

Hargrave Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100408
Local Authority	Islington
Inspection number	323273
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Gulshanbir Kayembe

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	215
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	16
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miss Debbie Brown
Headteacher	Mr Craig Woollard
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	22 January 2007
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	51 Bredgar road London N19 5BS
Telephone number	020 7272 3989
Fax number	020 7272 7847

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school includes, under the guardianship of the governing body, a children's centre catering for children between the ages of 0-3. This provision has been put in place since the last inspection. There is a Nursery as well as statutory provision for children aged 4-5 in the Reception class. Other extended services provided by the school include breakfast and after school clubs. Approximately half the children who join the school's Reception class have attended the Nursery. A very high proportion of pupils are eligible for a free school meal. The intake is very ethnically diverse with over 16 home languages represented in the school. Almost half the pupils speak English as an additional language and many begin school with little English. The number of pupils joining or leaving the school midway through their primary education is high, this is particularly so for the numbers joining. The proportion of pupils who have a learning difficulty and/or disability is similar to most schools nationally but in some year groups, such as the current Year 6, it is considerably higher. Most of those who have learning difficulties require support in literacy and numeracy. A few are on the autism spectrum.

The school has undergone significant changes to staffing since the last inspection, including a period without a substantive headteacher. The current headteacher and deputy headteacher, along with many of the teaching staff, have been in post since September 2008. The school has a number of awards including the Healthy School and International School awards, for example.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Hargrave Park provides a good education for its pupils. This enables them to make good progress and attain creditable results given their often low or even very low starting points. Pupils experience a very broad and rich education which enables them to flourish and mature into thoughtful youngsters who are well prepared for their next step in education.

Attainment on entry to the Nursery and Reception classes is beginning to change. Children currently in Reception began with skills and knowledge that were in line with their age. In previous years, children's knowledge and skills have usually been below, and sometimes well below, those expected for their age. Attainment by the end of Year 6 tends to be broadly in line with national averages although, in the current Year 6, it is below the national average. Nevertheless, taking these pupils' prior attainment into account, they have made good progress, especially in this last year. Progress across the school is good in English. Inspection evidence shows that many pupils have made very good strides this year in both reading and writing. Progress in mathematics is good but not as consistently good as in English. The school has done much to address pupils' basic skills in mathematics so that they are confident with numbers and show increasing confidence in shape, space and measures, an area identified as a weakness by the school. Nonetheless, their skills in applying their knowledge are not always as strong. This extends to science where pupils develop good knowledge but are not always as skilled in explaining their thinking and ideas. A good curriculum ensures pupils develop good skills across a wide range of areas including information and communication technology (ICT) and music.

Good teaching is responsible for good progress. Teaching assistants give good support to lower attainers and those who have additional needs, enabling these pupils to make good progress. Good use of other subjects as a backdrop to English lessons makes work more relevant and real for pupils, for example, using history and current affairs to enable pupils to formulate their own arguments as to whether the Elgin Marbles should stay in Britain or go back to Greece. Overall, the curriculum has not yet been sufficiently developed to thread through subjects the key skills that will help pupils to further develop their thinking and clarify their ideas. These include skills such as analysis, evaluation, critical thinking and applying knowledge. As a result, teaching does not always extend and challenge the more able pupils and, more crucially, middle attainers who have the potential to achieve more highly. Very good enrichment and extra-curricular activities contribute greatly to pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are thoughtful and caring. They establish enduring relationships with others and take considerable pride in their work so that it is always well presented. Pupils are self-disciplined, hence behaviour in and around the school is excellent. Attendance is in line with national averages. The school has taken very effective steps to improve it since the last inspection, particularly over the last year. Care and support to pupils are very good. Academic guidance is developing well. Marking of work is thorough but does not always provide sufficient guidance on improvement and this is at least in part because the targets currently in use tend to be general and not specific enough. Nonetheless, these targets have served a useful purpose and helped to establish secure basic skills in English and mathematics. The school recognises it now needs more sophisticated targets to help raise standards further and enable pupils to make even better progress.

The school is outstandingly well led by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They take a rigorous and systematic approach to school development, making very effective use of information from monitoring to tackle identified weaknesses. Improvement in the school has

been rapid this year. With staffing and leadership issues in the previous year, standards had begun to slip. The school is now back on track. Other leaders provide good support to the headteacher and deputy headteacher and, overall, leadership and management are good. Governors exercise good oversight of the school and make a strong contribution to the school's excellent promotion of community cohesion. Given the improvements secured, especially in attendance and English, particularly writing, the school is well placed to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Standards in the current Reception year are above average and this represents good progress for children, taking into account their starting points. Close links with parents are established from the time children start school and children settle into school quickly. In the Children's Centre, they enjoy a colourful and enticing environment where they experience a good range of stimulating activities. Outdoor areas are used well by staff to extend children's learning. The provision enables children from six months to three years to mix within a safe, secure environment. The strong regard for their welfare helps children enjoy their early experience of school and become confident learners. Together with children in the Nursery and Reception classes, they behave well and build positive relationships with staff and other children and an awareness of the needs of others. The learning environment is well organised, vibrant and interesting, with many displays that support and celebrate the good progress that children make across all areas of learning. There are excellent relationships between staff and children and good standards of behaviour are evident, as are the development of good personal and social skills. Attention is given to developing children's speaking and listening skills and they show particularly good progress in their knowledge and use of sounds and letters. Nevertheless, on occasion children are expected sit for too long during a whole-class session and some lose focus as a result. The curriculum offers a good balance of child- and adult-led activities. Staff record children's progress regularly and make effective use of these records to identify the next steps in learning. Leadership and management of the Children's Centre and the Early Years Foundation Stage are good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils with the potential for higher achievement are consistently well challenged in lessons and that they have the skills to clarify their ideas and explain their thinking.
- Develop more specific targets for learning and ensure these are used to guide pupils on how to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

