



# Hurst Drive Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 117180  
**Local Authority** HERTFORDSHIRE  
**Inspection number** 294580  
**Inspection dates** 31 January –1 February 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Nichola Perry

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>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Hurst Drive
<b>School category</b>	Community		Waltham Cross
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Hertfordshire EN8 8DH
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01992 624099
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	281	<b>Fax number</b>	01992 622790
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority	<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Tina Matthews
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 November 2005		

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<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 31 January –1 February 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 294580
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average school. It serves an area with a significant degree of social and economic deprivation and numbers taking free school meals are higher than average. Many pupils join the Reception class with standards that are below the levels expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and social development. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or with English as an additional language is well above average. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and the rest come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Approximately one third of pupils do not speak English as their first or main language, a few of whom are at an early stage of learning the language. A high number of pupils join the school part way through their primary education. For example, just over one third of the current Year 6 pupils joined the school in this way. Many pupils also leave the school during the school year, particularly in Year 2.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Hurst Drive Primary is a satisfactory school. Pupils get off to a good start in the Reception class. They make steady progress as they move further up the school and achievement is satisfactory in relation to their low starting points. Standards by Year 2 are average. Standards by Year 6 are average in English and science, but below average in mathematics. Average standards overall reflect the high proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and the high number of pupils who join the school part way through their education. Behaviour and pupils' enjoyment of school are good and pupils' overall personal development is satisfactory. Attendance has improved and is now satisfactory.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Whilst higher expectations and regular monitoring by senior staff have brought about an increase in good teaching, the quality of teaching still varies too much. Teachers form good relationships with pupils and most lessons are interesting, well organised and use resources effectively to support and enhance learning. Support staff contribute strongly to helping pupils achieve as well as they can. In weaker lessons there is insufficient challenge for more able pupils and expectations of good listening are not high enough.

The curriculum is satisfactory and well enriched by visits, visitors and a range of additional activities after school or at lunchtime. There has been steady improvement in the way pupils' progress is recorded and tracked across year groups. This is helping staff to check on progress so that pupils falling behind are identified and given additional support to help them learn. This focused support has contributed to improving standards.

The pastoral care and support for pupils are good. Academic guidance is not as strong. Sharing of learning objectives is mostly good in lessons and pupils are aware of them. However, the arrangements for feeding back pupils' achievements through marking and their progress against individual targets are not consistently applied by all teachers. There are examples of good practice but this is not widespread.

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. Finances are carefully managed and value for money is satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, improvements in the monitoring of pupils' progress and careful analysis of data to find out if pupils are making sufficient progress mean that senior staff and subject leaders have a sound evaluation of how well the school is doing and what needs to be improved. Self-evaluation has identified correctly the need to develop the roles of subject leaders so that they have greater influence on improving achievement across the school. The governing body has improved. They fulfil their legal duties and, in addition to being supportive, they are increasingly challenging the school's performance. This is because they are given a good steer by the headteacher. Together they all work as a team which has led to improvement since the previous inspection. The school has satisfactory capacity to continue this improvement. In accordance with Section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English and mathematics by ensuring that teaching and learning are consistently good.
- Develop further the leadership roles of senior staff and subject leaders so that they are able to take full responsibility for raising standards across the school.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties and those whose main language is not English, achieve satisfactorily. They do well in the Reception class, particularly in developing their basic language, communication and social skills. In Year 2 standards are now average in all three core subjects. Attainment in reading has improved over the last three years and there was significant improvement in writing and mathematics in the 2006 test results. A few Year 2 pupils achieve the higher Level 3 standard in writing. Standards at the end of Year 6 have been average for the last five years in English and science. Standards in mathematics have been below average in recent years but show an improving trend over the last three years. Pupils' achievement in the current Year 6 is satisfactory.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are adequate. There are particular strengths in the social and moral elements, and behaviour is good. Older pupils adopt caring attitudes towards younger ones, acting as playground friends at a 'friendship stop'. Pupils say that bullying is rare and any incidents are dealt with rapidly and effectively. They also know about precautions to take when around strangers. As a result they feel safe and secure.

