

Hounslow Heath Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102490
Local Authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	286394
Inspection date	25 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Graham Lee

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	372
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	P.S. Rob Bryan
Headteacher	Ms Kathryn Harper-Quinn
Date of previous school inspection	27 May 2002
School address	Martindale Road Hounslow TW4 7HE
Telephone number	020 8570 2562
Fax number	020 8570 9604

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. They evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, personal development and well being, teaching and learning, care, guidance and support and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, discussions with school leaders, governors, pupils and parents, examination of documentation and parental surveys. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included in this report.

Description of the school

This is a large infant and nursery school close to Heathrow Airport. It serves an area of considerable social and economic deprivation and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is much higher than average. Most pupils are of ethnic minority background and speak English as an additional language. A significant number are at the early stages of learning English. Pupils of Indian and Pakistani heritage are the largest groups and the remainder are from a wide range of backgrounds. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the usual times is much higher than is usually found. Several of these are asylum seekers or refugees. The school has a Centre for children with physical disabilities and medical needs, which currently has nine pupils on roll.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

'The entire staff of the school put their wholehearted effort into the all round development of the children', commented one parent, echoing the views of many. This confidence is well-placed because this is a good school, which is outstanding in the way it cares for and nurtures its diverse population. Consequently, pupils thrive in its supportive and happy environment. They feel secure and know how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They are very friendly, enjoy all that the school has to offer and achieve well.

Many parents rightly believe that 'much of the success of the school is down to the excellent leadership qualities of the headteacher', as one put it. Indeed the headteacher provides inspirational leadership. She has led the school successfully for many years and ensures that the personal and academic needs of every child are at the heart of its work. A close partnership has been developed with the local community and a wide range of outside agencies to enhance pupils' learning. Support for vulnerable pupils and their families is exemplary. This is illustrated very well through the successful integration of children with a range of complex needs in the Centre. This typifies the determination to include everybody in all aspects of school life.

Whilst most pupils make good progress to meet the challenging targets that have been set for them, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average by the time they leave. This reflects the low starting points of many children, including those who arrive with little or no English, and the high levels of mobility in the school. Those who join in the Foundation Stage and complete their education in the school attain significantly higher standards. Pupils achieve well because of consistently good teaching and learning. Teachers have good relationships with their classes and generally plan effectively to meet the needs of all the pupils. Pupils are involved in assessing their own learning and know what they have to do to improve. Increasingly effective systems for tracking pupils' progress are enabling teachers to identify quickly any who are falling behind and to provide extra help where it is needed. Good support enables those who are learning English to acquire rapidly the language they need to make sense of the curriculum. Occasionally, more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged.

Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in the enthusiastic way they talk about all aspects of school life and in their positive approaches to learning in lessons. It is also shown by the good attendance of the majority of pupils. However, despite the school's best efforts, a significant minority do not attend regularly enough and do not always achieve as well as they might as a consequence. Pupils' enjoyment has also been enhanced by a new curriculum, which is much improved since the last inspection. A themed approach allows pupils opportunities to be creative and to see how different parts of their learning fit together. Information and communication technology is also being used to support pupils' learning effectively in different subjects. The excitement of this curriculum was illustrated very effectively in an assembly, when pupils enjoyed an interactive presentation of their 'Black African Week' featuring mask-making, drumming, dancing, story telling, drama and many other activities. Pupils also appreciate the additional activities they are now offered.

The headteacher is very ably supported by an enthusiastic staff and an able leadership team. Though this team is comparatively new, it is highly skilled and gives outstanding direction to the work of the school. This is shared by all staff and is clearly focused on improving teaching and learning and raising achievement. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have put in place strategies to bring about improvement when necessary.

The impact of their work is not yet fully in evidence as it is still early days. Governors have developed well since the last inspection. They are fully involved in school life and offer support and challenge to school leaders. The school enjoys a very productive partnership with parents, who hold the school in high regard. Several commented on how the school actively seeks and acts on their views. Issues for the last inspection have mostly been addressed and the drive and commitment of senior leaders and staff indicate that the school has good capacity to improve still further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

When they begin life in the Nursery children's skills and understanding are very low overall and around half are at the early stages of learning English. Others join in the Reception year with a similar profile. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children make good progress because of a stimulating and welcoming learning environment. They quickly settle to school routines and enjoy a range of activities in all areas of their learning. They develop considerable levels of independence through exploring the world around them, both inside and out. At the same time, the adults skilfully guide other activities based on careful assessments of children's learning needs. There is a great emphasis on speaking and listening, which allows all pupils, and particularly those learning English, to develop their language skills. In spite of children's good progress, standards remain well below average by the time they enter Year 1, particularly in communication and language. The new Foundation Stage leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and is providing clear direction to the team, although new systems for planning and assessment have yet to be fully embedded.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that more able pupils are consistently challenged to achieve as well as they can.
- Work with parents to improve attendance.

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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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
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?	1

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

8 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hounslow Heath Infant and Nursery School, Hounslow, TW4 7HE

You may remember that I visited your school a little while ago with another inspector. I am writing to thank you all for being so friendly and helpful. We really enjoyed our day at Hounslow Heath and I thought you would like to know what we found out.

You and your parents are right to be proud of your school because it is a good school and it is outstanding in the way it looks after you all. You told us how much you enjoy school and what a friendly and caring place it is. We agree with you. Teachers plan a lot of interesting things for you to do and your Black African week looked like a lot of fun. We thought you worked hard in lessons and always try to do your best. Well done! You know how important it is to take lots of exercise and to eat healthy food.

You make a good start in the Nursery and Reception and carry on doing well in Years 1 and 2. Most of you reach your targets. Those of you who are learning English are given lots of help to make sure that you understand the language so that you can make good progress.

Many of your parents told us how much they think of your headteacher. She is a very good leader and knows all of you well. She gets lots of help from all the other staff, who are working hard to make things even better for you. We have asked them to do a couple of things which we think will help.

- We think that teachers can help some of you, who find things easier, to do even better in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Some of you do not come to school regularly enough, which means that you do not learn as much as you should. You and your parents can help by making sure you are at school every day.

Best of luck to you all.

Yours truly

Graham Lee

Lead inspector