While current standards in Year 6 are below average, standards coming through Key Stage 2 are better. Standards in Year 2 are also below average but pupils have made good progress from their low standards at the end of Reception. Year 1 pupils are on track to attain better standards by the time they reach the end of Year 2. Pupils who join the school after the start of Reception make good progress, although many of these pupils have standards that are below age-related expectations when they join. There are no major differences in the attainment of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Boys' writing has been an issue in the past and although there are still some differences between boys and girls in written work, the school is

well on the way to addressing these. Pupils who find learning difficult make good progress against the targets in their personal plans because their needs are well identified and supported.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and participate enthusiastically in school activities. Attendance has improved and is now satisfactory. Pupils say, 'This is a caring school where everyone's views are taken into account'. They are reflective and show care and concern for others. Their understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity is excellent. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and possess a good understanding of the importance of healthy diets and taking regular exercise. Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils, particularly the older ones, take on additional responsibilities such as helping younger ones in the playground. The school is a very safe and orderly community. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the community. School council members, for example, have invited the 'Better Archway Forum' into the school to discuss how they could make the community greener. Pupils enthusiastically exchange letters with others in a school in Italy. The good progress they make in acquiring numeracy and literacy skills and their excellent ability to work with others and share their views openly and maturely prepare them well for future life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons are well planned with clear learning outcomes that are shared with pupils so that they know what they are expected to learn. Activities and tasks are usually well thought-out and are varied, making the work interesting for pupils so that they are well engaged. Work is often of a practical nature and teachers ensure that introductions are brisk and well paced so as to maximise the time pupils are actively involved. A range of work is usually available to match the different abilities represented in each class. Nevertheless, able pupils are not always challenged enough. Questioning is used well to check pupils' understanding and to extend it. Good use is made of computers to support learning. Work is very thoroughly marked and ensures that pupils make the necessary corrections. Nevertheless, comments do not always provide enough guidance for improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The English curriculum is very well developed to structure teaching and pupils' learning and this is evident in the often very good progress pupils are making. There is good coverage of mathematics and, in science, pupils regularly do practical work. Nevertheless, the curriculum has not yet embedded, as systematically, some of the more sophisticated learning skills to help pupils think through ideas for themselves, develop their own questions and apply their knowledge to new or different problems. ICT is used well to support teaching and learning, and music is a strength. The curriculum contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. Awards such as the Healthy School and International School awards reflect the high quality of provision for pupils' personal and broader awareness. A very wide range of visits, visitors, external agencies and providers extend the curriculum exceptionally

well; these have included units of work for gifted and talented pupils with Arsenal Football club and a theatre company based onsite.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are very well looked after and cared for and this extends to the before and after school clubs. Safeguarding procedures are securely in place. Support for pupils who find learning difficult and those who speak English as an additional language is particularly effective. Parents are very complimentary about the school, and say they are always welcome and are kept well informed. A wide range of support staff, including a learning mentor and an attendance officer, together with an extensive range of outside agencies, ensure that the needs of individual pupils and their families are very well met.

Pupils' progress is monitored carefully and, in the most successful lessons, pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own learning. Targets have been used very effectively to establish consistent standards of basic skills in literacy and numeracy, such as good punctuation. Nonetheless, these are now becoming limited in usefulness and are not personalised or specific enough to provide the more detailed guidance pupils now need on how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has set an exceptionally clear direction for development and pursued this with vigour. Raising attainment is at the heart of what the school does. It has built well on the extensive community links and broad educational development of pupils at the time of the last inspection to further hone pupils' academic development in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The school's self-evaluation is honest and accurate. Data on progress is analysed exceptionally well to continuously inform the school's leadership of patterns in progress and flag up potential underachievement quickly, enabling a rapid response to emerging issues. Subject leaders make good use of data to inform their work. They lead and manage their subject areas well but initiatives for improvement tend to come more from the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Support staff play a pivotal role in the school, providing support for a very wide range of needs. This year particularly they have provided necessary stability during a period of considerable change in the teaching staff and leadership of the school. The school is a strong cohesive community where pupils from a very broad range of social, cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds get on exceptionally well together. The extended schools provision enables the school to reach out to the local community and make a real difference.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

07 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hargrave Park Primary School, London, N19 5BS

We enjoyed visiting your school and would like to thank you for making us feel welcome. It was very nice to meet you and watch your lessons. The school gives you a good education and ensures that you are ready for secondary school.

These are some of the best things about your school.

- You develop into thoughtful, confident and self-assured youngsters who get on exceptionally well with one another and with staff.
- The school provides a positive and welcoming atmosphere. This creates a strong sense of community and makes pupils feel safe and happy at school.
- You are well taught and, as a result, make good progress in your learning.
- The school provides you with an excellent range of visits, visitors and activities outside school.
- Your headteacher leads the school exceptionally well and makes sure that staff are working together to help you learn.
- The school promotes outstanding links with the local and wider community, enabling you to develop a better understanding of people from different walks of life.

We have asked your headteacher and your teachers to make a few improvements by:

- developing skills in thinking through and explaining more difficult ideas, especially for able pupils in mathematics and science so that they progress even faster
- ensuring that you have enough advice on how to make your work better.

You can contribute to improvements by asking staff about how you can make your work better.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Gulshan Kayembe

Lead Inspector