

Hollickwood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101285
Local Authority	Barnet
Inspection number	307641
Inspection dates	12–13 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Glynis Bradley-Peat

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Professor Philip Schofield
Headteacher	Mr Christopher Ryan
Date of previous school inspection	9 November 2005
School address	Sydney Road Muswell Hill London N10 2NL
Telephone number	020 8883 6880
Fax number	020 8915 9636

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	12–13 February 2008
Inspection number	307641

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average and serves an area with some pockets of high deprivation. The majority of pupils come from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. Forty two percent of pupils have English as an additional language, much more than in most schools. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much higher than usually found. The proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties is above average but the percentage with a statement of special educational need is below. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the usual times is also high. The school has gained 'Healthy Schools' status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Hollickwood Primary provides a good standard of education for its pupils. Parents are overwhelmingly pleased and praise the school, and particularly the headteacher, highly. One wrote, 'We as parents are very happy with Hollickwood,' and another, 'Since the new headteacher has arrived the school has improved in all directions.' Because of good quality teamwork and a shared vision amongst managers at all levels, the school has made good improvement since the time of the last inspection. The headteacher and his deputy know clearly what further improvements need to be made and are diligently formulating strategies to raise standards in mathematics, which are currently not high enough across the school. The school is doing everything it possibly can to ensure better attendance rates but a few parents do not make sure their children attend regularly.

The rate at which pupils make progress at Hollickwood has significantly improved over the last three years. Considering pupils' starting points, their achievement is good. Although standards by the end of Year 6 are still below average overall, they have improved in English and science. However, standards have not gone up enough in mathematics and progress is not as good. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and achieve well.

A real strength is the excellent personal development and well-being of pupils. They behave exceptionally well and are kind and considerate. Pupils very much enjoy being at school and were keen to talk to inspectors about the many good things they experience. They have the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of extra-curricular clubs and other activities. The school council is very effective and has made sure that the voice of the pupils has been heard. As a result, changes have been made to the fabric of the school building and equipment has been bought. Pupils make healthy choices, eat sensibly and exercise regularly. Visits by the police and fire brigade, in addition to lessons, have ensured that pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils contribute well to the school and local community. The excellent personal development of pupils owes much to the exemplary care, guidance and support provided by the school and to the good curriculum. Pupils develop their understanding of wider issues very well, through curricular events such as multi-cultural week, black history week, refugee week and anti-bullying week.

Teachers work hard and teach their pupils well. They provide them with a good variety of interesting activities both during lessons and after school. Teachers make good use of technology to make learning more interesting and engaging for pupils. However, teachers often concentrate too much on how they intend to teach their lesson rather than focusing on what they want pupils to learn.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Foundation Stage with levels of skills well below expectations, especially in communication, language and literacy. Good teaching contributes to children making good progress towards the early learning goals. The atmosphere in lessons is very calm, but purposeful and busy. Children enjoy a stimulating range of well-organised learning activities, which help them to develop independence. The free flow of movement between the Nursery and Reception areas ensures continuity and helps new children to settle quickly. They work and play extremely well together, show outstanding behaviour, and follow instructions well. All staff show high

