headteacher	Tony Linnett
Date of previous school inspection	21–22 January 2009
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 22 lessons taught by 21 teachers. They held meetings with pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school policies and documentation, safeguarding records, pupils' work, assessment data, monitoring records, strategic planning and the governing body minutes. Questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and 222 parents and carers were analysed.

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

- The impact of strategies to improve boys' writing, particularly at Key Stage 1.
- How well teachers meet the needs of all pupils, especially high attainers and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The helpfulness of marking and feedback in showing pupils how to improve their work.
- How effectively leaders and managers at all levels are bringing about improvement in outcomes and provision.

Information about the school

Hurst Primary is an above average-sized school serving a residential area of outer London. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low compared with the national average. The proportion who come from minority ethnic groups is below average, and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average, and so is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs. These needs relate mainly to behavioural difficulties or specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia. The Early Years Foundation Stage is provided in the school's Nursery and Reception classes. Before- and after-school care is offered on the school site, but this is run by a private provider and subject to a separate 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

Hurst Primary is a good school which has improved in many key areas since its last inspection. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and parents and carers are pleased with what it offers them. One parent commented, 'My child is happy and secure at the school, which is a well-run and happy environment.' Another said, 'We have observed and experienced significant improvements at Hurst over the past few years.'

Good pastoral care and close partnerships with outside agencies mean that pupils feel safe at school and know that staff will help them if they have a problem. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good, and throughout the school they behave well and show good social skills. Relationships are good, and pupils are supportive of one another. However, the school has few links with schools elsewhere in the country or abroad, and as a result, pupils' awareness of other cultures is limited. Pupils have a good understanding of how to be fit and healthy, and many represent the school in competitive sport. They enjoy their lessons and the creative opportunities available to them through the curriculum, and this was confirmed in their responses to the inspection questionnaire.

Since the last inspection, the school has improved attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 and the Early Years Foundation Stage, so that, by the time pupils leave, attainment is now consistently above average, and progress is good. Staff changes in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 have meant that progress has been satisfactory here. The introduction of a new leadership structure and of a computerised tracking system have helped bring about improvement. Year group leaders work with their colleagues to ensure consistency in teaching practice across each year. However, this means that the best practice is not always spread across the school, particularly in the marking of pupils' work and in teachers' planning to meet all the different needs of the pupils in their classes. New tracking systems have enabled the progress of individuals to be closely monitored. As a result, the school has identified that a small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are not making rapid enough progress against their individual targets. A good, thorough programme of support both in and out of class has been set up to address this, and is beginning to have an impact.

The headteacher and senior leaders have been successful in raising achievement in the school, and in improving the quality of teaching. Thorough and effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school have been established, so that strengths and areas for development are clearly highlighted. School self-evaluation is

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realistic and accurate, and the school development plan focuses on the right areas for improvement. The governing body has a good understanding of its role and holds the school to account effectively. They, and the school's leaders, have a clear insight into what needs to be done next to move the school forward. As a result, the school has a good capacity for further continuous improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the leadership of teaching to eradicate inconsistencies and raise achievement in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2, particularly by:
 - improving marking and feedback to pupils
 - ensuring that planning meets the needs of all pupils.
- Improve the progress of a small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities against their individual targets.
- Increase national and global links in order to improve pupils' multicultural awareness.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

The work seen in lessons and in pupils' books confirms that attainment is above average at the end of Key Stage 2, and that pupils achieve well from average starting points. This includes the very small number of pupils learning English as an additional language. Strategies to improve boys' attainment in writing are working well, thanks to changes in the curriculum which motivate boys to write. At the end of Key Stage 2, an above-average proportion of both boys and girls are successful in reaching the higher levels in their assessments. At Key Stage 1, boys are making good headway in their writing because of the good start they are now getting in the Nursery and Reception classes. In lessons, pupils are full of energy and eager to learn, and the best teaching capitalises on this. During a Year 4 English lesson, for example, pupils worked in pairs with great enthusiasm to edit the mistakes from a piece of text, and enjoyed the challenge of doing this to the countdown of a timer. Pupils make the most of opportunities to use their imagination, and the new curriculum supports this. In a Year 5 English lesson, pupils posed pertinent questions to classmates playing the roles of Anne Frank and her sister, and were then able to empathise convincingly with their situation in their own writing.

Pupils behave well in class, and their behaviour in assemblies and in the playground is often outstanding. They move round the school in a safe and sensible way. They take on responsibility very willingly and carry out their roles conscientiously, for example as school councillors or lunchtime monitors. Older pupils support younger ones very effectively in this way and act as good role models for them. Pupils understand right from wrong and are able to reflect on values and beliefs beyond their everyday experiences. They are well prepared for the next stage in their education and their later life, thanks to their above-average attainment and attendance, and their good social skills.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

In most classes, teachers set a good pace to their lessons and give pupils plenty of challenge. Resources are well used, particularly the interactive whiteboards, and teaching assistants are effectively deployed to support pupils of all abilities. Teachers of older pupils in particular make good use of questioning to check pupils' learning, and plan their lessons well to meet the needs of all abilities, including the higher-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Target cards are used well, so that pupils know what they should be aiming for. However, in some classes, particularly at the end of Key Stage 1 and the beginning of Key Stage 2, assessment is not always used effectively to plan for work which matches pupils' different needs and challenges them well. This slows down their progress. There are good examples of high-quality marking in some parts of the school. This marking tells pupils what they are doing well and advises them on what they can do better. This practice is inconsistent, however, and sometimes marking focuses only on praising pupils' efforts or pointing out their errors.

