



**Office for Standards
in Education**

Inspection report
Sunnyfields Primary School

London Borough of Barnet Education Authority

Dates of inspection: 7-8 July 2004

This inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996 and was deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act

© Crown copyright 2004. This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Inspection reports are available on the Ofsted web site (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

Contents

Section	Page
Basic information about the school	iv
Introduction	1
Main findings	1
Key issues	3
Inspection findings	3
Standards achieved by the pupils	3
The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	5
The quality of education	5
Leadership and management	6
Implementation of the action plan	7
Appendix – Information about the inspection	8

Basic information about the school

Name of school:	Sunnyfields Primary School
Type of school:	Primary
Status:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Headteacher:	Ms A Godfrey
Address of school:	Hatchcroft Hendon London NW4 4JH
Telephone:	020 8203 3113
Name and address of appropriate authority:	The governing body at the above address.
Chair of governors:	Mr B McNally
Local education authority area:	London Borough of Barnet
Unique reference number:	101311
Name of reporting inspector:	Mr D Jones HMI
Dates of inspection:	7-8 July 2004

Introduction

1. Sunnyfields Primary School is situated in Hendon, north London. Located within an area of modern private housing, close to Middlesex University, the school serves an ethnically diverse community. There are 220 pupils on roll, which is average size for a primary school. Most of the pupils come from the immediate area, which has levels of social and economic disadvantage similar to the national average. The proportion of the pupils eligible for free school meals, 13 per cent, is close to the national average. The proportion of the pupils who are of an ethnic heritage other than white British is 75 per cent, which is high, the largest groups being from eastern European, Pakistani and Chinese backgrounds. The percentage of pupils, 59.6 per cent, who speak English as an additional language is high. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is above average, at 27.8 per cent, and five pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. The pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average.

2. The school was inspected in January 2003. The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the school and the school was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.

3. The governors drew up an action plan to address the key issues from the inspection of January 2003. The school was visited by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) on three occasions to monitor the progress being made.

4. In July 2004 two HMI inspected the school, assessing the standard of education provided and the progress the school has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and key issues in the inspection report of January 2003.

Main findings

5. In accordance with section 14 of the School Inspections Act 1996, I am of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures, since it is now providing an acceptable standard of education for its pupils. The main findings of the inspection are:

- standards of attainment are rising. The school's results in the 2003 national tests at Key Stage 1 showed a significant improvement compared to those achieved in 2002. The unconfirmed results of the 2004 national tests continue this trend and, based on previous figures, are likely to be above that of schools nationally. The 2003 results in the national tests for 11-year-olds in English and mathematics were in line with the national figures and those of similar schools. However, the results in science were well below the national average and those of similar schools. The unconfirmed results of the 2004 Key Stage 2 national tests reveal significant improvement, notably in mathematics and science;
- the pupils in the Foundation Stage make sound progress towards the nationally set Early Learning Goals. However, the quality of education at this stage is inconsistent and the pupils in the nursery class make insufficient gains in learning;

-
- standards in numeracy lessons are close to those that might be expected for the age of the pupils. The pupils' number skills are appropriate and often good; most are confident with investigations. The higher achieving pupils in Years 2 to 6 are able to explain the calculation and the mathematical processes they have used;
 - standards in English at the end of both key stages are close to or above age-related expectations in reading, speaking and listening. However, many pupils, including the most able, are not appropriately challenged by the written tasks they are given;
 - the pupils made satisfactory progress in 20 of the 23 lessons; progress was good in 11 lessons. The pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress;
 - the pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons and around the school were satisfactory and often good. Attendance, at 94.3 per cent, is close to the national average. Effective procedures are in place to monitor attendance and to identify the absences which cause concern;
 - the provision for the pupils' social, moral and cultural development is good. The staff consistently use the school's guidelines to provide the pupils with clear messages about acceptable behaviour. Provision for spiritual development is uneven across the curriculum, although satisfactory in assemblies. The pupils are provided with some opportunities to study the diversity of faiths and culture in the local area;
 - the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall; however there are some remaining weaknesses. Teaching was at least satisfactory in 20 lessons; this included eight lessons which were good and two which were very good. Three lessons were unsatisfactory;
 - the curriculum is broad and balanced, and opportunities for investigative learning are satisfactory. The provision is good for those pupils who have special needs and for those who speak English as an additional language. The new assessment system is reliable; a comprehensive database of information about the pupils' progress is being compiled. The marking of the pupils' work has improved but some inconsistencies of style and application remain;
 - the school environment is well maintained, although some classrooms are small. Corridors are bright with lively displays. The links with parents and the community have improved significantly. The parents appreciate the headteacher's open and communicative style;
 - the leadership and management of the recently appointed headteacher are good. Her commitment and determination to improve the school are clear. The senior leadership team has been re-established and is making sound progress in fulfilling its duties. The staff have shown considerable commitment to the headteacher since her appointment;
-

