



Inspection report

Guru Nanak Sikh VA Primary School

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 131927
LEA Hillingdon

Inspection number 275630
Inspection dates 21 and 22 June 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs C Munt HMI

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.

Type of School	Primary	School address	Springfield Road
School category	Sikh Voluntary Aided		Hayes
			Middlesex
Age range of pupils	5 to 11 years		UB4 0LT
Gender of pupils	mixed	Telephone number	020 8 561 6318
Number on roll	212	Fax number	020 8 573 6165
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Sant Baba Amar Singh Ji
Date of previous inspection	March 2003	Headteacher	Mr R Singh Sandhu

Age group	Published	Reference no.
5 to 11 years	21 July 2005	275630

Introduction

When Guru Nanak Sikh Voluntary Aided Primary School was inspected in March 2003, it was judged to require special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools (HMI) subsequently visited the school on five occasions to monitor its progress, and reinspected the school in June 2005.

Description of the school

Guru Nanak Sikh Voluntary Aided Primary School is located on the outskirts of Hayes in the London Borough of Hillingdon. The school, which is oversubscribed, draws its pupils from a wider area than the ward in which it is situated. It is about the average size for primary schools with 212 pupils on roll. All of the pupils are from Asian British backgrounds and almost all of them speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average, as is the proportion who have been identified as having special educational needs. The number of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need is below the national average. The school will move into purpose-built accommodation in September 2006.

© Crown copyright 2005

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.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Overall effectiveness of the school

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 school had suffered from long-term deficiencies in staffing, leadership and management at the time of the last inspection in 2003. Following a period as acting headteacher to the primary school, the substantive headteacher of the adjacent secondary school was appointed to the headship of both schools. The headteacher has brought about the necessary improvements supported by the governing body and the deputy headteachers from the secondary school, and the hard work and dedication of the staff. Two key stage co-ordinators have been appointed to assistant headteacher posts and there are suitable training programmes to further improve their management skills. Standards are at least in line with national expectations and are rising; the pupils have responded well to the teachers' higher demands. The youngest pupils make a good start in the reception class. The teaching is satisfactory or better; where it is of a consistently high standard the pupils make good progress. The proportion of good teaching is not as high as is typically found in primary schools. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good. All adults are positive in their dealings with each other and the pupils. The pupils enjoy learning, are keen to do their best and their behaviour is very good. Attendance rates have improved but a number of pupils are late each day. The school is addressing this problem. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. The school is a warm and welcoming community in which the values of the Sikh faith are promoted effectively.

Improvement since the last inspection

The inspection of March 2003 required the school to address key issues concerned with leadership and management, the pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching, and inadequacies in the accommodation. There has been good progress in relation to all of these issues.

Capacity to improve

The school has good capacity for further improvement. Plans for moving into the new building are advanced and have taken full account of the school's staged expansion to two forms of entry. The school improvement plan anticipates the future training needs of the staff. There are sound systems to set targets, to track the pupils' progress and to monitor the school's performance. The governors and staff of the school use the information well to meet the pupils' needs. A spirit of strong and effective teamwork pervades the school and this has helped new and inexperienced staff to settle quickly into routines. The quality of subject leadership is uneven and the management skills of some of the newer subject leaders are relatively underdeveloped. However, established subject managers have begun to identify priorities for action and suitable training is provided to improve their management skills. A strong budgetary position, enhanced by significant contributions from

the parents and the local community, has assured the school's ability to continue to plan for improved provision in the new building.

What the school should do to improve further

The key priorities for the school's development plan are to:

- continue to improve the quality of teaching so that more is good and very good;
- continue to support the development of the assistant headteachers;
- extend the subject leaders' experience in leading programmes of improvement;
- continue to prepare for the transition to the new building.

