



# Little Heath Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 117567  
**Local Authority** HERTFORDSHIRE  
**Inspection number** 290873  
**Inspection dates** 7–8 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Stephen Walker

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	School Lane
<b>School category</b>	Foundation		Potters Bar
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		Hertfordshire EN6 1JW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01707 652104
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	225	<b>Fax number</b>	01707 664847
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Mary Wikner
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Marina Breeze
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 March 2001		

<b>Age group</b> 3–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 7–8 December 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 290873
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Little Heath School is a mixed primary school of average size compared to other primary schools. It is situated in Little Heath on the northern edge of Potters Bar. The school is very popular and is currently oversubscribed in all year groups. Although the majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, there are a small number from minority ethnic groups. Most pupils start school with above average levels of knowledge and understanding. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and the percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are below the national average. The school has recently been awarded the Healthy School Award, Sport England Activemark, Learning to Learn, Effective Early Learning, Naace and ICT Marks. Little Heath Primary is a Foundation school housed in an extended Victorian building.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Little Heath Primary is a good school with some outstanding features. The school has made a real effort to balance the aims of excellence and enjoyment for all children. The headteacher provides strong and dynamic leadership so that there is a clear vision for continuous improvement. Parents speak highly of the school and support their children in the learning process. One parent wrote, 'I feel very fortunate that my child is a pupil at such a good school'.

Standards on entry are above average and all groups of pupils make good progress during their time at the school. Most pupils leave Year 6 with standards well above the national average. The school is implementing further strategies to make all pupils' progress outstanding.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding mainly because of the exceptional quality of care and guidance. The majority of children are exceptionally well behaved and act as excellent ambassadors for the school. Attendance and punctuality are extremely good. Pupils enjoy their time at school and develop into well rounded and confident individuals. A particularly impressive feature of the school is the friendship groups where pupils from Reception to Year 6 meet on a monthly basis to work together and support each other in the school.

There are excellent systems of care throughout the school and pupils are well prepared for secondary education. Very good use is made of assessment information to track pupils' progress in order to identify underachievement. Teaching is overall good with some examples of outstanding practice. Effective teaching methods ensure that pupils are actively engaged in the lessons. The school recognises the need to share good teaching practice to increase the proportion of good and outstanding lessons. Pupils' targets are not, as yet, used consistently across the school so pupils do not always understand how they can improve their work.

The curriculum provision is very good with a wide variety of subjects and enrichment experiences. The curriculum for Foundation Stage is exceptionally effective so that pupils get a very good start to their education. Whole school themed days provide opportunities to integrate the subject areas and these are very popular with the children.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher are well supported by the governors who are fully involved in the strategic development of the school. Support staff are used imaginatively to enhance provision in classrooms and the smooth running of the school. The school has identified areas for development but its self-evaluation is over generous and not always closely enough linked to pupils' progress. The school has made effective progress since the last inspection. The school's budget is well managed and the school provides good value for money. Little Heath Primary School has considerable capacity to improve.

## What the school should do to improve further

- develop school self-evaluation so that it is more closely linked to pupils' progress
- further develop the overall quality of teaching and learning in order to increase the proportion of good and outstanding lessons
- develop the use of targets so that all pupils understand more fully how they can improve their work.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils enter the school with above average levels of knowledge and understanding. Most pupils leave the school with well above average attainment, which represents good progress. Pupils make effective progress in the Nursery and Reception classes so that standards are above average by the start of Year 1. The majority of pupils develop good skills in writing, reading and numeracy.

In Years 1 and 2 pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards are above average with nine out of ten pupils gaining at least a Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. A greater number of higher level grades are gained in writing and mathematics than are achieved in reading. The school is developing the phonics programme in order to improve standards in reading. The school has successfully improved the standards of mathematics in Key Stage 1.