The school's good curriculum gives pupils a secure grounding in literacy and numeracy, and a thorough coverage of other subjects. Good links are being developed between subjects, which make lessons increasingly more stimulating for pupils and help develop their literacy skills. The current topic of the Second World War in Years 5 and 6, for example, is inspiring boys as well as girls to write as they learn about the experiences of children 70 years ago and read factual and fictional accounts of the period. Good partnerships with outside providers mean that there is

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

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a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and additional opportunities, particularly in sport and music.

The quality of care, guidance and support is good, particularly for pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable. The recently introduced programme of support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is now helping them to catch-up so that they can make similar progress to their peers. The school works closely with parents and carers, and draws effectively on the expertise of outside professionals and external agencies to provide pupils and their families with additional support where needed. Transition arrangements are well organised. Year 1 pupils, for example, have settled very quickly after their move from Reception, and are enjoying a good range of activities well suited to their stage of development. The school is scrupulous about chasing up absence promptly, so that above-average levels of attendance are maintained.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior staff are committed to giving pupils a good start to their education, and have been successful in improving provision and outcomes for pupils since the last inspection. Senior leaders are not complacent about what has been achieved and recognise the work required to improve the school still further. Year group leaders have done a good job in increasing consistency in the quality of teaching and learning in their teams. However, there is still some inconsistency in the use of assessment and the quality of marking, and there has not been sufficient focus on creating a structure in which best practice can be shared across the whole school. The governing body has a good grasp of the school’s strengths and weaknesses, and has improved its capacity to challenge the school and hold it to account. Procedures for safeguarding are robust and staff training is up-to-date. Required checks on adults who come into contact with pupils are carried out promptly and risk assessments are thorough. The school’s single central record is a model of exemplary practice. Pupils feel safe, and parents and carers are very confident that they are well protected. The school promotes equal opportunity and tackles discrimination well. Improved tracking systems mean that differences in the performance of boys and girls have been successfully addressed, and the slower progress of a small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is being energetically tackled.

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The school has built good relationships with parents and carers, and keeps them well informed, particularly through its website. Outside partnerships are well used to extend the curriculum and provide pupils with additional support services. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. It forms a cohesive community whose members support and value one another, and it plays an important role in the local community. However, links with other schools and organisations nationally and globally are only at an early stage of development, and pupils miss out on opportunities to find out what life is like for children living and learning in other places.

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	3
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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Relationships between adults and children are very supportive, so that children feel safe, secure and settled. They enjoy exploring the good range of opportunities available to them, both indoors and outside. The extensive outdoor provision is especially exciting and engaging. The use of topics, such as the current dinosaur theme, are well planned by staff to create a range of imaginative tasks which children find very motivating. As a result of this approach, children’s achievement has improved considerably since the last inspection, particularly in communication, language and literacy, and in their personal, social and emotional development. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is almost always good. There is an effective balance of child-initiated and adult-led activity, and adults work well with children, promoting their numeracy and literacy skills.

Provision and outcomes have improved since the last inspection because of good new leadership. Good systems for assessment have been established across all

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classes, together with clear action plans for further improvement in the consistency and quality of teaching. Good working relationships have been forged with parents and carers, who appreciate the opportunity to be partners in their children’s learning. Welfare requirements are fully met, and the accommodation and resources are bright, welcoming and well maintained.

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 proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire was in line with national averages. Those who responded were pleased with the school and what it offers their children. Almost all felt that their children enjoy school and that the school keeps their children safe. A few felt that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour, or that the school does not help them to support their children’s learning. Inspectors investigated these concerns and found that information for parents and carers is good, particularly via the school’s website, and recently introduced workshops give them the chance to find out more about how to help their children at home. During the inspection, children’s behaviour was almost always good and sometimes excellent, and staff managed them well at all times.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hurst 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 222 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 615 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	137	62	78	35	6	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	135	61	85	38	1	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	87	39	110	50	18	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	86	39	111	50	22	9	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	94	42	118	53	6	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	89	40	99	45	31	14	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	90	41	114	51	17	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)	83	37	107	48	15	7	3	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	86	39	113	51	18	8	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	73	33	106	48	27	12	5	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	73	33	110	50	20	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	111	50	92	41	13	6	1	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	115	52	94	42	9	4	1	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



3 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hurst Primary School, Bexley, DA5 3AJ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently, and for helping us with the inspection. We really enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and sharing your lessons.

We found that Hurst Primary is a good school and is giving you a good start to your education. These are just some of the things that we liked about your school.

- You enjoy coming to school and your attendance is above average.
- You feel safe at school because you are well cared for.
- You are making good progress in your lessons, because you are well taught.
- Although some pupils who replied to our questionnaire felt that behaviour in your school was not good, we found that it was during our inspection, particularly in assemblies.
- Your relationships with staff and with one another are good, and you show respect for others.
- The senior staff are doing a good job, and know how to make the school even better.

To help the school improve further, this is what we have asked the staff to do.

- Make sure that you all have work that challenges you and helps you learn, particularly if you need extra help.
- Help you to learn more about other cultures in this country and abroad.

All of you can help by telling staff in lessons if your work is too hard or too easy.

Yours sincerely

Jane Chesterfield
Lead inspector

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