



# Hamstead Junior School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 103895  
**Local Authority** Sandwell  
**Inspection number** 286801  
**Inspection date** 18 September 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Patricia Potheary

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>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	Hamstead Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Great Barr
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7-11		Birmingham B43 5BE
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 3571557
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	255	<b>Fax number</b>	0121 3571557
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	J A Moon
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Tim Bowen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 March 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Hamstead is a large junior school with nine classes. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and just over a third come from minority ethnic backgrounds. All pupils are fluent in English. Pupils come from a wide mix of social backgrounds. There are low numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals and very few pupils are looked after by the local authority. The school's roll is reducing each year. The school is part of a special project to raise attainment for pupils who experience personal and social difficulties.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Hamstead Junior is a good school where pupils have reached better than average standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science for several years. The leadership team has ensured that the school continues to help all pupils make good progress and achieve well. They have consulted widely and have an accurate view of where the school's strengths and weakness lie. They make regular improvements, take good advantage of what other schools and organisations have to offer and have a clear idea of how to go about making the school even better. Parents are largely positive about all aspects of the school.

The quality of teaching is good. Teachers regularly update their skills in making lessons interesting and pupils really enjoy what they do. As one pupil said, 'It's ever such a good school, I love it here'. Pupils develop well personally and are remarkably confident about their ability to achieve high standards and what they have to do to get there. This is due to the good care and guidance which all pupils receive, where their progress is carefully tracked and effective support given. The most vulnerable pupils, including those with personal and social difficulties, make outstanding progress in their personal development, often achieving well beyond expectations. All pupils work well together and play a responsible role in school life through aspects such as a recycling project and the school council. With these good basic and personal skills, pupils are well placed to make the most of secondary school and their future careers.

Pupils feel very safe; one pupil remarked that 'on my 'buddy' duties, I hardly come across any problems'. The school offers a good range of activities to help pupils in their development and enliven their studies such as residential trips and wildlife visits. The curriculum is satisfactory but subjects such as art and design and music are less well developed than the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils make less progress in them as a result. In addition, opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology (ICT) in all the subjects are limited by a lack of computers, which results in slower skill development in this important area. Pupils show a good awareness of spiritual, moral and social issues, which are carefully nurtured by staff, although provision for pupils' cultural and multicultural understanding is more limited. The school has worked hard to help pupils lead more healthy lives and many take more exercise because of this. Despite the school winning the healthy schools 'Gold Award', and providing better lunches, not all pupils choose to eat the healthy option, and the school is considering what else might be done to help them make better choices.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' skills in ICT through increasing their opportunities to use computers in all subjects.
- Develop the provision for subjects such as art and design and music to enable pupils to achieve as well in these as they do in other subjects.
- Extend the range of activities offered to develop pupils' cultural and multicultural understanding and experiences.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils have broadly average standards when they join the school but by the time they leave, the standard of their work is above average. This represents good progress and achievement because all pupils, including those with learning difficulties, do better than expected given their starting points. This picture has been the similar for the last few years although there are annual variations within subjects. For example, this year in the national tests (SATs), pupils in Year 6 did very well in English, particularly in reading, exceeding their targets and reversing a slight decline. Achievements in mathematics were not as high, although higher ability boys did well. The school has identified what caused this dip in their normally good results and has already put steps into place to rectify it. In science, the majority of pupils do well. The results show no significant differences in achievement and progress between pupils of different ethnic groups, nor between girls and boys.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' good personal development, well-being and enjoyment are evident in everything they do. They behave well and safely, show enthusiasm for their work and grow in confidence, gaining essential skills as they move from year to year. This, alongside their experiences of enterprise, working in teams and taking responsibility in school, stands them in good stead for secondary school and their future work. Pupils were praised for their singing in a local home for the elderly, which is one of several good quality contributions they make to their local community.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and as a result, they appreciate and respect each other's achievements. Pupils' cultural understanding is the weakest element because it lacks the breadth that a wider range of opportunities within the curriculum would provide. Pupils show a very mixed response to the school's efforts to help them lead more healthy lives, they know what they should be doing, but the choices some of them make are, at best, satisfactory.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good teaching by teachers and teaching assistants is reflected in consistently good standards reached by pupils each year. The school's leadership has not been complacent, however, and teachers' skills to meet the needs of all pupils and in keeping lessons lively to hold pupils' interest are always being improved. One pupil appreciated 'the way teachers make it fun for you, so that you learn more'. Teachers use information gained from assessments well to plan work that develops pupils' skills systematically in the core subjects. Pupils are very clear about what targets they have to reach and

