

Hillingdon Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131152
Local Authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	298590
Inspection dates	10–11 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Mike Thompson

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	413
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Rikesh Raichura
Headteacher	Ms Ann Bowen-Breslin
Date of previous school inspection	20 June 2006
School address	Uxbridge Road Hillingdon Uxbridge UB10 0PH
Telephone number	01895 671970
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Hillingdon is a large primary school located within a socially and culturally diverse community on the western outskirts of London. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is continually rising and these pupils now comprise almost half the number on roll. About a third of pupils are in the early stages of learning English. The local area contains pockets of social deprivation. This is evident in the above average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. The school population is more mobile than in many schools, and about a fifth of pupils either join or leave during the course of each year. Following an inspection in June 2006, the school was given a Notice to Improve because of low standards and pupils' lack of progress in Years 3 to 6.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

In accordance with Section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Hillingdon Primary has made excellent progress since its last inspection and is now providing its pupils with a good quality of education. It is a school with a number of outstanding features, mostly relating to the care, guidance and support provided for pupils and their personal development and well-being. This transformation has occurred because of the very clear and determined leadership of the headteacher. The good leadership provided at all levels and the strong teamwork and shared sense of purpose shown by staff have been important factors in the success of the drive to improve achievement and raise standards.

From below average starting points, pupils make good progress as they move through the school. By the time they leave at the end of Year 6, standards are broadly in line with the national average.

An important contributory factor to the school's effectiveness is the excellent standard of pupils' social development. This stems from the outstanding pastoral care provided for all. Pupils' excellent behaviour contributes to the good climate for learning throughout the school. Particularly noteworthy are pupils' excellent attitudes towards their education and their enjoyment in being at school.

This is an inclusive school in which each child matters. All pupils are warmly welcomed and equally valued. The school's outstanding features include its systems for assessing pupils' needs and checking on the progress that they make. As a result, teachers know their pupils very well. They use this knowledge to provide achievable challenges for pupils and to plan a good range of interesting and exciting activities. Consequently, pupils learn well. Pupils in the early stages of learning English benefit from the good quality help they are given and make good progress.

The quality of teaching has improved, and is now good. Teaching is sometimes outstanding. However, in a few of the lessons seen pupils only made satisfactory progress. Teachers do not often get opportunities to observe each other at work and share good and outstanding practice. One of the weaknesses in otherwise good provision is the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning. The number of computers available to pupils falls well short of the national average for a school of this size. In lessons, inspectors saw little evidence of pupils' use of ICT as a learning tool.

The school has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. There is a very strong commitment to continuous improvement and robust systems to help ensure that this happens. The school is, therefore, extremely well placed to make further progress.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

'I have nothing but praise for the staff who have helped him to settle so quickly', wrote one parent. This comment reflects the effective leadership and teamwork which help ensure that the children are given a good start to their education. By making good progress, most reach the expected goals by the end of Reception. Well-planned activities, carefully matched to children's needs, and a lively and stimulating environment enable them to make swift gains in independence, social skills and confidence. The highly practical curriculum links the different

areas of learning and promotes all aspects of children's development very well. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children develop good social skills as they are encouraged to initiate their own activities in the workshops set up in the classrooms and outside areas. However, the impact of the work done to promote children's independent learning is sometimes reduced when adults over-direct it. The effective assessment systems and the monitoring of teaching and learning are helping to raise standards further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Eliminate inconsistencies in teaching, and ensure that teachers observe and share good and outstanding practice.
- Ensure that pupils make more regular use of ICT as a tool for learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

By the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average in English, mathematics, science. Standards in ICT are also average, but pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their ICT skills to help them in other subjects. The standard of artwork on display is high.

While the school fell well short of the ambitious targets set by the governing body, pupils regularly meet, and sometimes exceed, the realistic yet challenging targets set by their teachers.

All pupils achieve well irrespective of ethnicity or gender. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well, as do those in the early stages of learning English. The specific learning needs of these pupils are carefully assessed and they are given good quality help in lessons.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are happy and exceptionally well behaved, and show a strong sense of responsibility. They develop very good skills in teamwork. They know how to care about their own well-being and are ready to contribute to that of others, for example through the 'buddy' system.

Through the active and influential school council, pupils are confident they have a voice in the school and have arranged with the management to refurbish the toilets and develop the playing field. Attendance is only satisfactory because of a small number of pupils who regularly miss school. However, the vast majority enjoy coming to school to learn. Inspectors were struck by the enthusiasm displayed by pupils when they talk about their school.