Achievement and standards

Standards are satisfactory overall and are rising rapidly, particularly in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1, because focused teaching challenges the pupils and accelerates their progress. In 2004, the school's average points scores in the national tests were in line with those achieved by all schools at Key Stages 1 and 2; results in English and mathematics were better than the previous year. Results in science in Key Stage 2 were static. The unvalidated Key Stage 2 results for this year indicate a further improvement in the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science.

In 2004, the school did as well as schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. The results at the end of Key Stage 2 were much better than those of schools whose pupils had similar prior attainment, and value-added measures showed that the pupils made good progress during Key Stage 2. While these data demonstrate that considerable improvements have been made in pupils' learning, they also reflect the amount of underachievement in the standards achieved by the pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2001. The trend in the schools' performance is above the national trend at Key Stage 1 and is improving, though still below the national trend, at Key Stage 2.

The pupils made at least satisfactory or better progress in 13 out of 14 lessons; progress was good or very good in half of them. Progress was better in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 classes. In all classes, the higher attaining pupils are starting to work towards their potential. In one lesson where the activities did not promote the development of physical skills adequately, the pupils made limited progress. Achievement in different subjects was sometimes inhibited by the pupils' restricted vocabulary and their uncertain grasp of spelling rules. However, suitable strategies have been introduced, including classes in the Easter holidays, to improve the pupils' literacy. Assessment information indicates that the pupils' achievement in literacy is improving.

Personal development

Provision for the pupils' spiritual and moral development is very good; social and cultural development is good overall. Focused teaching and varied learning activities have countered the passive response that typified too many lessons when the school was made subject to special measures. The pupils were more actively involved in their learning and rose to the challenging tasks that were set in some lessons. They listened attentively to teachers and to each other, showed a keen interest and were eager to do their best. All of the pupils were polite and welcoming. Classes settled quickly to work and the pupils showed consideration and respect for others. A clear code of conduct, based on the principles of Sikhism, is adhered to by all. There have been no exclusions this year. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are strengths of the school.

The school makes very good provision for the pupils' personal development. The adults know the pupils well and provide outstanding role models in their interactions with each other, the pupils and visitors. Relationships are excellent and there is a warm, family ethos throughout the school. The pupils worked productively and collaborated well in class and at play. Their behaviour was very good: they were mature and sensible. Consequently, the school was orderly and calm despite the many disruptions caused by major building works. There is a good range of extracurricular provision which helps the pupils to develop their individual interests and talents.

The headteacher gives a strong lead in fostering a caring Sikh ethos, coupled with a desire to achieve. The older pupils lead the school in worship at the daily assembly in the Gurdwara, and all of the pupils reflect on the basic tenets of their faith when listening to stories and singing. In other lessons the pupils considered world events, such as the recent tsunami in the Indian Ocean. The pupils regularly support charities that provide education in poorer countries. The school has made effective use of its good links with the Sikh community and local businesses to involve the pupils in cultural, sports and social events. It is addressing the need to expand the pupils' awareness of other cultures through improvements to the curriculum and by developing a suitable programme of visits to places of interest including, for the first time, a residential trip for pupils in Year 6.

Attendance has improved and is just below the national average. The school has worked closely and innovatively with the local authority to ease the traffic congestion around the school at the start and end of the day, in order to tackle poor punctuality. Plans for a new bridge will enable more pupils to walk or cycle to school safely. In addition, from September, the primary school day will begin a half an hour later than the secondary school.

Quality of provision

The quality of teaching was satisfactory overall, although there weaknesses remain in aspects of the teachers' subject knowledge, particularly in physical education and in art. There are growing strengths in the teaching, not least in the development of the support

staff's skills. The overall quality of teaching was better than in 2003 although there is scope to increase the amount that is good or better. Teaching was good in seven lessons, satisfactory in six and unsatisfactory in one. The teachers have responded positively to advice and training. Good lessons were seen in all key stages and the impact of the recent support and training from the school's attached inspector showed in the interesting work that met the needs of different groups. In all classes information and communication technology (ICT) was used well to motivate the pupils and to maintain their interest.

