

Christopher Hatton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130342
Local Authority	Camden
Inspection number	293631
Inspection date	3 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Nirjay Mahindru
Headteacher	Ms Gwen Lee
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2002
School address	38 Laystall Street London EC1R 4PQ
Telephone number	020 7278 4500
Fax number	020 7278 2232

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- Does the progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities match that of other pupils?
- What are the particular features of the school's provision that need to be improved in order to make it outstanding?

Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, national published assessment data, the school's own assessment records, observations of lessons, conversations with pupils and discussions with the headteacher, teachers and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspection 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

The school serves a diverse local community that consists of owner-occupier properties, private rented accommodation, social housing and bed and breakfast homeless families' placements. Overall, the social circumstances of many pupils are disadvantaged and this is reflected in the exceptionally high proportion of pupils that are entitled to free school meals. Currently there are 26 different languages represented and over two thirds of the pupils speak English as an additional language. A few of these are at an early stage of learning English. There is a particularly high movement of pupils both in and out of the school, with many staying in the school for less than one year. The school has a specialist Language Resource Base for pupils with severe and specific speech and language disorders. These five pupils are fully integrated into classes. A new headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed from September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Christopher Hatton provides an outstanding quality of education for all its pupils. From standards that are very low in comparison with expected levels for their age when they enter the Nursery, pupils reach standards that are significantly above the national average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. In addition, standards in information and communication technology, music and art are well above average. The meticulous tracking of each individual pupil's progress ensures that all groups achieve exceptionally well. Staff target pupils with extra help where needed. Hence, those pupils who find learning hard, and those that have statements of special educational need due to their particular speech and language needs, achieve as well as others. Staff are very adept at supporting the few pupils who are at an early stage of learning English by targeting questions. They do this by giving many opportunities for practising speaking and listening skills and by ensuring that the vocabulary that they use is understood. Interesting programmes are developed for gifted pupils such as the regular mathematics master classes. Particularly able writers have the opportunity to undertake a project with the Hampstead Theatre. Pupils delighted in writing play scripts and then going to the theatre to see professional actors perform their play. In addition, gifted and talented pupils' interests and abilities are supported through after-school clubs such as chess, drama and gymnastics.

Parents are unanimous in their support of the school and expressed positive views. In particular, parents pointed out that there is a very positive atmosphere of close teamwork that permeates the whole school and enables their children to be supported and challenged exceptionally well. Typical of the comments was the parent who commented, 'This is a truly great school. It creates curiosity and enthusiasm and the teachers and my kids really care about each other.' Other parents were keen to point out how every child is included in the school. Children of all classes, cultures and abilities learn to respect each other regardless of background.

The new headteacher and deputy headteacher work in very close partnership and have built on the very many strengths found at the time of the previous inspection. Outstanding leadership and management is pivotal to the success of the school. There is a clear vision and direction linked to a determination both to squeeze the best out of adults and pupils and to seek ways to continue to improve. The senior leaders set very challenging targets to raise standards for both pupils' academic and personal development. These are achieved because leaders invest in an enriched curriculum and target resources well to ensure that the needs of all the pupils are met. Governors play an important role and the way in which they have persisted in securing additional land to provide extra playground space illustrates their excellent involvement and commitment to the school. The school has a very accurate view of its own strengths and areas for development. These factors demonstrate the school's outstanding capacity for further improvement.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Teachers make sure that lessons are interesting by providing high quality activities that are pitched well to meet the learning needs of the different pupils. The careful choice of stimulating topics enables pupils to make links in their learning across the curriculum. For example, the Year 2 topic about 'Pirates and the Oceans' included a visit to the 'Golden Hind'. In addition, work on sustainability and personal and social education as well as a wide range of literacy and artwork were also included. Teachers have drawn up a series of learning skills to be developed in all topics. These are woven into the work to ensure that pupils' skills development is made progressively more challenging levels as pupils move up the school. Teachers have exceptionally high expectations of their pupils. For example,

in an outstanding phonics session in the Reception class the teacher's clever explanations and rapid-fire questioning engaged and enthralled children to achieve impressively when identifying and building sounds. Teachers ensure that they maintain the interest of pupils that have different learning styles by preparing lessons using a wide range of strategies and resources. Staff ensure that the pupils that have statements of educational needs and those that are at an early stage of learning English are taught well because they adapt their lessons to enable them to make strong progress. Above all, relationships are highly positive and purposeful, and classrooms are a hive of activity where all groups of pupils engage happily and readily in their learning.

Pupils' personal development and well-being including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding because they receive the highest level of care, guidance and support. Great care is taken to ensure that pupils are safeguarded exceptionally well. For example, the procedures for child protection, securing the staff's and pupils' health and safety are excellent and the school meets all current safeguarding regulations. Pupils keep fit because they know the importance of regular exercise. They have a deep understanding of eating healthily and speak animatedly about the recent 'health week' that supported their understanding. Pupils have a thorough appreciation of how to stay safe. Pupils thoroughly enjoy taking responsibility. Older pupils take great pride in acting as role models during lunch when pupils sit in mixed-age groups. The learning mentor runs responsibility and friendship groups, and Year 5 and 6 pupils act as 'buddies' for younger ones. The active school council has helped to create a science garden and to improve the playground. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for secondary education.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children get off to a flying start in the Nursery and Reception classes and they make rapid progress. This is due to the outstanding provision by all the adults. They fully understand how very young children learn and they provide an excellent quality of teaching and learning. Bi-lingual support is provided for those children who are at early stage of learning English and this aids their rapid progress in speaking and listening. Each activity planned has a clear purpose and this ensures that children build firm foundations in their learning. Adults are careful to ensure that there is a good balance of activities that enable the children to make choices for themselves as well as those that are directed by adults. In addition, the very limited outdoor space is used exceptionally well by the Nursery class though opportunities for the Reception class is much more limited owing to the nature of the accommodation. Although the provision is outstanding overall and children make excellent progress, at present the structure of the Nursery planning is not as effective as that in the Reception class and this is a limiting factor in ensuring continuous learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that curricular plans for the Foundation Stage are structured in a similar way in both the Nursery and Reception classes.

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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?	1
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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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?	1
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	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

11 December 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Christopher Hatton Primary School, London, EC1R 4PQ

Thank you so much for making me welcome and for talking with me when I visited your school. I enjoyed finding out about Christopher Hatton. Please would you also thank your parents for sending the questionnaires back.

I agree with both your parents and yourselves that yours is an excellent school in all respects. Your work is of a high standard and your achievement throughout the school is outstanding. I was very impressed with the way that you use so many skills across all your subjects. I thought the many displays of work were beautifully created and displayed and they help to show all the many and wide variety of things that you are taught. I was particularly impressed with your art work. Your teachers have excellent skills and they help you to learn exceptionally well. They plan interesting and exciting activities for you, and I can understand why you all love lessons and learning. I enjoyed hearing about the trips that you go on - I wish that I could stay overnight at the science museum and learn all the things that Year 5 do when they are there!

Your behaviour is excellent, you have very positive attitudes to each other and I was very impressed how well all of you get on together, and make sure that others are happy too. You have a very good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy, and you all certainly knew about staying safe in assembly when Gwen checked with you after lighting the candle! Gwen and all the other adults involved in leading and managing your school do an excellent job. They make sure that you receive the best possible education.

I have asked your school to do one thing. This is to make sure that the lessons planned in the Nursery and Reception class are similar so that when the children move along from Nursery to Reception, it will be very smooth for them.

Once again, thank you for your help. Keep doing your best to make sure that Christopher Hatton gets even better.

Best wishes

Keith Sadler

Lead Inspector