

Minet Nursery and Infant School

Avondale Drive, Hayes, Middlesex, UB3 3NR

Inspection dates 10–11 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Minet Nursery and Infant School is a happy and well-ordered place. Relationships between pupils and staff are good. Children settle into the caring atmosphere of the Nursery well.
- The school is led and managed well. Senior leaders are good professional role models and have made sure that teaching and pupils' achievement continually improve. Teachers and well-trained teaching assistants work well as a team.
- Most teaching is good and some is outstanding. Planned activities, which are matched to pupils' abilities and interest, engage them well. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and in detail.
- Pupils achieve well and, though their attainment is below the national average, standards have been rising faster than nationally.
- Pupils of all ages make good progress in their subjects. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported and do particularly well.
- Pupils enjoy school and their learning. They like their teachers, feel secure and are well looked after. Attendance is improving and is above average.
- The Nursery is outstanding. Children are given a wide range of engaging activities, rich in language, in a safe environment.
- Parents and carers are pleased with how happy their children are and the progress they make. The school gives good support to parents and carers so they can help with their children's learning at home.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. Teachers do not always plan activities that will stretch pupils of all abilities.
- Pupils are not given good opportunities to respond to teachers' marking.
- Pupils do not achieve as well in writing as they do in other areas. Opportunities to engage children in conversation and further develop their speaking skills are sometimes missed in Reception.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 30 lessons or parts of lessons, including six which were observed jointly with senior school leaders. They also looked at pupils' written work in literacy, mathematics and other topics.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, the vice chair and another governor, the headteacher and other school leaders, and, by telephone, a representative of the local authority and an independent consultant who has been working with the school.
- Inspectors spoke to two groups of pupils and informally with other pupils in lessons and around the school. An inspector listened to other pupils reading and talked to them about their reading habits.
- Several of the school's documents were examined. These included: the school's own evaluation of its performance and its development plan; the school's information about pupils' progress and the support given to pupils with English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs; evidence about the quality of teaching; and records relating to behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of 15 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the views expressed by parents and carers as they waited to pick up their children and a parent or carer who asked to speak to an inspector. They analysed 15 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Jim McVeigh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Fran Ashworth

Additional Inspector

Cliff Mainey

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Minet Nursery and Infant School is larger than the average-sized primary school. There are two Nursery classes and four classes in each year group. The majority of children start school in the Nursery.
- Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The largest groups are of Black African, Pakistani and Indian heritages. Most pupils speak English as an additional language, which is a much higher proportion than average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (extra government funding for specific groups of pupils including those known to be eligible for free school meals, children in local authority care and service children) is above average.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action and those supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are above the national average.
- The school shares a site with a junior school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding by:
 - making sure teachers always plan activities that will stretch pupils of all abilities, particularly the more-able
 - ensuring teachers give pupils good and regular opportunities to respond to advice given about how to improve in reading, writing and mathematics and check that pupils have taken account of that advice.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing so that their attainment is similar to that in reading and mathematics by developing pupils' speaking skills more rapidly, particularly in Reception, and taking every opportunity for pupils to form letters and write words, sentences and text.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school in Nursery with knowledge and skills well below the levels typical for their age in all areas of development. Many children have very low levels of skill in spoken English and very little experience of writing and numeracy.
- Children achieve well over their two years in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children make most progress in their confidence and physical, personal and social development. In a session where nursery children chose what they wanted to do, they made outstanding progress in language development and learning to interact with others. Adults provided a language-rich environment, talked frequently to every child, modelled speaking very well and emphasised the need to ask for things politely.
- Transition into the Early Years Foundation Stage involves parents and carers closely and is carefully planned. Prior to children joining the Nursery, parents and carers receive useful material, such as chalk, crayons and exercise books, and advice, through visits and a DVD showing how to help children's learning in their early stages of development, which helps parents and carers to better prepare for their start in school. Consequently, children's development in the area of self-care when they start is stronger than in the other areas of learning.
- Parents and carers can stay with their children in the Early Years Foundation Stage for a short time at the start of school to help them settle well. Children are carefully looked after and cared for by staff and all their welfare needs are met. Consequently, children feel safe and very happy, arriving each day ready for the exciting learning opportunities organised for them.
- Pupils continue to make good progress from their low starting points throughout Key Stage 1. The proportions of pupils making good or better progress compare favourably with the national picture. Pupils do best in mathematics but attainment is still below the national average by the end of Year 2 in mathematics, reading and writing. School data show that over recent years, pupils' overall attainment has been rising at a faster rate than nationally. Pupils who speak English as an additional language leave school with levels in line with those of their peers nationally in all areas.
- Phonics (the sounds letters make) is taught well and pupils develop good skills in pronouncing unknown words, though some pupils with English as an additional language and a limited English vocabulary cannot always recognise the word they pronounce and struggle to use the past tense correctly. In the recent phonics screening checks, pupils performed below the national average, but pupils in Year 2 did better than others nationally in the phonics screening check retakes.
- The school encourages reading effectively. Pupils have a school reading book and a self-selected (but with teacher guidance) book for home. Parents and carers are shown how to help with reading at home, including through a video clip of a teaching assistant on the school website supporting a pupils' reading. Pupils have many opportunities to read to an adult at school and a reading log encourages parents and carers to listen to their children read at home.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including the more-able, are well supported in class activities and in small-group work. These pupils make strong progress from their starting points and they reach standards similar to or above those of their peers nationally. The school makes good use of external specialists to identify its needs and advise on its support.
- The gap in attainment between pupils eligible for the pupil premium and others in school is closing rapidly and, in 2013, was around three months. Eligible pupils are doing better than their peers nationally. This reflects the school's judicious spending of funds to enrich these pupils' life experiences and provide well-focused extra support.