Teaching was good in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 and sound in Key Stage 2. In the reception class, the teacher's skills and knowledge, combined with high quality support from the teaching assistant, enabled the pupils to make good progress in their learning in all subjects. Throughout the school, the assistants' skills and talents were used well to lead groups and to support individual pupils.

Provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good overall: it has improved because of the effective support and advice from the inclusion manager. The school has developed a sound system to assess and track each pupil's progress. The information is being used with increasing effectiveness to plan additional support for some pupils and more challenging work for the remainder. Although these improvements have resulted in the pupils making better progress than before, not all the pupils learned as quickly as they should have because of weaknesses in the teachers' subject knowledge.

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is broad and balanced. In the Foundation Stage there was a good emphasis on learning through play and first-hand experience indoors and out. All pupils are benefiting from the improved programme of personal, social and health education and, from September, the older pupils will have the opportunity to learn French. Good progress has been made in developing the pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum. Instructions on how to produce a range of graphs from data using a computerised program, written by pupils in Year 4, were a good example of how these strands had been combined effectively.

The school enjoys good links with, and support from, the community. Attendance at school events and functions is good. Parents are well informed and have regular opportunities to discuss their children's progress with teachers. Visits are made to the pupils at home before they start school and parents generally welcome this initiative. The involvement of parents in their children's learning has improved significantly. The excellent working partnership with the Sikh secondary school enables resources to be shared and staff and pupils to have access to specialist support and advice.

Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management has improved considerably and is good overall with some very good aspects. The headteacher's appointment in September 2004 was welcomed and provided further impetus for change. The headteacher's very good leadership, quiet determination and sensitivity in promoting teamwork have proved highly effective in giving a clear steer to the school's work. He is well supported by senior staff.

The management of the school is good overall. Morale has risen and all members of staff work together exceptionally well. The middle managers and core subject co-ordinators know their roles and responsibilities. Their experience varies widely and their individual training needs have been identified in order to further develop their management skills. The headteacher's strong commitment to the continuing professional development of the whole staff is one of the school's major strengths.

The class teachers and foundation subject leaders are taking increasing responsibility for raising standards and identifying what needs to be done. However, there are gaps in their skills and expertise in leading effective programmes of action to raise standards.

The quality of governance has also improved and is good. The governing body has an effective committee structure and has received helpful training from the local education authority (LEA) tailored to meet its needs. Governors negotiated the assistance of senior teachers from the secondary school and supported the acting headteacher effectively when he took difficult decisions. The planning for the development of the new school and the quest for improvement have been successfully addressed at the same time.

After a slow start, the school has benefited from the support of the LEA which has accelerated improvement in crucial aspects of leadership, management and governance.

The systems to monitor the effectiveness of the school's work are sound. A self evaluation document is in the early stages of development. It is thorough but requires further refinement before it is a precise management tool. The school has a clear, long-term strategy to ensure continued financial security alongside its plans to raise standards and improve the provision further.

Appendix – Information about the inspection

Guru Nanak Sikh Voluntary Aided Primary School was inspected in March 2003 by a Registered Inspector and a team of inspectors under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996. 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 September 2003, in February, April and November 2004 and in February 2005 to assess the progress it was making to implement its action plan and address the key issues in the inspection report of March 2003.

In June 2005, two HMI returned to inspect the school for two days. The inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996, and was also deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act, which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected.'

Fourteen lessons or parts of lessons, two registration sessions and an assembly were inspected. The pupils' conduct was observed around the school and on the playground at break and lunchtimes, and samples of their work were inspected. Discussions were held with the headteacher, a number of senior staff, the vice-chair of governors and a representative from the LEA and informally with other staff. A wide range of the school's documentation was scrutinised. Account was 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 March 2003 and the action plan prepared by the governing body to address those key issues.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet 'Complaining about HMI-led Ofsted inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2005. This document may be freely reproduced in whole or in part, for non-commercial purposes, provided the source and the date are acknowledged.