

# Pinner Park Middle School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102194
<b>Local Authority</b>	Harrow
<b>Inspection number</b>	286303
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Graham Lee

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Middle deemed primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	8–12
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	345
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Barry Lewis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Katrina Mildner
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 June 2001
<b>School address</b>	Melbourne Avenue Pinner HA5 5TJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8863 1239
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8424 8618

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<b>Age group</b>	8–12
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This larger than average school serves a culturally diverse, but relatively advantaged community. Nearly half the pupils are of White British origin and a further quarter of Indian heritage. The remainder are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than average and increasing. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. The school population is relatively stable although a number of pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 and others join throughout Year 7. A new headteacher started in April 2007 following several years without a permanent incumbent. The school recently gained the Healthy Schools award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Pinner Park Middle School provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils, with some good features. It is emerging from an extended period of uncertainty without a permanent headteacher. During that time the good quality of care and support has been maintained. As a result pupils feel safe, enjoy everything that school has to offer and generally behave well. The school's efforts, however, have not been sufficiently focussed on raising pupils' achievement in recent times. Pupils have continued to reach well above average standards by the end of Year 6. Their progress from very good starting points is satisfactory overall but some pupils have not done as well as they should have, particularly in mathematics and science.

The new headteacher has rapidly secured the confidence of the school community. One parent, representing the views of several, commented 'We expect the school to move forward now as the new head appears to be a woman of vision with excellent people skills.' She has recognised the school's strengths but has quickly gained a realistic picture of its weaknesses as well. Good strategies have already been identified to address them. The monitoring of teaching by leaders at all levels has not been systematic enough to give them a clear enough view of the quality of teaching and learning and of how it impacts on pupils' achievement.

Pupils' satisfactory progress is the result of satisfactory teaching and learning overall although there is some strong practice in the school. Teachers have good relationships with their classes and make the purpose of lessons clear to pupils. Sometimes, activities do not challenge pupils sufficiently and work is too easy for them. This is particularly the case in some mathematics lessons which are taught in ability groups. Generally, teacher's marking does not give pupils a clear idea of how they might improve their work. The school tracks pupils' progress from year to year but does not use this information to identify potential underachievement and to set challenging targets for improvement. Consequently, gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding are not identified at an early enough stage. Pupils with a range of learning difficulties make good progress and are included in all the school's activities because they are very well supported and their progress is monitored carefully. One parent commented, 'We cannot praise the way our son's special needs have been supported enough.'

The good curriculum is a strength of the school. It is considerably enriched through visits and a variety of clubs. In particular, the school has a long tradition of high quality provision in music. Many pupils learn to play instruments and have the opportunity to perform in the school's orchestras and choir. All of these activities develop pupils' skills and interests and make a considerable contribution to their creativity and enjoyment. The physical activities, in particular, enhance pupils' good understanding of the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle. The curriculum in Year 7 is adapted well in order to prepare pupils for their secondary education. It includes some specialist teaching and a partnership with the local high school to provide aspects of the curriculum such as food technology. Consequently, most pupils make satisfactory or better progress in Year 7 and are well prepared for their secondary education and the world beyond.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teaching challenges all pupils to achieve as well as they can, particularly in mathematics and science, and that marking helps them to improve their work.
- Use tracking information to identify underachievement at an early stage and to set challenging targets for improvement for all pupils.

- Develop the monitoring and evaluation skills of leaders at all levels in order to improve teaching and learning and raise achievement.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They arrive at the school having reached high standards in Year 2, a year prior to their transfer. Generally, they make satisfactory progress as they move through the school and reach standards in English, mathematics and science that have been significantly above average overall for many years by the end of Year 6. Around half of pupils reach the higher levels in each of these subjects, which is better than in most schools. Standards rose in English in 2006 as a result of a focus on the subject and most pupils had made at least satisfactory progress. In mathematics and science a number of pupils of all abilities did not make sufficient progress between Year 4 and Year 6. The school is aware that pupils of Indian heritage perform particularly well and has identified that some White British boys underachieve. They are investigating ways of addressing this issue.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including the social, moral, cultural and spiritual aspects is good. Their behaviour is good overall, especially in lessons where most show positive attitudes to learning. One pupil, typical of the views of many, said 'we work hard together'. Some pupils do present challenging behaviour around the school but it is generally managed well. The school is a harmonious community in which racist and bullying incidents are rare and learners feel confident that any problems they may have will be dealt with by the adults around them. Attendance is average although it is adversely affected by some families taking holidays in term time. The school is introducing more rigorous systems to deter this practice. As well as the regular exercise they take in school, pupils are aware of the importance of a balanced diet in adopting a healthy lifestyle. Learners make a good contribution to the community, through activities such as fund raising for charity and participation in local and national events. Members from the school council express their views with confidence and have some influence on aspects of school life, for example, they added valuable support to the school's accreditation as a 'healthy school.'