The quality of teaching is good

- Relationships between pupils and teachers are strong. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work ethic and behaviour and have developed a good climate in which children can learn. Little time is wasted in managing behaviour and classrooms have bright displays, showing examples of pupils' work and key points from current learning to support greater independence for pupils in their learning.
- Activities are organised to help pupils develop their understanding of concepts in a logical manner. For example, pupils in Year 1 learned how to use software tools to alter the font for their writing in a good information and communication technology lesson. The teacher had guided them through the changes that could be made and pupils had a good opportunity to experiment themselves and quickly handled the tools confidently.
- There is always a strong focus on speaking in lessons. Teachers model speaking well. They speak very clearly and at a modest pace to help pupils with low levels of language skills to understand. Pupils are given good opportunities to discuss their ideas with one another during lessons. Teachers often question pupils skilfully by giving them time to think and explain their answers. All teachers encourage pupils to answer questions in full sentences to continually improve their acquisition of speaking skills.
- Teachers deploy well-trained teaching assistants effectively to support pupils' learning or small groups. For example, teaching assistants model the sounding of letters clearly and accurately in small-group sessions for phonics so that pupils make good progress in sounding letters and blending them to make full words. Teaching assistants are particularly effective when working with pupils who have English as an additional language, through engaging activities that stimulate pupils to speak and learn new words.
- Teachers plan a range of activities that interest and engage pupils well. Usually activities are pitched at different levels of challenge to meet the learning needs of pupils of different abilities. However, not all activities are matched to needs closely enough so that pupils are not always stretched as far as they could be. For example, occasionally, more-able pupils finish tasks quickly and have to wait before getting the next challenge.
- Teachers make good use of pupils' prior learning and experiences to plan lessons. Pupils in Year 1 were inspired in their writing about nocturnal animals by getting close to a real hedgehog. Pupils' written work is marked frequently and accurately, but pupils are given too few opportunities to respond to the advice for improvement.
- Teaching in the Nursery is outstanding. Children are provided with a rich, varied and exciting range of activities and are constantly encouraged to speak, ask questions and repeat new words. A special emphasis is placed on social development and effective extra groups are set up for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage who have difficulty in relating to others. Good teaching in the Reception classes enables children to continue to make good progress in all areas of learning, but when children have free choice in what they want to do adults do not engage with them often enough. Opportunities for outdoor learning are limited by the restricted space in the Early Years Foundation Stage area.
- During the day there are a large number of movements of pupils from their class to other areas for interventions to support their particular needs. Teachers and teaching assistants are consistent in the way they manage this movement and pupils leave and rejoin their classes without fuss and with minimum disruption to learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils look forward to coming to school. They enjoy lessons, finding them interesting, and they like their teachers. Attendance has improved and is above average. Pupils are proud to achieve recognition for full attendance and classes like having 'Brainy Bear' for achieving top attendance figures. Punctuality and absences are closely monitored by the school.
- Pupils know they need to behave sensibly in order to do well and understand the school's

rewards and sanctions. They are keen to earn 'Golden Time' and appreciate thinking time to reflect on the choices they have made which might get them into trouble.

- Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They settle to tasks easily, know what to do and persevere. They say that most lessons run smoothly and are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. They collaborate well with one another, sharing resources fairly and discussing their ideas sensibly. However, when activities are not challenging enough, pupils can become restless and less attentive.
- In the playground, pupils get along well. They say they can always find someone to play with and no one is mean to them, though the small play areas get crowded towards the end of lunchtime and pupils bump into each other more. When moving round the school, pupils are polite and courteous.
- Pupils are keen to take on roles of responsibility, for example, as monitors to help teachers or representatives for the school council. The school council recently decided that the pupils should be quieter while eating lunch in the hall and members are designing posters to that effect.
- For their age, pupils have a good understanding of bullying. They say that bullying is rare and are confident that adults would tackle it effectively.
- Pupils know about staying healthy through exercise and balanced diets. They have 'built' suitable examples of plates of food in art sessions. They are learning how to keep themselves safe, for example, by crossing the road safely and being aware of the dangers when using the internet.
- The school's well-kept logs of incidents show bullying rates are low and that actions taken have been effective. Exclusions are low and their numbers have reduced over time.

The leadership and management are good

- Governors and staff have high expectations and a shared vision 'to place literacy at the heart of the curriculum and to work closely with families to raise aspirations and create the best life chances for pupils'. The school, with a large population and space at a premium, still runs smoothly day to day. Staff work well as a team and model the behaviour they expect of pupils.
- Senior leaders know the school's strengths and areas for development, which are clearly linked to their detailed plans for continued improvement. Governors and staff contribute to the school development plan and it is reviewed regularly.
- Pupils' progress is a central focus and is checked frequently. Appropriate support is put in place for any pupils who are in danger of falling behind ensuring that pupils have equal opportunities and all forms of discrimination are effectively discouraged. Extra support is put in place for less-advantaged pupils, for example, subsidised trips and free after-school clubs, such as Bug Club for reading, and swimming and cookery clubs.
- Senior leaders strive relentlessly to improve teaching and how well pupils achieve. They follow a detailed plan to check the quality of teaching through regular lesson observations and checks on pupils' work. Teachers are set challenging targets regarding pupils' progress, the school development plan, teachers' own career aspirations and linked to the Teachers' Standards.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have good opportunities for relevant professional development through in-house training, including demonstration lessons from skilled colleagues, external courses and visits to outstanding schools. Teachers new to the profession feel well supported and year leaders are closely involved in managing teaching in their areas.
- The school has engaged well with parents and carers, who say that their children are kept safe, make good progress and are well cared for. Parents and carers receive good support to help their children at home through the family support worker, newsletters, workshops and the school's website.

The school provides a broad and balanced range of subjects linked by well-planned common themes to engage and motivate pupils better, and with an appropriate number of discrete English and mathematics sessions. The needs of pupils are well met by the school's focus on speaking, listening and literacy skills.

- Provision is successfully adapted for different groups of pupils, for example through small-group intervention support. Pupils develop the skills necessary for full access to learning in all subjects. This is particularly true for pupils who have English as an additional language or who are disabled or have special educational needs.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, making good use of the diverse ethnic backgrounds within the school population, for example, by focusing on the different languages present in school in 'the language of the half term'. Assemblies, multi-faith celebrations, visits to places of worship and visitors from different backgrounds, such as Caribbean drummers, provide rich experiences for pupils, particularly in spirituality and the range of cultures.
- The extra sports funding for primary schools is being used to provide a permanent member of staff who is a specialist in physical education. It is improving the school's expertise in teaching a wide range of sporting skills and promotes more regular participation in physical activity by pupils.
- The local authority has given good support to the school by establishing a link with an outstanding local primary school, which is effective in sharing best practice, particularly in developing assessment and school self-evaluation procedures. The school is considered by the local authority to be good and not needing intensive support or monitoring.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a good range of relevant skills, for example in education, finance and law, and governors have received further training from the local authority. Governors are kept well informed about the school's performance, such as the quality of teaching, through clear, regular reports from the headteacher, meetings with school leaders and their own focused visits. Governors set robust targets for the performance of the headteacher. They ask searching questions and provide good support to ensure the school is continually moving forward.
 - Governors ensure the school is financially sound and prudent by checking that teachers' rewards for their work are warranted, and that the pupil premium is targeted to improve achievement for eligible pupils. They make sure safeguarding arrangements fully meet statutory requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	102392
Local authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	425546
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	480
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jasvinder Osan
Headteacher	Judith Lynch
Date of previous school inspection	28–29 February 2012
Telephone number	020 8573 5177
Fax number	020 8561 3207
Email address	minetinf@hillingdongrid.org

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