



# Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Better  
education  
and care

**Unique Reference Number** 117377  
**LEA** HERTFORDSHIRE LEA  
**Inspection number** 280059  
**Inspection dates** 30 January 2006 to 31 January 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs. Joyce Cox LI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Shenley Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		HP2 7JZ
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01442 211963
<b>Number on roll</b>	158	<b>Fax number</b>	01442253765
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs. Hilary Robins
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	19 June 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs. Hellen Phillimore

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This smaller than average Infant and Nursery school serves the area of Woodhall Farm which is situated to the north east of Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire. The children come from a wide range of social, economic and ethnic backgrounds. The large majority of the children are of White British heritage with a fifth of the children coming from minority ethnic backgrounds. A small number of children in the Nursery are at an early stage of learning English. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals varies from year to year but is currently below average. Fewer proportion of pupils have learning or physical difficulties than in most schools. Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery varies from year to year but is usually slightly below average when compared to children of a similar age. The Nursery has just received the Hertfordshire Quality Standards award for its Early Years provision.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

Inspectors agree with the school that it provides a satisfactory quality of education. This is because there are areas of leadership and management which are currently being improved. Most parents are very happy with the school which is very popular in the local community. They feel that the staff take very good care of the pupils. From a slightly below average starting point on entry, children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a flying start and achieve well. The majority of children attain the expected levels on entry to Year 1. Standards at the end of Year 2 in 2005 were above average in reading and broadly average in mathematics and writing. Teaching is predominately good. Although not all teachers share with pupils what they are to learn in lessons. The atmosphere in the school is calm and positive. The school welcomes everyone and makes all children feel valued. The views of staff and parents are sought and acted upon. Leadership and management are satisfactory and the headteacher, governors and senior leaders are currently developing systems to look at and evaluate all aspects of the school's work. Subject leaders' roles have improved since the last inspection. However, more work is needed to make sure that they play a full part in raising pupils' achievement in their particular subjects. The school gives satisfactory value for money. Improvement made since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory and enhanced by its participation in a national programme designed to improve leadership at all levels.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Continue to develop rigorous systems for senior leaders and governors to look critically at all aspects of the school. - Carry on improving the way subject leaders influence standards and achievement in their subjects. - Make sure all teachers share with pupils what they are to learn in lessons.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The school data show that most pupils make good progress and the inspectors agree with this analysis. A number of children start in the Nursery at an early stage of learning and have much ground to make up. In particular they have weaknesses in their communication, language and literacy skills and in their personal and social skills. In addition some children are at a very early stage of learning English. Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because the teaching and curriculum are good. By the time they start in Year 1 the majority have reached the expected levels. The progress of the pupils is satisfactory in Year 1 and good in Year 2. Pupils' achievement is good overall. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average in reading and broadly average in writing and mathematics. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well because they are quickly identified and supported effectively by teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants. Those children from minority ethnic backgrounds also achieve well and those at an early

stage of learning English make good progress in speaking English due to the good focus on encouraging children's communication skills in the Nursery.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils behave well, enjoy school and have very good relationships with staff and one another. As a result, the school is a happy and caring place in which pupils make good progress. Pupils enjoy helping others around the school. Teachers discuss informally with pupils what they think of their school but pupils do not play an active part in making decisions. Pupils learn what to do to stay safe and they know their concerns will be listened to and acted on. They know that it is important to eat healthy food and to participate in regular exercise. Their understanding of developing a healthy lifestyle is enhanced by the good range of physical activities such as football and tennis clubs. Also a specialist physical education teacher visits the school each week to work with pupils in Year 2. Pupils love these sessions and are passionate about sport. Learners make good progress in acquiring the numeracy and literacy skills, which will help in later life. Attendance is slightly below average. However, the school works hard to promote good attendance. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have good opportunities to reflect and think of others during assemblies.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good and is a major reason for children's good achievement. Most teachers are very experienced and confident. Their good relationships and classroom management skills, improved planning and knowledge of the children helps pupils to succeed. Teaching is often lively and animated and secures and maintains the interest of the pupils. This is particularly true in the Foundation Stage where staff work tirelessly to help bring children's learning to life. There is normally a buzz of excitement as children take part happily and enthusiastically in an enticing range of imaginative tasks. For instance Reception children successfully devised different ways to record how many objects they could fit inside a wellington boot. Nursery nurses and teaching assistants are capable, competent and highly valued members of the team. They happily and confidently provide good support in lessons to all children and in particular to those with learning difficulties and disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English. The main areas to improve in teaching are to make sure that all teachers tell pupils what they are to learn in lessons and then to check their learning at the end of lessons. There are satisfactory systems to check on pupils' progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