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teachers generally have good subject knowledge which they demonstrate through clear explanations to pupils. They have a good partnership with a skilled team of teaching assistants who make a very good contribution to the quality of education, particularly for pupils with learning difficulties. Teachers often use questions well to challenge pupils' thinking and consolidate their understanding. For example, in a Year 7 mathematics lesson, the teacher developed pupils' understanding of estimation and problem solving through good use of interactive technology and opportunities for pupils to discuss the strategies they were using.

In some lessons, however, teachers talk for too long and do not engage pupils sufficiently. Consequently, pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their thinking. Because of weaknesses in assessment, teachers do not always match work to pupils' needs, resulting in insufficient challenge for some. Marking generally consists of ticks and supportive comments but gives pupils little guidance on what they need to do to move on in their learning.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum ensures that pupils maintain well above average standards but also allows them to be creative and enjoy their education. Pupils are developing good skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT) and use these to support learning in other subjects. For instance, in a Year 6 lesson pupils were making very good use of computer technology to deepen their understanding of 'pop art.' However, some opportunities to develop links between subjects are missed, for example, in writing for different audiences and purposes. The effective support for pupils experiencing difficulties ensures that they make good progress. The school provides well for pupils' personal development which helps them to develop good social skills and an understanding of citizenship. Enrichment is a real strength of the school. As well as the many musical opportunities pupils are able to participate in clubs as diverse as Spanish, gardening, drama and tennis to name a just a few of the many available.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The school provides strong pastoral support. It takes good care of its pupils and works in close partnership with a range of outside agencies to meet the needs of its vulnerable children and ensure that they are able to participate in all that the school has to offer. However, academic guidance is weaker. Teachers do not make enough use of the school's tracking data to monitor pupils' progress and to identify the next steps in their learning. Target setting is at the early stages of development. Many pupils are unaware of their targets or, at best, are uncertain about how they help them to improve their work. The exception to this is for pupils with learning difficulties who have very precise targets and are fully involved in assessing how well they are doing. The school has a generally good relationship with parents although some have concerns about the impact of the uncertainties of the past few years and others do not feel that the school communicates well with them. There is some justification in this concern, which the new headteacher is already addressing.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new headteacher has quickly established herself and articulated a clear vision to all members of the school community. Consequently, there is a sense of optimism and eagerness to move forward after a period of uncertainty. She has quickly identified the most important things that need to be done in order to improve achievement. Therefore, whilst the record of improvement from the last inspection is mixed, the school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement. She is supported by an enthusiastic leadership team but, until now, there has been no established culture of monitoring and evaluation in the school. Consequently, the leadership team and core subject leaders have no clear picture of teaching and learning and achievement in their areas. Leadership of inclusion

is very effective and ensures that pupils who are new to English, or who are experiencing difficulties, are able to progress well. Governors have undergone a lot of changes over the last year. They are enthusiastic and committed but are still developing strategies that will enable them to fully hold the school to account.

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## Annex A

## 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>
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	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	No

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	4
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

4 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pinner Park Middle School, Pinner, HA5 5TJ

I am writing to thank you all for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed our time at Pinner Park and you all helped us by being so willing to talk to us. It is a shame that we didn't see too much of those of you in Year 6 because of SATs and in Year 5 as most of you were on the school journey. I hope you all enjoyed it! I thought you would like to know what we found out.

We found that the school gives you a satisfactory education overall although there are some good things as well. The school has been through an uncertain time recently but you and your parents told us that your new headteacher has made a good start. We agree, as she has lots of plans to make the school even better for you. She gets lots of help from all the teachers although we think they need to do more checking up on how well you are doing.

You reach well above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time you go on to high school and you are well prepared. The teachers help you to do this but we think that some of you could do even better, particularly in mathematics and science. We want them to make better use of the information they have about how well you are doing to set you targets to achieve even more. We also want them to give you more ideas on how to improve your work when they are marking your books. Those of you who find things a little bit more difficult do well because of the very good support you get from the teaching assistants.

We were impressed with how positive you were about the school and how much you enjoyed your lessons. We also thought most of you behaved well and were very polite. Well done! Everybody at the school looks after you very well. You are lucky to have lots of interesting extra things to do in sport and music especially. We were very impressed with how much you do in music and were lucky enough to hear some of you playing during the two days.

We are confident that under the leadership of your new headteacher the school will go from strength to strength and become even better for you. Best of luck to you all.

Yours truly

Graham Lee  
Lead Inspector