levels of care for the children who feel very safe and secure. Assessment procedures are good, and staff use their observation records to identify the next steps children need to make in their learning. The determined leadership of the Foundation Stage co-ordinator ensures that priorities are clearly identified. The school has correctly identified that the outside area has a number of limitations but staff make very good use of the present facilities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics across the school.
- Ensure that lessons focus more consistently on what pupils should learn rather than how they are taught.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall, pupils make good progress in response to good teaching and a stimulating curriculum. The school's tracking information shows some unevenness in progress across the key stages, because of inaccurate teacher assessment at the end of Year 2 in previous years. Current data show progress to be accelerating significantly and there has been year on year improvement since the time of the last inspection. Although standards are below average, pupils achieve well considering their starting points. The school's focus on mathematics is beginning to have a substantial impact, and data for current Years 5 and 6 indicate that pupils are on track to meet challenging targets. Across the school, there is no significant difference in the progress made by pupils with a variety of learning difficulties, nor amongst pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Those at an early stage of learning English achieve well because of the good support they receive. Their increasing confidence contributes to the overall good progress made.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are polite and friendly. Relationships throughout the school are excellent and pupils work extremely well together. Behaviour in lessons and around school is outstanding. Pupils really enjoy school and like their teachers. One pupil said, 'Teachers are friendly, lessons are fun and they help us when we are stuck'. They choose to eat healthily at lunchtimes and high numbers participate in sporting activities before and after school. Pupils feel very safe in school as adults look after their needs well. Pupils empathise with others and show genuine care when acting as playground friends and buddies for younger pupils. Bullying and racist incidents are rare and pupils know that they are dealt with quickly. They contribute to the community by raising money for local and global charities. Pupils enjoy the responsibility of being part of the school council. It is a good forum for them to share their views and influence development, such as improving the toilets and providing new outdoor shelters. Despite the excellent procedures and systems in place, attendance is still below average but improving. Standards in pupils' basic skills are improving to ensure a good start to the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Generally, teachers plan lessons carefully to ensure that pupils are given work to challenge them and develop their skills. Teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) well to enhance lessons. In an effective literacy lesson, for example, pupils edited their writing using laptops to create storyboards. Strategies such as 'hot seating' contribute well to the personal development of pupils. Active encouragement to 'put themselves in the place of someone else' means that pupils develop qualities such as empathy and consideration. Teachers are confident in their use of the electronic whiteboards which enlivens learning. They manage their classes well and excellent relationships mean that pupils can learn in a calm and purposeful atmosphere. Pupils are enthusiastic and clearly enjoy their learning. Sometimes teachers spend too long talking in lessons and there is insufficient time for independent working. Too often, the focus is on teaching rather than what the children are learning. In mathematics, weaknesses in subject knowledge mean that teachers do not provide enough support to pupils' learning, or facilitate the development of thinking skills. Good support is given by teaching assistants and the learning mentor.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum provides children with opportunities to learn in different ways. The school has well-developed cross curricular links. ICT across the curriculum is a real strength. Extensive and highly effective links are made between literacy, history, science, mathematics and ICT. This makes learning more interesting and adds to the enjoyment of the pupils. There is a variety of extra-curricular clubs and activities, which are attended well. Examples include drama, French, science, netball and football. The school ensures that pupils are able to visit places of interest linked with the curriculum, which enhances learning well. They are also able to participate in enrichment activities such as the annual 'Maths Challenge' or a dance festival. School sports teams compete against other schools. Last year, a group of gifted and talented pupils won the 'Jury Prize' for production of a short film. However, the curriculum in mathematics does not offer sufficient opportunity for pupils to exercise their thinking skills or develop mathematical enquiry.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

This is a school which provides extremely good care and support for its pupils. Procedures to ensure health and safety and to promote pupils' welfare are very effective. The atmosphere in the school is very positive and relationships are warm. This helps pupils feel safe in school and know that when they have problems there is someone that they can talk to. One parent stated that, 'The school is like a family', reflecting parents' extremely positive attitude to the care shown to their children. Support for pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties and those at an early stage of learning English is excellent. This ensures that they make similar progress to their classmates. The school has rigorous systems to track pupils' progress and identify suitable support and challenge for those that are underachieving. Pupils know their targets and areas for improvement. The quality of marking is extremely good, especially in Year 6, and comments help pupils to improve their work. The learning mentor, other staff and outside

agencies monitor behaviour and attendance very closely and this is having a positive impact, though attendance remains an issue.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The head teacher provides a very strong lead and the school has improved steadily since the time of the last inspection. The school has good capacity for further improvement as he is ably supported by staff who share the same vision, ambition and determination to improve. Leaders, including the governing body, make a good contribution to strategic planning and they keep a close eye on the impact of actions taken. The school monitors its performance rigorously and has an accurate picture of its effectiveness and a thorough understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement. The school is aware that teaching focuses too often on the role of the teacher and that insufficient attention is given to pupils' learning. The school improvement plan has a clear focus on the correct priorities. It analyses data and uses information effectively to help pupils make good progress. Governors are closely involved in school development and hold it to account for its work. Parents are overwhelmingly positive and are full of praise for the headteacher and staff. One parent stated that, 'Since moving to this school, my children have flourished and grown in confidence and independence'.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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	2

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	1
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	1
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

28 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hollickwood Primary School, London, N10 2NL

As you know, your school was inspected recently. I am writing to you to let you know what we found out. We think your school is doing a good job. Your parents agree. I would like to say how impressed we were with your behaviour and how welcome you made us feel. You were friendly and kind to us. You also were very helpful and gave us lots of information so that we could write our report more easily. You told us how much you enjoy school and how safe and happy you feel. You know how to eat healthily and lead an active lifestyle. This is highly commendable, well done! We enjoyed your healthy school food too. We would like to say a special thank you to the children who baked some cakes and kindly gave us some. They were delicious!

Teaching in your school is good. Teachers use their electronic whiteboards well and this makes lessons interesting for you. You have good opportunities to visit places of interest and participate in clubs and activities. Some of you won a film competition, and this is an excellent achievement! Your headteacher and all his staff want to do their best for you. Your school does many things well, but there are always things that could be better. We have asked your school to make sure that you learn better in mathematics and that teachers give you more chance to think about problems for yourself. You can play your part too. The school is doing all that it can to improve attendance. It would be really good if you always come to school whenever you possibly can and try not to take time off.

I am looking forward to reading your results this summer as I hope to see that you have all done well! I wish you every success in Hollickwood Primary School.

Kind regards

Glynis Bradley-Peat

Lead Inspector