- the chair of governors has been proactive in appointing the new headteacher and establishing the financial security of the school. The governance of the school is satisfactory;
- the local education authority (LEA) has strengthened the governing body, provided good support for all of the initiatives detailed in the school's action plan. A well-structured plan to monitor and support the school over the next academic year is in place.

Key issues

6. In order to improve the pupils' quality of education further, the governors, headteacher, senior managers and staff need to:

- improve the quality of education in the Foundation Stage;
- improve the standard of the pupils' writing;
- improve the quality of marking and target setting;
- continue to improve the quality of teaching.

Inspection findings

Standards achieved by the pupils

7. Standards of attainment are rising. The school's results in the 2003 national tests at Key Stage 1 showed a significant improvement compared to those achieved in 2002. The results in writing and mathematics were above the national figures, while those for reading remained below. The unconfirmed results of the 2004 national tests continue this trend and, based on previous figures, are likely to be above that of schools nationally.

8. The 2003 results in the national tests for 11-year-olds for English and mathematics were in line with the national figures and those of similar schools. However, the results in science were well below the national average and those of similar schools. The proportion of pupils who attained the higher Level 5 in English was in line with the national average, and with schools where the pupils' prior attainment was similar. In mathematics the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level was above such comparative groups. However, in science the proportion of pupils who attained the higher level was well below the figures for schools nationally and similar schools. The unconfirmed results of the 2004 Key Stage 2 national tests reveal significant improvement, notably in mathematics and science. Across the school, standards in the core subjects have become more consistent, reflecting the higher scores in the pupils' annual tests.

9. Overall, the pupils in the Foundation Stage make sound progress towards the nationally set Early Learning Goals. However, the quality of education at this stage is inconsistent and the pupils in the nursery class make insufficient gains in learning. In the reception class, the rate of progress improves and standards are satisfactory; for example, in mathematics, a significant number of the pupils are already working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum.

10. The pupils made at least satisfactory progress in 20 of the 23 lessons; progress was good in 11 lessons. Throughout the school, the standards attained and the progress the pupils made improved steadily from January 2003 onwards. The pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 made at least satisfactory progress in all 15 lessons in the core subjects; progress was good in ten of these lessons.

11. Standards in English at the end of both key stages are close to or above age-related expectations in reading and speaking and listening. However, many pupils, including the most able, are not sufficiently challenged by the written tasks they are given.

12. In lessons, the pupils' speaking and listening skills were well developed through a wide range of practical activities which involved paired discussion and the use of interesting and creative tasks. These were particularly helpful for the pupils learning English as an additional language. On occasion lessons failed to ensure that the pupils fully understood the task; for example, idiomatic phrases within the chosen text were not clearly explained. Many pupils were confident when they talked about their work and offered cogent responses to the teachers' questions.

13. Guided-reading sessions were well used to support the pupils' development. Many pupils read fluently, with good expression and understanding. However, some of the pupils at the earlier stages of learning English as an additional language struggled with unfamiliar vocabulary. In all classes, there was a wide range of ability in reading, which was appropriately catered for. The recent introduction of paired work, between the Year 6 and Year 2 pupils, has promoted reading for pleasure; many Year 6 pupils used an appropriate phonics-based approach when supporting their younger partners. Standards in writing at the end of Years 2 and 6 are variable. At times the work was not dated and the presentation was unsatisfactory. In the best practice, the pupils' written work was carefully marked and provided guidance for future improvement but this was not routine.