Pupils' attitudes to learning vary according to the quality of teaching. When lessons are good, they concentrate very well, but otherwise quickly stray from the task. Partnership with a local council, emphasising healthy living, has contributed to pupils' raised commitment to eating fruit and vegetables. They also respond well to a wide range of after-school sports clubs, realising the importance of exercise. Pupils show concern for people in circumstances less fortunate than their own, demonstrating a willingness to organise and participate in charitable events. In the Reception class, although personal, social and emotional development is below normally expected levels, progress is good. Weaknesses in numeracy restrict pupils' readiness for the world beyond school, although their ability to work in groups and teams is good.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Although there is some good teaching, the proportion is too small to raise standards consistently across the school. Lessons are planned around clear objectives for learning and criteria for success, which are shared with the pupils. However, tasks are not always matched to pupils' learning needs, particularly the more able, who do not always do as well as they should. Teachers have good skills in managing behaviour, although some pupils become restless if the pace of the lesson is slow and tasks are insufficiently demanding. Pupils' work is marked regularly in English, which has been a particular focus, but elsewhere too much is unmarked or without effective guidance for improvement. Some teachers do not always insist on neatly presented work. Teaching assistants are used well to support pupils with learning difficulties and those who are learning to speak English as an additional language, and these pupils make satisfactory progress.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The school has a suitably broad and balanced curriculum. It places great emphasis on supporting pupils' learning in English and mathematics. However, these basic skills are not integrated well enough into other subjects to make learning them more interesting and meaningful for pupils. The Foundation Stage curriculum is well planned and provides pupils with a good start to their education. The school is successful in promoting pupils' personal development and visits to places of interest and visitors to the school enhance learning. Plans are rightly in place to enhance multi-cultural understanding by visiting a variety of places of worship and asking religious leaders to visit the school. Residential trips for older pupils help to broaden their horizons and contribute to their confidence and readiness to grow up. Regularly attended extra-curricular activities add further to what is taught.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

This aspect of provision is satisfactory with important good features. Staff share a strong commitment to pupils' personal care and welfare. Close links with external agencies mean that relevant specialist help is sought for pupils as needed. Statutory procedures for child protection, risk assessment and first-aid are conscientiously managed and staff receive regular training. School councillors feel that the staff listen to pupils' concerns and 'take us seriously.' For example, by altering provision to meet their suggestions whenever appropriate and possible. An awards system provides pupils with recognition and encouragement for academic and personal achievement. Personal development is monitored effectively. Staff are now using systems to track pupils' progress and to set targets. However, these targets do not always define the short-term

steps that pupils need to make in order to reach the next stages in their learning. Newsletters, progress reports and opportunities for parents to meet staff to discuss their children's academic progress are satisfactory. However, while parents are very positive about what the school offers their children, a small number of parents do not feel communication is regular enough or sufficiently detailed.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. The headteacher has been in post for just over two years and is determined to raise standards across the school. The record of developments demonstrates satisfactory capacity to improve further. The headteacher is using external support effectively to raise standards in literacy and numeracy and to develop the skills of senior leaders. The deputy headteacher is working closely with the head and other senior staff, resulting in some effective teamwork. Although subject leaders are managing their subjects well, they have yet to fully develop strategies to promote consistently good achievement in their areas of responsibility. The headteacher provides good guidance for teachers, including those new to the school, to improve teaching and learning, and monitors this regularly and rigorously. Whilst this has led to improvement, it has not been sufficiently rapid to ensure consistently good teaching across the school. The school's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses shows that it knows how to move forward. Governors are increasingly involved in strategic planning and evaluation: they receive good coaching in this respect. Higher expectations of the governors by the headteacher have led to their improving role in holding the school to account. Key issues for improvement from the last inspection have been addressed and work on this is continuing. Indications are that standards are improving and that this year's pupil performance will maintain an upward trend.

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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>	3
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	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### 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>	3
<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.

## 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	3
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**

2 February 2007

Dear Pupils

Hurst Drive Primary School, Hurst Drive, Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire, EN8 8DH

We enjoyed our recent visit to your school very much. Thank you for being so friendly and helpful.

We think there are several things which are good about the school. You said that you like coming to school and think your teachers are friendly and helpful and that, if you have a problem, you can talk to them easily. Most of you have sensible attitudes to your work and are keen to learn. You behave well, although a small number of pupils do not always listen to their teachers and carry on chatting, which spoils it for the rest of you. You are kind and thoughtful and like helping the younger pupils and those less fortunate than yourselves. You have a good range of lunchtime and after-school activities which you like to attend.

The children in Reception make a good start in school. Lots of you try hard with your work and we can see that by Year 2 you are getting better at reading, writing and science. However, some of you need to try harder at improving your writing. In Years 3 to 6, most of you work hard so that last year you did better than in previous years in English and science and even in mathematics. We think that you could do better still, especially in mathematics, and we would like you to try even harder.

We know that your headteacher is determined to help you reach higher standards in your work and we think that there are two things that will help her to improve standards further. The first is that your learning will improve if you always have lessons which are more interesting and exciting and with work that really stretches those of you who are faster learners. The second is that the teachers could take on more responsibility for helping the headteacher to raise standards.

We wish you good luck in the future.

Best wishes

Nichola Perry

Lead inspector