



Whitefriars First and Middle School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102184
Local Authority Harrow
Inspection number 286301
Inspection dates 13–14 November 2006
Reporting inspector Sue Vale

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

The inspection of the day care was carried out under Children Act 1989: Part XA (as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000) and, where (funded) nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Type of school	Middle deemed primary	School address	Whitefriars Avenue
School category	Community		Wealdstone
Age range of pupils	3–12		Harrow HA3 5RQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0208 4272080
Number on roll (school)	443	Fax number	0208 8612651
Number on roll (day care)	12	Chair	Ms M L Nolan
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Headteacher	Mrs L Pritchard
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2001		
Date of previous day care inspection	17 November 2004		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–12	13–14 November 2006	286301

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional inspectors and an Additional Inspector for child care.

Description of the school

Whitefriars First and Middle School is a larger than average school in the West London Borough of Harrow. Attainment on entry into nursery is below what is expected for children of this age in most areas and well below in communication language and literacy. The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic communities and approximately two thirds are learning English as an additional language. There is much higher than average percentage of refugees. Mobility is very high. Approximately a third of the school is entitled to free school meals. A quarter of pupils are identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities. The school is currently undergoing major building works as it develops into a children's centre. There is after school care provided by the school, and currently there are 12 children attending.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Whitefriars First and Middle School provides a satisfactory standard of education with some good features. As pupils' commented, 'the school is very friendly', 'it's getting better and we do more projects'.

Most of the pupils who start at the school in the nursery start with skills which are below expectations for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy and personal social and emotional development. Overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage and the progress they make are satisfactory.

Overall, standards and achievement are satisfactory. Pupils who are at the school in Year 2 and who are still at the school in Year 6 make satisfactory progress in their learning. There are many factors which affect pupils' progress and achievement. These include the exceptionally high number of pupils starting and leaving school other than at expected times and also those who are at the very early stages of learning English. Around two thirds of pupils are learning English as an additional language. Because of a good curriculum and pupil's interest in learning, pupils make satisfactory progress to reach below average standards in science by the end of Year 6. The focus by the school on raising standards in English has had a positive impact and standards have improved in Year 6 although they remain below average. Standards in mathematics are well below average.

Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good elements. In the better lessons pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well because work is interesting and relevant. In these lessons teachers give pupils opportunities to explain and to think and to give their own views and opinions. In some lessons work is not well matched to pupils' individual needs and not challenging enough for the higher attaining pupils.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils behave well and show a real enjoyment of learning. Attendance is broadly average; this is affected by the high movement of pupils in and out of the school. Pupils receive satisfactory care, guidance and support. The curriculum is good and is the main factor why pupils are so interested in learning. It is enriched by extra curricular activities with a strong emphasis on the wider development of pupils' learning. This is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection.

The provision for the twelve children attending after school day care is inadequate as a result of a failure to comply with two national standards and three regulatory requirements. Although the schools overall effectiveness is satisfactory, its performance in one respect is inadequate. Before its next Section 5 inspection, Ofsted inspectors may visit the school to monitor the progress that it has made in remedying this weakness. The school would receive two-five days notice of such a visit.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher and leadership team are aware of what needs to be done to move the school on. The governors are supportive and committed to doing their best for the school and its pupils.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement and standards in mathematics.
- Improve the achievement of the higher attaining pupils by providing activities that challenge their learning so that they reach higher standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. This progress continues as they move through the school so that they reach broadly average standards by Year 2. Standards reached by Year 6 and Year 7 are well below average, although they are improving in English and science. Very high numbers of pupils join and leave this school throughout the year and overall their skills knowledge and understanding, when joining the school are well below average. Notably, pupils' speaking skills are especially underdeveloped and many pupils are new to learning English. Overall, achievement is satisfactory when considering pupils' complex needs and high mobility. The movement in and out of school impacts on all pupils' progress. Although teachers resettle their classes well and ensure that those new to the school are integrated successfully, this inevitably undermines the achievement of pupils.

The school has rightly placed an emphasis on helping pupils to communicate well and use more complex vocabulary. They are managing this successfully with pupils making satisfactory progress in reading and writing. Following a fall in science standards in the 2005 National tests, standards rose in 2006. This improvement was summed up by one pupil who said that, 'we are doing far more experiments this year and we love this'. Currently, the school is rightly working on raising achievement in mathematics because this is inadequate. In mathematics, pupils are not consistently challenged and this slows their progress. The recent introduction of more mental mathematical activities is helping standards to rise.

Throughout the school, higher attaining pupils do not reach high enough levels for their capabilities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being is good. They enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. This is reflected in improving attendance which is now broadly average. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and value the opportunity to run their own healthy tuck shop. Pupils make a positive contribution to the community such as when making a presentation to a local company about information and communication technology (ICT). They know about how to be safe in school and out in the wider world and raise money for a number of charities. Pupils agree that their behaviour is good and that they are considerate to each other. The good range of visits and activities are said by pupils to, 'help us to enjoy learning

and understand about how to work in teams by cooperating with each other'. Pupils are prepared satisfactorily for their future lives considering the effective development of their personal skills and the strong promotion of speaking skills and overall satisfactory academic achievement.

Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a good knowledge about different cultural and religious beliefs and say that they hold debates that help them to understand different points of view and develop tolerance and respect for each other.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Good relationships between teachers and pupils contribute well to their learning. Pupils are keen to please their teachers and contribute their ideas enthusiastically in lessons. Teachers encourage pupils to speak and use new vocabulary, especially in discussions groups, and when working in pairs. Pupils enjoy the lessons in which they are actively involved in their learning such as when doing science experiments because 'It is fun but still learning as well'. Although grouping pupils by ability for English has been successful in allowing teachers to provide work more closely matched to most pupils' abilities, some of the work planned does not always challenge pupils with higher ability. In particular, in mathematics, learning is not always planned sufficiently well for these higher attaining pupils. Also in mathematics teachers do not always demonstrate skills and show pupils how to record their calculations to aid their learning to best effect.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum. There is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' literacy skills and there are sound opportunities for pupils to practise and improve these skills in other areas of the curriculum. Interesting links are made across subjects to encourage the development of pupils' personal and social skills and to make learning more relevant for them. Pupils learn to stay safe and healthy and to express their feelings within discussions known as circle time and the effective personal, social and health education programme. Links with a school in Uganda raises pupils' awareness of diversity within society and of wider global issues, such as careful use of world resources. The curriculum is greatly enhanced by a good range of visits, visitors and well-attended clubs and activities in and beyond the school day such as the Year 7 lunch club. These activities involve pupils with sports, arts and cultural experiences that extend their learning and add to their enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are satisfactory, as most parents agree. However there are deficiencies on the checks made on staff and consequently the school does not fully meet government guidelines on safeguarding learners. Pupils feel valued and safe within this racially harmonious environment; they are confident that an adult or a playground buddy will always be ready to listen to them and help them if they need it. They say problems among pupils are dealt with promptly and effectively. The school's good induction procedures ensure that pupils who arrive during term-time settle quickly. Family learning programmes provide parents with some of the skills and knowledge needed for them to support their children at home. The needs of pupils with English as an additional language are assessed at an early stage and effective support is put in place to meet their needs. As a result they make good progress in speaking. Pupils know their targets for improvement in English but, are less clear about how to improve their mathematical skills. In addition marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and not always helpful in guiding and supporting pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management is satisfactory overall. The head teacher along with the senior management team has clearly identified areas for development and strongly promotes the personal development and well-being of learners.

Self-evaluation is mostly accurate and the leadership team have identified the key areas for improvement. However there are areas where the school has over estimated its own effectiveness. There is evidence of progress in areas identified for development, such as improving teaching and learning, raising standards in English and science and this demonstrates that the school has the capacity to improve still further.

The governors are supportive and committed to doing their best for the school and its pupils. They provide strategic direction and have a realistic view of the strengths and areas for development of the school. They ask challenging questions to hold the school to account.

Effectiveness of registered day care

Grade: 4

The outcomes for children are inadequate as a result of a failure to comply with two national standards and three regulatory requirements. This compromises children's safety.

Despite this, there are strengths in the provision. Staff create a welcoming, relaxed atmosphere that means children settle quickly and interact well. Children of different ages mix well and are caring towards each other, for example an older child helped a younger child in a craft activity. Behaviour is good and all children are included. Staff

plan an outline of the day and activities are well organised. Although there is not a broad range of activities, children enjoy taking part, especially when they have the autonomy to choose.

Parents are kept informed about their child's well-being. A parent said she appreciated the care provided and felt she could talk to staff if she had concerns.

Children are supported in developing good hygiene, for example they wash their hands before they share a snack. There is plenty of food offered although healthy options are limited. If a child has an accident staff manage the situation well and ensure the parent is informed.

Most documents are in place and this supports children's well-being. At the last inspection the need for parental consent for administering medicines was raised. This system is now in place.

The provider is in breach of three regulations, and as a result children's safety is at risk. The times children attend are not consistently recorded in the register. Not all records contain children's dates of birth. Ofsted was not informed that the premises had changed. Whilst, the environment is secure and the garden enclosed, not all potential hazards have been addressed. The floors are mopped whilst the children are playing, compromising their safety and enjoyment. Cleaning products in the toilet are accessible to children and hazards remain in the garden.

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints about the registered day care that required Ofsted or the school to take action so that the day care continued to meet the National Standards. The school is required to keep a record of complaints about the registered day care made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints about the registered day care other than those made to Ofsted.

Recommendations or actions to improve the registered day care

- Ensure that Ofsted are informed of any significant changes, to include any change in premises.
- Ensure register accurately reflects children's hours of attendance.
- Ensure children's records contain the required details, including the date of birth of each child.
- Ensure children are not exposed to hazards in the environment.

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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?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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	4
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	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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?	2
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?	No
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

The effectiveness of the registered day care

The quality and standards of the registered day care	4
How effective is the day care in helping children to be healthy?	3
How effective is the day care in protecting children and helping them to stay safe?	4
How effective is the day care in helping children to achieve and enjoy their learning?	3
How effective is the day care in helping children to make a positive contribution?	3
How effectively is the day care organised?	4
Does the day care meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides?	No
Has the day care improved since the last inspection?	No
Does the day care require enforcement action?	No
Does the day care require a notice to improve?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed meeting and talking with you and looking at your work.

Here are the things that we think are best about your school.

- You behave really well.
- You are interested in your lessons and you want to learn.
- Your teachers look after you well.
- What you learn is interesting and you have lots of opportunities to experience lots of different things.
- Those of you who are new to learning English make satisfactory progress.

These are the things that we think could be better.

- Some of you need to work harder in mathematics so that you achieve better.
- Teachers need to plan work that will stretch the more able pupils better, so that you can achieve even more in your learning.

Best wishes

Sue Vale

Lead Inspector