14. Standards in numeracy lessons are close to those that might be expected for the age of the pupils. The pupils' number skills are appropriate and often good; most are confident with investigations. The higher achieving pupils in Years 2 to 6 can explain the mathematical process and the calculations they have used. The pupils use mathematical vocabulary correctly; for example, the middle and higher achieving pupils in Year 2 used multiplication, division and inverse relationships correctly when explaining their work. The pupils' understanding of place value was secure and the pupils in Year 4 accurately transposed equivalent fractions and decimals. Most of the pupils in Year 6 have above-average mathematical skills and the confidence to tackle an unfamiliar calculation. The pupils in all year groups are interested in mathematics.

15. In science, standards of attainment are rising as a result of improved planning. The pupils cover a suitable range of topics as they move through the school; they are keen to investigate, using scientific terms and processes. When examining forces, Year 1 pupils worked consistently to explore the application of energy to achieve forward motion. Pupils in Year 5 proved the concept of a change of state between water and ice by investigating the relationship between temperature and volume. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are at the level expected for the pupils' ages, and the pupils demonstrate appropriate skills. The school is beginning to develop the use of ICT across the different subjects of the curriculum.

16. The pupils make appropriate progress in the foundation subjects. In a Year 3 physical education lesson, for example, the pupils developed dance routines to incorporate repetition of rhythmic patterns and balances. In geography, Year 6 pupils mapped the land use in the centre of Hendon accurately and compared their findings to the work undertaken during a recent visit to the central area of Bude in Cornwall.

17. The pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Effective use was made of reliable assessment information in well-organised small group and booster class sessions. These sessions were well taught by the special educational needs co-ordinator and teaching assistants. Good use of resources from the national numeracy and literacy strategies ensured curriculum continuity and challenge.

The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

18. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons were satisfactory or better in 22 of the 23 lessons, including nine where they were good or very good. A small number of the pupils did not understand all of the teachers' instructions, and others, as a result of the weather, were excitable. The pupils' behaviour around the school and in the playground was satisfactory and often good. The pupils were friendly and courteous to adults and they were thoughtful to each other. Attendance is close to the national average at 94.3 per cent. Effective procedures are in place to monitor attendance and to identify the absences causing concern.

19. Provision for social, moral and cultural development is good. The staff consistently use the schools' guidelines to provide the pupils with clear messages about acceptable behaviour. Relationships between adults and the pupils are good. Extracurricular activities and visits enhance social and cultural development; some Year 6 pupils experience a residential week at an outdoor education centre in Cornwall. However, the pupils sit on the hall floor to eat their packed lunches; this is unsatisfactory and does not promote hygienic habits. Provision for spiritual development is uneven across the curriculum. However, assemblies allow the pupils to consider spiritual and moral issues and relate these to their own lives. The pupils are provided with some opportunities to study the diversity of faiths and culture in the local area.

The quality of education

20. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall; however, there are some remaining weaknesses. Teaching was at least satisfactory in 20 lessons and this included eight lessons which were good and two which were very good. Three lessons were unsatisfactory.

21. In all of the lessons the planning was sound and resources were well used. In the best lessons the strengths of the teaching included: good subject knowledge; productive relationships; effective questioning; and a lively teaching style which required pupils to think and concentrate. The small group work lead by the special educational needs co-ordinator is good; all opportunities to develop the pupils' literacy skills within the context of the current class topic are explored. Teaching assistants were active and gave at least satisfactory and sometimes good support to the individuals and groups with whom they worked.

22. In some of the lessons that were satisfactory overall, the following weaknesses were apparent: insecure subject knowledge; an inability to engage the attention of some of the

pupils; and lengthy teacher exposition. Unsatisfactory teaching was the result of weak questioning and missed opportunities to engage pupils in their learning.

23. The new assessment system is reliable. A comprehensive database of information about the pupils' progress is being compiled from the results of the national tests for 7 and 11-year-olds and the non-statutory tests for pupils in Years 3 to 5. The school's analysis of this information shows that the vast majority of the pupils have made the expected progress. Assessment and record keeping in the Foundation Stage lack continuity and have not been incorporated into the school system. The marking of the pupils' work has improved but some inconsistencies of style and application remain. Most teachers write useful and encouraging comments on the pupils' work; however, suggestions for improvement are limited and references to National Curriculum levels are scarce.

