



Heathmere Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101029
Local Authority Wandsworth
Inspection number 285949
Inspection dates 14–15 November 2006
Reporting inspector Richard Cheetham

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Alton Road
School category	Community		Roehampton
Age range of pupils	3–11		London SW15 4LJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02087889057
Number on roll (school)	340	Fax number	02087850141
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Judith Chegwidden
		Headteacher	Pramilla Fouracre
Date of previous school inspection	17 June 2002		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 14–15 November 2006	Inspection number 285949
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school. It serves a culturally diverse and economically deprived community. Just under half the pupils are entitled to free school meals. Children's attainment on entry is below average. Almost half the pupils have White British backgrounds and the remainder are from minority ethnic groups, the largest of which is Black British African. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is above average as is the proportion learning English as an additional language. A high proportion of pupils starts or leaves the school in mid year. There have been three changes of headteacher since the school was last inspected. The current headteacher has been in post since the start of this school year.

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 a satisfactory education and is emerging from a period of instability and temporary leadership. This resulted in slow progress following the previous inspection. The newly appointed headteacher has done a lot in a short time to build on the better progress made over the last two years. She is leading further rapid improvements and the school has made satisfactory progress overall since the previous inspection. The school is soundly led and managed, and has a satisfactory capacity to make further improvement.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage because of good teaching and provision. They reach average standards by the start of Year 1. Pupils make steady progress through Key Stages 1 and 2 because the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. However, this is not consistent in Key Stage 2 because of some inadequate teaching in Year 4. Standards have improved and at the end of Year 6 they are broadly average in mathematics and science but below average in English. Pupils make satisfactory progress in most respects but do not do as well in reading because they do not practise their skills often enough and some are reluctant to read. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans because good provision is managed well.

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum for its pupils and gives them a good range of extra activities. It takes good care of its pupils' personal and pastoral needs but academic guidance is not so strong. It is beginning to set them challenging targets but this is not yet having enough impact in subjects other than mathematics. The headteacher has won the confidence of staff and parents who have a high regard for the school. She has raised staff morale, increased expectations and has taken the right initial steps to bring about improvement. Some of these have had a rapid impact. For instance, pupils' behaviour has improved and pupils are making faster progress in mathematics. Subject leadership is currently satisfactory but the arrangements are temporary and not having sufficient impact on improving teaching and learning and raising standards in their subjects. The school is monitoring and evaluating its effectiveness adequately. Senior staff and governors are preparing a school improvement plan but this is not yet in place. Urgent steps are planned to improve the accommodation because its upkeep has been neglected.

Pupils enjoy school and play a full part in the school's extra activities. Their attendance, has improved significantly but remains just below average. They know about staying safe and keeping healthy through taking part in sports but do not always make healthy food choices. They behave well and mix together easily. The school council gives them a voice in school affairs such as improving the quality of lunches. Their progress in most basic skills is preparing them satisfactorily for later life.

What the school should do to improve further

- Give pupils more opportunities to practise and enjoy reading in order to raise their achievement
- Strengthen subject leadership to support the school's self evaluation, raise standards and improve teaching and learning
- Set more challenging targets for pupils' attainment in English and science by using pupils' progress data more effectively

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children make good progress and achieve well in the Foundation Stage, particularly in creative and social development. Most reach average standards in the areas of learning by the start of Year 1 except for language development, where their progress is slower. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and reach average standards in writing, mathematics and science because of sound teaching. They make slower progress in reading. Their progress in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall but slows when the teaching is less challenging in Year 4. By the end of Year 6, they reach average standards in mathematics and science but are below average in English because they do not make enough progress in reading. This is due to continuing uncertainties in understanding new words in context and reluctance to practise their reading skills, especially among boys. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress and those learning English as an additional language make similar progress to that of most others in the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory overall. They are friendly and polite. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils have a sound understanding of their own and others' cultures but do not develop their own ideas or opinions frequently enough. They enjoy visits from a theatre company as part of the school's Black History Celebration, and also go to museums to reinforce their learning in history. The younger pupils study the locality and one commented excitedly when going to make a traffic survey, 'We're all going on a trip.' Pupils support charities through their participation in fund raising but do not often take the initiative in proposing worthy causes. They also support each other as they raise money towards school trips. Pupils contribute soundly to the school through the school council and are helping to bring about improvements such as suggestions for better lunches now being provided. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of being healthy and staying safe but are sometimes too easily satisfied with their efforts. Attendance and punctuality have improved significantly and are now just below the national average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The good teaching in the Foundation Stage is exemplified by good planning, high expectations, brisk pace and a well-managed balance of pupil choice and teacher-led activities. Pupils are happily engaged in tasks which challenge and interest them and they make good progress. Throughout the school, teachers plan their lessons carefully and establish a calm working atmosphere. In a few weaker lessons in Year 4, pupils make slow progress because expectations are too low. Pupils' interest is not engaged because tasks are not matched to their range of needs and the pace of learning is slow. In all classes, pupils have a positive attitude to work, behave well and enjoy good relationships with their teachers and other pupils.