Overall, the curriculum and supporting activities offered to pupils is good. The work pupils do is varied, interesting and covers all the appropriate areas of learning and subjects. There are many meaningful links between the different subjects and the shared teaching areas and high quality resources are used well. Computers and other forms of technology are used satisfactorily to support learning. The school is in the process of developing this area of learning. Children in Nursery and Reception classes enjoy participating in a very interesting range of learning experiences. Year 2 pupils enjoy physical education lessons taught by a physical education specialist. All pupils thoroughly enjoy a range of physical activities and develop good skills. Pupils learn to play tennis and football during lunchtimes and this helps to develop their interest in sport. They also enjoy learning to play musical instruments such as the ocarina. Pupils' learning is enriched by a good range of visits to museums, environmental centres and other local places of interest. Members of the community visit the school to talk about various aspects of their work and this helps pupils develop their understanding of the world of work.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a friendly and caring school, where pupils are happy and looked after well. Pupils and parents know that their concerns will be listened to by all staff. For example, the school provides special counselling sessions for a group of pupils who were traumatised by the Buncefield oil depot fire. Child protection arrangements are clear and pupils who are at risk are identified early and supported effectively. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is good. There are good links with the local playgroup, and these help children settle very quickly when they join the school. Throughout the year older pupils enjoy participating in a range of activities at the nearby junior school and this ensures that the transition of pupils from one school to another is seamless and unthreatening. The attractive school grounds provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment for pupils who participate in an exciting range of outdoor activities. This helps promote calm and trouble-free play and lunchtimes.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has worked hard since her appointment to set a clear direction for the school and to begin to improve provision in some significant aspects. For instance she has implemented changes to curriculum planning and to the way in which pupils' progress is recorded. Together with the deputy headteacher and as part of a national initiative she has begun to introduce systems to look at and evaluate the school's work. This work needs to continue to make sure that the school is very clear about its priorities for improvement. Parents are consulted about school improvement and the vast majority of parents are very happy with what

the school provides. Subject leaders' roles have improved since the last inspection but as yet they do not have a complete understanding of ways to improve achievement in their subjects. The governance of the school is satisfactory. The chair of governors is relatively new but is beginning to gain a clear understanding of the strengths and areas needing improvement in the school. Other governors are also comparatively new to their roles and are currently receiving training. Many of the strategies currently in place to improve the school are fairly new and have not yet had an impact in some areas. Therefore the capacity to improve is satisfactory.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

Thank you for welcoming us to your school when we visited. It was good to talk to some of you and to watch you working and playing. This letter is to tell you about some of the important things we saw. You are lucky at your school because the headteacher, teachers and all the other staff encourage you to be happy at school, to be healthy and to stay safe and they make sure you learn lots of new things. You behave well and like coming to school and this makes it easier for the teachers to teach and for you to learn. Your headteacher and all the teachers are keen to make the school even better for you. We think that to do this they need to carry on looking at ways to improve the school. Also, it would be good if all your teachers share with you what you are to learn in each of your lessons. It was great to find out that you are happy at school and that your parents say you love coming to school. Keep working hard at Holtsmere End.