24. The curriculum is broad and balanced; and opportunities for investigative learning are satisfactory. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy and their accompanying remedial provision have been used well. However, insufficient opportunities are created for the pupils to write in subjects other than English, and language and literacy skills are not fostered in a consistent manner in the Foundation Stage. The provision for those pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is good. Nearly seven out of ten pupils speak English as an additional language and the school is successful in developing the pupils' oracy skills.

25. The school environment is well maintained, although some classrooms are small. Corridors are bright with lively displays, although there is insufficient emphasis given to celebrating the pupils' literacy achievements. The communal areas are well used to promote learning and for small group tuition.

26. The links with parents and the community have improved significantly. The pupils are well cared for and supported by the school. The parents appreciate the headteacher's open and communicative style.

Leadership and management

27. The leadership and management of the headteacher are good. She was appointed in October 2003 as acting headteacher and assumed the substantive post from June 2004. Her commitment and determination to improve the school are clear. The senior leadership team has been re-established since the appointment of the new headteacher and is making sound progress in fulfilling its duties.

28. The school's routines, policies and practices are being reviewed. Roles and responsibilities, including those for monitoring and reporting, are being redefined. Financial management and developmental planning are satisfactory. The core subject co-ordinators have a clear understanding of their responsibilities; planning and monitoring are part of an agreed whole-school structure. Effective monitoring, evaluation and support by the headteacher, the LEA and the governors have helped the school move forward. The staff have shown considerable commitment to the headteacher since she took up post.

29. The LEA strengthened the governors by an additional appointment, following the inspection that placed the school in special measures. The chair of governors has been proactive in the appointing the new headteacher and securing the financial position of the school. The governance of the school is satisfactory.

30. The LEA has provided good support for all of the initiatives detailed in the school's action plan. The allocation of a one-off payment from the LEA's 'Headroom' fund has enabled the school to secure the current staffing structure and set a balanced budget for the 2004-5 academic year. A well-structured and thoughtfully produced plan to monitor and support the school over the next academic year is in place.

Implementation of the action plan

31. The inspection report of 2003 required the school to address five key issues. These principally related to: raising standards; improving leadership and management; meeting statutory requirements; improving the quality of teaching; and developing assessment. Overall, there has been reasonable progress, with good progress in some aspects of the work.

32. Well-targeted monitoring and evaluation have led to considerable improvements in the quality of teaching. The rapid development of a reliable assessment database has provided the basis for a significant rise in standards. The focus on the implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies has been particularly beneficial, helped by extensive support from the LEA. The school's curriculum is based on national requirements, and schemes of work guide the planning in all subjects. The provision for those pupils who have special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language is good.

33. The leadership and management of the school are good. The recently appointed headteacher and chair of governors work well together. The school has delegated more responsibility to the core subject co-ordinators and their work is now satisfactory. Routines and the organisation of classrooms are thorough. Although the legacy of previously weak educational direction is apparent in some aspects of the curriculum, the pupils are making satisfactory progress. As a consequence of the school's efforts, the pupils' attainment has risen significantly.

Appendix – Information about the inspection

The school was inspected under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 by a Registered Inspector and a team of inspectors in January 2003. The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the school and, in accordance with that Act, the school was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.

The school was visited by HMI in June and October 2003, and in February 2004 to assess the progress it was making to implement its action plan and address the key issues in the inspection report of January 2003.

In July 2004 two HMI returned to inspect the school for two days. The inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996, which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

Twenty three lessons or parts of lessons, two assemblies and three registration sessions were inspected. The pupils were observed at break and lunch times and samples of their work were inspected. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior staff, the chair of governors and a representative of the LEA. Informal discussions were held with other staff and pupils. A wide range of the school's documentation was scrutinised. Account was also taken of the evidence from previous monitoring inspections.

The inspection assessed the quality of education provided and the progress the school has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and key issues in the inspection report of January 2003 and the action plan prepared by the governing body to address those key issues.