



Harold Court Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102278
LEA Havering LEA
Inspection number 276685
Inspection dates 22 March 2006 to 23 March 2006
Reporting inspector Jacqueline Kraft

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Church Road
School category	Community		Harold Wood
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Romford RM3 0SH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01708 342275
Number on roll	305	Fax number	01708 342275
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr J Coles
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2000	Headteacher	Mr D A Lynch

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Harold Court is a large primary school taking most of its pupils from the local area. The majority are of white British heritage with average numbers from minority ethnic groups. The numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language and those eligible for free school meals are very low. The percentage with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, is below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides an adequate education for its pupils and gives satisfactory value for money. It views itself as good. This is accurate in some aspects of care and personal development of pupils. However, the school's self-evaluation is not based on an incisive analysis of how well pupils are doing or systematic monitoring of the effectiveness of its work to bring about improvement so is over-generous. Although subject leaders are involved in some monitoring activities the lack of involvement in lesson observations is hindering the impact they are having on improving teaching and learning.

Pupils make a sound start to their education in the reception classes. They receive good levels of care and quickly settle into school life. They make steady progress, most reaching the levels expected of them by the end of the year. Standards are average by the end of Year 6. However, there is variation in the rates of progress in different subjects. Pupils do better in English and science than they do in mathematics.

Most pupils enjoy school, feel safe and are well cared for. They participate in a variety of after school clubs and benefit from a good range of visits and visitors to the school. Teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory but tasks are not always well matched to pupils' needs and some teacher expectations are too low. Where pupils have targets they are not specific so pupils do not know how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve. Extra support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is effective so pupils make good progress during these sessions.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and have ensured that the school has made appropriate improvements since the last inspection and has the capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- * Improve the progress pupils make in mathematics by raising teachers' expectations and ensuring that work is well matched to pupils' different levels of ability.
- * Develop systematic and rigorous monitoring, including classroom observations by subject leaders, to improve teaching and learning.
- * Ensure that assessment data is analysed accurately and robustly to identify how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Most pupils start school with the skills and knowledge expected for their age. They make steady progress in the reception classes and most reach the levels expected of them by the end of the year. Progress in mathematical development is slower than in other areas.

Pupils make satisfactory progress and reach standards that are broadly average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Results over the past few years have been close to the

national trend in Year 2 and Year 6. Improvement in science has been consistent but there has been a decline in mathematics because not enough pupils are achieving the higher levels. In 2005 results in Year 6 improved in English and science but targets were not met because the progress pupils make is not yet being monitored systematically and there are some inconsistencies in teaching.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are supported well and make good progress in specialist support groups but their progress is less good in lessons where work is not matched to their needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of pupils are good. Their attitudes and behaviour around the school and in lessons are good. Pupils feel safe in school and they enjoy their lessons so attend regularly and arrive on time.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Since the last inspection the school has improved pupils' knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultural traditions such as the celebration of the Chinese New Year. Pupils make a contribution to the wider world community by supporting charity work in Africa and Eastern Europe. These activities are accompanied by the organisers coming into school to raise awareness of the problems faced in these locations. Pupils participate in the life of the school through the school council and as a result are confident about expressing their views and opinions. Pupils conduct themselves safely, are aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles, bring healthy lunches and snacks and participate in a range of sporting activities. The school has been awarded healthy school status.

Pupils have satisfactory basic skills preparing them for later life. They learn to become responsible individuals who are confident in speaking to one another and to adults. The fund raising activities of the school council, to buy equipment for the playground, are teaching pupils effectively about enterprise.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There are good relationships so pupils work hard, behave well and listen attentively. They enjoy their lessons, are keen to answer questions and demonstrate to each other what they can do. When taking part in practical activities, such as measuring different objects in mathematics, pupils work with particular enthusiasm. In the best lessons the pace is brisk and skilful questioning gives good opportunities for pupils to develop and explain their ideas. Teachers use a wide variety of resources such as puppets, games and lively texts to interest all pupils so they make good progress.

However, there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. In the less effective lessons the main focus of what pupils will be learning is not clear and teachers' expectations are too low. Too often the same work is given to pupils of different abilities so more able pupils find the work too easy and some pupils find the work too difficult. Progress is limited when undemanding worksheets are used or pupils are merely required to copy writing.

Pupils' work is well presented and marked regularly but teachers' comments do not tell the pupils how well they are doing or precisely how they can improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is organised and resourced appropriately and meets statutory requirements. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. It is used appropriately to support learning in other subjects such as mathematics and art. In some classes, pupils have good opportunities to practise their literacy skills in other subjects by writing their own reports. Personal, social, health and citizenship education prepare pupils appropriately for life outside school.

Pupils enjoy lessons and many participate eagerly in a satisfactory range of activities organised for them outside school hours. Learning is made enjoyable and relevant by the good use of visits and visitors to the school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The school is a calm and friendly place where pupils learn happily. The procedures governing their safety and protection are satisfactory, but records and staff training are not up-dated regularly. The school provides good day-to-day care for its pupils so they feel safe.

The guidance provided to help pupils improve their work is inconsistent because progress is not monitored rigorously. Although some pupils are aware of their targets these are too general and often relate to presentation or punctuation so pupils do not know the level at which they are working or what they need to do to improve.

There is good additional support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities in literacy and, more recently, numeracy. In these sessions they make good progress. Some pupils have been identified as gifted and talented but the additional support for these pupils is yet to have an impact on their progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The day to day running of the school is effective and provides an orderly environment. Sufficient staff and resources exist to

fulfil curriculum demands. There are good links with other organisations including the local secondary school, sports clubs and church which contribute well to the good personal development of pupils. There has been an appropriate focus on ICT, increased writing opportunities and cultural provision which has led to improvement in these areas since the previous inspection.

Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities but do not have sufficient understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school to identify where further improvements need to be made.

The focus on academic improvement lacks rigour. The school's self-evaluation is inaccurate and over-generous because improvement priorities are not linked to careful analysis of pupils' progress. The monitoring of the quality of teaching does not take place often enough and is limited to senior leaders. Middle managers review planning and monitor pupils' work but their effectiveness is restricted by their lack of involvement in classroom monitoring. The local authority has provided good advice, correctly identifying areas for the school to improve, but this is yet to be acted upon.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Pupils

On behalf of all the inspectors, I would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and seeing you in lessons.

We think you work hard for your teachers and enjoy your lessons. You behave well, are polite and care for each other. The visits you go on and visitors who come to your school are interesting and fun. Those of you who saw the road safety show recently really enjoyed it. You and your parents like your school.

We think your school gives you a satisfactory education. To make it even better we have asked your headteacher and teachers to help you do as well as you possibly can, especially in mathematics, by making sure the work you do isn't too hard or too easy. We have also asked them to keep checking how well you are doing so that they know if they need to do anything differently. We would like to thank you again for making us so welcome and hope that you carry on working hard and enjoying being at school.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Kraft

Her Majesty's Inspector