they know what to do to get there. Teaching and assessment are not always as effective in subjects such as geography or design and technology because less time has been spent developing teachers' skills in teaching these subjects. Learning is sometimes satisfactory rather than good, as a result. The school is addressing this with, for example, recent training in design and technology.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory, providing pupils with well-rounded experiences that meet most of their needs. It builds learning from year to year, enables pupils to develop good personal and social skills, prepares them well for the future and helps them to know how to keep healthy and safe. Pupils also have good opportunities to play sport and to go on trips, including visits to historical buildings, to bring their studies alive. The school takes good advantage of links with others, including the secondary-led programme to enrich the curriculum further. The weaknesses are twofold. Provision for some subjects, for example art and design and music, is not well developed to meet the needs of all pupils. In addition, although ICT is taught well in ICT lessons, there are simply not enough computers for pupils to get used to using them in all their subjects. This means that they miss out on developing some important skills.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good and ensure that pupils are kept safe and that they are guided well in reaching the high standards set for them. Information on how pupils are doing is used very well in the core subjects so that they can be helped to do their best. This is currently being refined because teachers cannot always respond quickly enough to occasional underachievement with the present system. Guidance to help pupils develop good personal skills is very effective and pupils' confidence in discussing what they have achieved and how they have changed is impressive. Staff have outstanding success in helping those pupils with social and personal difficulties behave well, do well in their work and go on to a brighter future.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management by the senior team are good. Their foresight and effective actions have supported pupils' education and personal development well. Through careful consultation with parents, pupils and staff and a sharp focus on the results of pupils' learning, they have managed to maintain the quality of the school's provision whilst improving different aspects. Governors have supported them well in this. Since the last inspection, there have been many improvements, including recent improvements in the quality of pupils' reading, their problem-solving in mathematics, and the range and quality of strategies used by teachers. This demonstrates that there is good capacity to continue improving. It is recognised by the senior team that development of the

foundation subjects such as art and design and music has been slow and the review process has had insufficient emphasis. This is beginning to change.

Resources, although adequate, have some limitations; for example, the playground does not provide a good range of activities or equipment and there is the issue of insufficient computers for ICT.

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## Inspection judgements

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

### Achievement and standards

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

<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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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**

Thank you for being so welcoming to me when I visited your school. I enjoyed meeting those of you in the school council and joining you for lunch and some of your lessons.

I found your school to be successful, well run and caring. It is a good school, just like many of you told me it was. It helps all of you to make good progress. School leaders also do a good job in seeing that the school maintains such good quality work. You are sensible and well behaved in lessons and you work hard. Your teachers and teaching assistants are good at helping you to do your best and they teach you well. You clearly enjoy your lessons.

I was pleased to see that some of you try to keep healthy through exercise and sensible eating, although not enough of you take the good advice given by the school about this. You do work and play very well together and I think that this, alongside your good basic skills in literacy and numeracy, will stand you in good stead for the future. You have some interesting activities to do to help you learn and improve many of your skills, but you need better opportunities to learn about subjects like art and design and music. ICT also needs to be improved because you do not have enough opportunities to use computers in lessons and develop essential skills that you will need. The school is good at keeping you safe, at helping you become well-rounded people, in guiding you in reaching your targets and in making sure you are well prepared for secondary school. The work that you are doing to help around the school clearly shows that you are becoming responsible citizens.