The marking of pupils' work, although carried out regularly, is inconsistent in its effectiveness. The best marking makes evaluative comments, sets achievable targets and pupils act on them to make good progress, for instance in some of their writing. There has been an improvement in the presentation of pupils' work this term because of higher teacher expectations.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Lessons are planned using national guidance and pupils are made aware of what they are expected to learn. However, the curriculum lacks interest and relevance in some aspects and the school plans to develop these areas for instance, by using literacy and numeracy skills more widely in other subjects. The headteacher is successfully raising the profile of music in the school and has established a link with the Wandsworth music festival. The Foundation Stage curriculum is based on a thorough understanding of the way in which young children learn and provides varied activities to stimulate learning. The curriculum is enriched by the large number of well-attended after-school clubs run by the school staff. Outside speakers and performers extend what the school offers, for example during 'Black History' week.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Pupils receive effective pastoral support from staff and enjoy good relationships with them. Parents and pupils appreciate the breakfast club which is also helping to improve punctuality. The current procedures for improving attendance are working soundly because attendance is increasing but there is more the school can do. The school day is organised well to ensure pupils' safety and to improve their behaviour and social skills. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are supported well through accurate diagnosis of

need and follow up work by school staff and outside agencies. The tracking of pupils' academic progress is satisfactory. It has started to be used to set more challenging targets for pupils in mathematics but this is not yet established practice in other subjects and is not making a significant contribution to improving pupils' progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Following the period of temporary headship, the new headteacher has quickly come to grips with the issues the school faces and is committed to raising achievement and improving teaching and learning. She has re-evaluated provision and her findings match those of this inspection. She is working effectively with governors and staff to build on the school's strengths and remedy its weaknesses. She is supported soundly by her senior team and phase leaders. Current arrangements for subject leadership are temporary. Staff take them on voluntarily and the headteacher seeks a more permanent, effective arrangement. The school plans improvement. Some initiatives are already having an impact but there has not been enough time for the effect of leadership to be seen in overall school performance. The school has some means of judging its effectiveness such as the monitoring of teaching and learning but these are not part of a systematic process. Governors are soundly organised. They oversee school finances prudently and are starting to be more influential in school improvement planning. In the absence of a detailed plan, senior staff and governor decisions have set the short term priorities. However, these are not part of an action plan so that progress can be evaluated. The most urgent accommodation issues are being tackled but a longer-term refurbishment plan has yet to be agreed.

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Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for telling us what you think of it. We enjoyed watching you learn and looking at your work in books and around the school. We know that you like school and we found that you behave well and are polite. Your new headteacher has made a good start and has already made some improvements. She and the other adults are planning others such as improving the toilets. She is taking stock of what the school is good at and where it needs to get better and we know she takes into account what you and your parents say. We want the staff to help her continue with the improvements so we have asked her to give them responsibility to develop all the subjects you learn about.

Children in the Foundation Stage make a good start to school life because the staff provide interesting activities to help them learn. Your teachers teach you satisfactorily and this has helped to raise standards in writing, mathematics and science since the last time the school was inspected but you need to do better at reading. We have asked the adults to help you more and you could help yourselves by reading more widely for enjoyment and practice. You have a lot of extra activities each week and go to different places to help you learn. The adults look after you and give up a lot of their time to run your extra clubs. They set you challenging targets in mathematics and you are making good progress towards them. We have asked them to do the same in English and science so that you can make good progress in these subjects too. You know about getting to school on time and this has improved lately and so has your attendance. You can all try even harder to win the awards for good attendance.

Best wishes for the future

Yours truly,

Richard Cheetham

Lead inspector