

Hallfield Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101116
Local Authority	Westminster
Inspection number	307589
Inspection date	6 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Kay Charlton

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	311
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Gifford
Headteacher	Judith Grigg
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2003
School address	Hallfield Estate London W2 6JJ
Telephone number	020 7641 6230
Fax number	020 7641 6231

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues, teaching and learning, curriculum, care, guidance and support, and personal development and well-being, gathering evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and documents. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, governors and staff also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector 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 where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Hallfield is a large inner-city junior school serving a multi-ethnic population with high levels of social deprivation. The percentage of pupils in receipt of free school meals is well above average. A high proportion of pupils leave or start at the school other than at the usual point of entry and over a third are from refugee or asylum seeker families. A significant number of pupils are at the early stages of learning to speak English. Over thirty different languages are spoken the most common being Arabic, Bengali and Kurdish. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties, including a high number with social, emotional and behavioural issues, is above average. The school has had a high turnover of teaching staff since September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Hallfield Junior School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. There are good features notably in their personal development and in the care, guidance and support they receive. The school values the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and has established a racially harmonious environment where pupils happily work and play together. Almost all parents speak well of the school and make comments such as 'My children find school is so much fun that they are happy getting up in the morning.'

As a result of satisfactory teaching and learning, pupils make satisfactory progress. By the end of Year 6, standards are below the national average but this represents satisfactory achievement from pupils' low starting point on entry. After the last inspection, there was a noticeable rise in standards in English, mathematics and science. However, in 2007, they declined and this was linked to significant changes in teaching staff. With recently improved stability in staffing and the determined efforts of all associated with the school it is starting to reverse this downward trend and clear improvements are starting to take place. Even so, there is still not enough good teaching to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they are capable. Staff are enthusiastic, they plan carefully in year teams and make learning fun. They have a consistent approach to managing pupils' behaviour and lessons proceed smoothly. The school has strengths in teaching bilingual pupils and, as a result, pupils who lack fluency in speaking English quickly catch up to their peers and are fully included in all lessons. Pupils with special educational needs receive a good level of support and achieve the small step learning targets set for them. However, there are lessons, where staff do not fully challenge pupils of all abilities, particularly the more able, and the pace of learning, notably in mathematics, becomes too leisurely. In these situations, pupils could achieve more.

The school's vision that 'everyone should have opportunities to grow, feel valued and be respected' is reflected in pupils' good personal development. Pupils learn to explore their feelings and their responses to issues, for example about why each person is special, are impressive. In assemblies, all show a high degree of reverence for times of prayer and reflection and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Many pupils make significant gains in improving their self-discipline and behaviour is good overall. Throughout the school, pupils take on responsibilities well and learn to work as members of a team. They make an outstanding contribution to both the school and the wider community. For example, through the work of the school council, the sports leaders and peer mentors, and by acting as an 'invisible observer' to give staff feedback on their lessons. They also take part in initiatives such as the City Guardians scheme to improve the neighbourhood. Pupils of all ages enjoy school, have positive attitudes and a noticeable feature is the pupils' sense of loyalty to the school. There are good systems in place to improve attendance, which has improved over time and is now in line with the national average. Pupils are aware that their views count and that staff will listen to them. They say that, 'We can talk to teachers if we have a problem.' They develop a good understanding of the need for a healthy lifestyle and appreciate the importance of being safety conscious.

The school's curriculum is satisfactory overall with particular strengths in the wide range of enrichment activities that build on the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and the local community. These play an important part in ensuring that pupils enjoy school. A good example is the school's troupe of street dancers who are an inspiration to all especially after their recent success at a cultural and arts competition at Wembley arena. The development of pupils' key skills in literacy

and numeracy is satisfactory although there is some lack of consistency from one class to another, particularly in ensuring a systematic build-up of pupils' skills in numeracy.

The care, guidance and support pupils receive are good. There are thorough child protection and risk assessment procedures in place and the care provided for pupils is excellent. Staff make sure that all pupils, including those who arrive at different times, settle happily into school and that they feel confident about moving to the next stage of their education. The systems for supporting pupils' personal development are particularly effective and the learning mentor plays an important role. There is comprehensive tracking of each pupil's academic progress and this information is used well to organise extra support for individuals. It also is used to set targets that the pupils are keen to reach although there are times when staff do not make best use of these in lessons in order to accelerate the pace of pupils' learning. Well-established systems are in place to support pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. The systems to extend the more able, such as the science booster group, are relatively recent but are already beginning to pay dividends. Parents are seen as partners in their child's education and the school works very well with them and with a wide range of outside agencies to support pupils' development.

Leadership is satisfactory overall. Leaders at all levels, including the governing body, are committed to future improvement but there is more to be done, particularly by middle leaders, to secure improvement in standards. The headteacher provides determination to ensure that all pupils reach their potential and, along with the recently appointed deputy, gives a clear sense of direction. She cultivates teamwork amongst all adults in the school so that everyone recognises they have a part to play. Middle leaders, a significant number of whom are new to their roles, are making an increasingly active contribution to whole school development. However, at present, they are having insufficient impact on improving the quality of teaching, particularly by ensuring consistency of approach from class to class. Governors are effective in both supporting and challenging the school and act effectively as its critical friend. They are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and, with the headteacher, have given a clear lead at a time of uncertainty. Overall, the school's self-evaluation procedures are accurate. At a senior level they are rigorous so that everyone is clear about what needs to be done for the school to improve. Staff development is given high priority and is well focussed towards the school's priorities which fully reflect the areas that are most in need of improvement. Staff are approaching these developments very enthusiastically, and the school's track record this shows that the school is in a sound position to move forward.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teaching improves, especially in mathematics, so that pupils of all abilities achieve as well as they can.
- Improve leadership, particularly of that of middle leaders, to secure higher standards for pupils.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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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?	3
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
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	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	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

14 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hallfield Junior School, London, W2 6JJ

Thank you for all the help you gave me when I visited your school on 6 March 2008. Many of you told me that the staff are always ready to help you and that you also help others particularly through the work of the school council, the peer mentors and that of the playground friends. You think that some of the activities and clubs you take part in, as well as the trips out of school, are especially good. I agree that these are strengths of the school. I was also extremely impressed with the way you responded in assembly and how you took time to think about the issues raised, for example why each person is special. I could see that you are proud of your school and that you enjoy the things it has to offer.

The headteacher and deputy have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are aware that the school is satisfactory overall and they are keen to see it improve further. I have asked them to work with the staff to improve teaching to make sure that all of you, whatever your ability, achieve your best in all lessons, especially in mathematics. I have also asked them to improve aspects of the way the school is led so that everyone ensures that standards improve. By trying your hardest at all times you, also, can help.

Yours sincerely,

Kay Charlton

Lead Inspector