

Holly Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101286
Local Authority	Barnet
Inspection number	276487
Inspection dates	11–12 January 2006
Reporting inspector	Scott Harrison HMI

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 on roll	
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Pearson John Maxwell
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Bellevue Road Friern Barnet London N11 3HG
Telephone number	02083681434
Fax number	02083616329

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's inspectors and two contracted inspectors.

Description of the school

Holly Park Primary School is a popular school with 487 pupils on roll. Pupils come from very differing backgrounds, reflecting the diversity of the local community. Nearly half of pupils have a first language other than English, with 49 languages spoken overall. The proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals (24.1%) and with special educational needs (20%) are close to national averages. Overall, attainment on entry to the school is below the expectations of pupils of this age. The school has grown in recent years and many classes are in new accommodation, with others in the original building, now approaching its centenary. The school aims to provide a 'safe and stimulating environment within which children can grow, develop and learn'.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade:

What the school should do to improve further

What the school should do to improve further * Maintain the focus of development on quality of teaching, particularly in foundation subjects, by boosting the role of subject leaders* Proceed as planned with staff training on assessment* Formalise communication with parents and prospective parents and ensure that policies are up to date and publicised

Achievement and standards

Grade:

Personal development and well-being

Grade:

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:

The school judged its teaching to be satisfactory overall, with some good and outstanding teaching, and teaching has been a major target for improvement. Inspectors agreed that this range of quality continues, but that the balance has now shifted from satisfactory to good. The best teaching was seen in core subjects where teachers' subject knowledge is most secure and in music where the teaching is outstanding. Good lessons were clear in purpose, used a range of learning styles and motivated pupils to do well, particularly through effective use of praise. A minority of lessons that were satisfactory overall fell short of being good for a range of reasons, including lack of challenge for some pupils; too long spent on a particular activity, such as whole class questioning; and lack of clarity of purpose, especially where arrangements for lessons were very complex. There are times when pupils would benefit from being given greater responsibility for their own learning for example more and earlier independent and creative writing. The school has taken significant steps to improve the quality of teaching following recent reviews. This includes the development of paired talk to encourage pupil to share their views and the widespread and effective use by teachers of information and communication technology (ICT), specifically laptop computers linked to interactive whiteboards. Attention has also been given to the setting of homework, which pupils say is now regular. Assessment data is well used to inform teaching and identify any trends and issues. There is some excellent marking, for example to provide pupils with detailed feedback on their redrafting; sometimes the marking includes questions or prompts to which pupils respond. Assessment for learning is a current training priority to promote consistently good understanding of the use of questioning and observation for assessment, which are currently uneven. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good, with experienced staff giving pupils the individual support they need to develop their skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

The school provides a rich curriculum. The English curriculum is well structured and steps have been taken to improve the quality of writing across the curriculum. Numeracy makes good use

of practical mathematics to develop understanding. The whole curriculum goes beyond National Curriculum requirements in some subjects and also includes French for pupils in Year 6. All pupils have two hours of physical education and games each week and pupils in Year 3 have swimming lessons. Many pupils take up the opportunities offered through extra curricular activities. Good use is made of school visits, for example a visit to the House of Commons linked to work in citizenship in Year 6. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 take part in a residential experience. ICT is playing an increasingly important part in the curriculum as teachers make good use of the equipment available to them, but there is scope for further development in terms of pupils' ICT capability and their use of ICT to raise standards in other subjects. There is co-ordinated planning and monitoring of the foundation stage curriculum, which is effective.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:

The quality of care and support for pupils is very good. The overwhelming majority of parents are quick to praise the school in this respect and pupils also believe they are very well cared for. The school is welcoming and has a harmonious atmosphere. It liaises closely with a range of service providers to ensure good care and support for all pupils. Health and safety routines and risk assessment are in place. Child protection procedures are clear and widely understood: all school staff and governors have taken part in recent training. As a result pupils feel safe and secure. Pupils express confidence that they have an adult to talk with should they feel the need to discuss personal matters. The school has clear systems for rewarding good behaviour and managing the few instances of poorer behaviour. Pupils understand their learning targets and appreciate the systems for rewarding and celebrating their success.

Leadership and management

Grade:

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Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming us to your school.

It was a great pleasure to visit the school and talk to you about it. We know that most of you really enjoy coming to school and value what it has to offer you. You are achieving well. We were particularly impressed by your confidence in speaking. We think you are lucky to have good opportunities to develop your skills in areas such as music and PE and to have such a varied curriculum. We were also impressed by your attitudes to the school, your good behaviour and your willingness to concentrate on your work and join in. In assembly, in your singing, it seemed that every one of you wanted to do your best as part of the whole school 'team'. We think that this is the story of the school as a whole- that you respect and look after each other, work together well and succeed.

The school wants to be even better and seeks to improve, as you know from the appearance of whiteboards in your classrooms. We agree with the targets the school has set itself, and we are confident that you will help the school to meet them.