Pupils develop excellent spiritual, social and moral awareness. They build up confidence through, for instance, performing in public, and understand the importance of contributing to the school and wider community. They eagerly participate in fundraising events such as growing daffodils for the Marie Curie Charity. Pupils are thoughtful and reflective in lessons and assemblies. Although they celebrated St George's Day and various festivals from around the world, they have a more limited understanding of growing up in a multi-ethnic Britain. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to stay safe, and chatter eagerly about the advantages of pursuing a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are well prepared for their futures lives, not only by developing sound literacy and numeracy skills, but also by having excellent attitudes to learning and a clear work ethos.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The positive impact of changes made over the last eighteen months is clear. The good opportunities for all staff to plan together have led to exciting lessons. Some of those seen, particularly in Years 2 and 6, were outstanding. The classes are small and pupils receive a lot of first-rate individual attention from outstanding learning support assistants. Teachers' excellent use of questioning and the clear success criteria they set out for each task lead to pupils' involvement in their learning and good achievement. This has been particularly effective in the school's efforts to strengthen boys' learning, especially in English. Teachers' good relationships with their pupils and their high expectations of what pupils can achieve ensure that pupils behave well and work hard. Occasionally, where teaching is less successful, but nonetheless satisfactory, teachers do not pitch the work at the right level, so pupils are not always able to sustain interest. Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to use ICT to help them with their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Curriculum planning has improved considerably since the time of the last inspection. High quality provision in art and music enables pupils to achieve high standards in these subjects. The new national strategies for literacy and numeracy are being used creatively to enrich the provision for pupils. The development of a creative arts curriculum is leading to innovative ways of promoting cross curricular work, but this initiative is not yet fully embedded. The planning that underpins this work is well thought through. The curriculum is further enriched by activities such as the drama and sports clubs which many pupils attend. A wide range of visits are organised, including residential trips, and these broaden pupils' understanding of the wider world. However, pupils' use of ICT, particularly for research and independent learning, is restricted because of a lack of equipment in classes and the library. Work in personal, social and health education helps pupils to understand their rights and responsibilities within the community.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Child protection procedures are rigorous. The school quickly identifies potentially vulnerable pupils and ensures that their specific needs are properly met. As a result, these pupils are effectively integrated and develop positive attitudes to learning. The school has developed strong links with parents and external professional agencies to help pupils to achieve as much as they can. All adults are exceptionally good at building pupils' trust and confidence. Parents hold the school in high regard and know their children are safe and well cared for.

The excellent systems for assessment, which involve the pupils in evaluating their learning, help teachers to check on progress and gain a good understanding of what pupils' need to learn next. Marking is good, and gives the pupils very clear guidance on what they need to do to improve. Pupils fully understand the targets set for them and work hard to achieve them.

Parents are well supported in helping their children to succeed through, for example, regular parent consultations, the ESOL (English Speaking Other Language) and 'Keeping up with your Children' classes.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

High quality teamwork and the sensitive management of change have enabled the headteacher and her deputy to bring about significant improvements in the school. Leaders at all levels successfully focus on improving the quality of provision through raising the teachers' and pupils' expectations of what can be achieved. The school's monitoring of teaching and learning, including the close tracking of pupils' progress, has brought about sustained school improvement. Staff are deployed astutely and provision for professional development is very well targeted. However, there are generally too few opportunities for teachers to learn from one another by observing each other's teaching. A great deal has been done to promote cohesion within the school community and there is a strong commitment to ensuring that all its pupils' needs are met.

Governance is good and this is an area where substantial improvements have been made since the last inspection. Governors have a good understanding of the issues facing the school and have recently put in place good systems for monitoring provision. The governors are now involved in strategic management, but their newly developed systems are yet to become embedded.

Annex A

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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

29 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hillingdon Primary School, Uxbridge, UB10 0PH

On behalf of your inspectors, I would like to thank you very much for being so helpful when we came to visit your school. We really enjoyed meeting you, talking to you and looking at your work.

Your parents think that you go to a good school, and we agree. Here is a list of some of the things we like best.

- You make good progress.
- You all follow the values your school teaches you. Everyone in your school is friendly and welcoming, and your behaviour is often excellent.
- You learn well in lessons because the teaching you are given is good.
- All of the adults in your school make sure that you are really well looked after.
- Your headteacher and the other people who help run your school are doing a good job.

We also loved looking at your wonderful artwork and we really enjoyed the excellent singing in the Key Stage 2 song practice.

Every school has something that could be better, so we have asked your school to do two things.

- We would like your school to carry on working hard to make teaching even better than it already is. One of the ways that this could be done is by making sure that teachers visit each other's lessons more regularly and then use the good ideas that they get in their own classes.
- We would also like you to have more opportunities to use computers and other ICT equipment. This will help you to learn even better.

With best wishes for your future success,

Mike Thompson

Lead inspector