From Years 3 to 6 all groups of pupils make good progress so that standards by Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are well above average. The high percentage of pupils gaining levels 4 and 5 in the Key Stage 2 tests places the school in the top 25% of primary schools for attainment. This success also reflects the targeted support through booster classes for higher ability pupils. Standards in ICT, an issue in the last inspection, have improved because it is now used well in many lessons.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are excellent. The school is a friendly and safe environment in which pupils show respect towards each other and the staff. Behaviour is exceptionally good and pupils display positive attitudes to learning and their school. Pupils value the rewards and praise they receive for hard work and good behaviour. They like working and playing together. Pupils very successfully adopt healthy lifestyles and take part in a wide range of sporting activities.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils are sensitive towards the feelings of others, and appreciative of the world around them. There are very good opportunities for reflection in assembly. They are encouraged particularly well to contribute to the community and recently entertained the elderly at the harvest festival and sang carols in the local hospital. Pupils regularly raise money for charities through non-uniform days. They appreciate the chance to share their ideas for

improvement through the school council and were involved in the development of the play area. They thoroughly enjoy coming to school and attendance is excellent.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good with some outstanding examples seen. Teaching is effective in developing pupils' understanding of many basic and complex skills. This means that pupils are well challenged. Outstanding teaching uses very imaginative methods. For example, in one excellent lesson, the teacher took on the role of a character so that pupils could develop effectively their questioning, listening and writing skills. These pupils showed exceptional ability to reflect on their feelings towards the person they had been finding out about. Satisfactory teaching is planned well but does not always use questioning or time effectively. Although teachers use assessment well to plan lessons, pupils' targets are not always used consistently. This means that some pupils are not clear about how to improve their work and attain higher skill levels.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is particularly good. Activities for English, mathematics and science are well planned and so pupils achieve well. ICT is used effectively. For instance, pupils enjoy many interesting sessions which incorporate the interactive white boards and computers. Pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported and so they make good progress. Gifted and talented pupils are provided for through special sessions for mathematics, music and sports tuition. Themed days and weeks enrich pupils' time in school. Impressive displays around the school celebrate pupils' skills in art and many other subjects. After school clubs offer pupils a wide range of activities including sports, music, drama and gardening. The curriculum is not at the moment fully adapted to meet the needs of middle ability pupils. Individual education plans are used well to support pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities but they do not always contain specific criteria against which success can be measured.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

Care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. Pupils' personal needs are well met, so pupils are really happy in the school. Friendship groups allow pupils from Reception to Year 6 to learn effectively about how others feel and about how to support each other. Personal, social and health education sessions give pupils excellent opportunities to discuss a variety of concerns and even young pupils know a variety of ways to sort out problems with friends. All legal checks are carried out on staff to ensure that pupils are kept safe. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe because

of effective guidance from staff. Pupils' progress is efficiently tracked so any pupil or group of pupils who are not achieving effectively are quickly identified.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has introduced an innovative and reflective vision for continuous improvement. Parents, teachers and governors greatly respect and share her focused approach to promote good standards of behaviour, and high levels of care and attainment for all students. The senior leadership team and staff are working energetically to move the school forward to its next stage of development. A key focus is further increasing the proportion of good and outstanding teaching.

The school has effectively identified key areas for development but self-evaluation is not always accurately or clearly focused on pupils' progress as well as attainment. Staff are fully involved in discussing strategies for improvement and sharing the direction of the school. The school improvement plan is a working document and subject plans are closely linked to whole school issues. Subject leaders are developing their roles so that they are taking a greater part in the planning and monitoring process. Lesson observations are well developed and there are good opportunities for peer observations and sharing of good practice.

The school runs very smoothly on a day-to-day basis. It effectively recruits specialist teachers and has a good programme of professional development.

Governors are well informed of the school's progress and areas for development. They are very supportive of the headteacher and staff, monitor progress well and make a significant contribution to the advancement of the school. The school has addressed all the issues in the last inspection.

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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 quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	1
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>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### 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>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<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

9 December 2006

Dear Pupils,

Little Heath Primary School, School Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire, EN16 1JW

Thank you for helping us to find out about your school. We enjoyed watching lessons and talking to you. It was interesting to meet your teachers and watch the assemblies. Really positive things about your school include the fact that:

- you do very well in Year 6 tests
- you work extremely hard in lessons
- you are extremely well behaved
- your headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher have imaginative ideas about ways to improve the school
- teachers work very hard to make lessons interesting and challenging
- teachers and staff care greatly for you
- friendship groups are used well to help you understand each other better.

We know that you and your families like your school and so we have talked to your headteacher about how the school can look at ways of being even better. The most important things are:

- develop the ways that teachers use targets so that you know more clearly how to improve your work.
- ensure that all teaching is of a very high standard
- develop the ways that senior teachers evaluate the success of the school.

Keep working hard and enjoying the many things you do at Little Heath Primary School. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Walker

Lead inspector