

Fryent Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101531
Local Authority	Brent
Inspection number	307725
Inspection dates	10–11 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Nicola Davies

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	488
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr P Kirwan
Headteacher	Ms E Webb
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2002
School address	Church Lane Kingsbury London NW9 8JD
Telephone number	020 8205 4047
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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

This is a primary school with a Nursery. Since the time of the previous inspection, it has reduced in size to two forms of entry as part of the local authority's managed building programme.

Nearly all pupils are of minority ethnic heritage and almost three quarters are bilingual. Around one in five of all pupils are at early stages of learning English as an additional language. A third of pupils are eligible for free school meals which is well above average. Around a quarter have learning difficulties or disabilities which is again higher than average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

One of Fryent Primary School's aims is to 'work closely with parents to ensure that all pupils benefit from a broad and balanced education which is provided in a safe, happy and stimulating environment'. Parents and pupils agree that it achieves this well, creating a friendly and hard-working community where children and adults feel valued, respected and included. The thoughtful way that teachers and other staff care for, guide and support pupils is an indication of one of the good aspects of the work of this satisfactory and improving school. For example, great care is taken to identify and support pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities and these pupils make good progress as a result. Similarly, teachers are well aware of the needs of pupils who join the school at early stages of learning English or part way through the school year. Staff work well to support and welcome both these pupils and their parents into the school community. These high levels of concern and care result in an ordered school community where pupils behave well, enjoy their time at school and develop a strong sense of concern for others.

One of the challenges facing the school is to ensure that pupils make as good progress in their academic learning as they do in their personal and social development. At the time of the last inspection, the school was asked to improve the progress and standards that younger pupils attain in English and mathematics. This has been accomplished. Pupils' standards in these subjects at the end of Year 2 are now broadly average which represents good progress from their low starting points. However, older pupils' standards and progress have been more uneven. In 2006, the results of national tests in Year 6 dipped sharply. Since then, staff have been working well to make changes, with extra support from the local authority. Standards improved in 2007, but are still a little below average. The school has rightly recognised that not all pupils progress as well as they should in Years 3–6, particularly in mathematics. Pupils achieve well in lessons where they have good opportunities to work together and to become involved in assessing their own learning and progress, but teaching is only satisfactory overall as this is not yet consistent across the school.

The school has investigated how the satisfactory curriculum can be improved to stimulate pupils and meet their particular needs and interests, for example, to encourage boys to make better progress in their English. The headteacher and deputy have led this work well, involving staff in investigating what improvements could be made and trying out new teaching and curriculum approaches. Some of this work is still at early stages and targets could be used more effectively to 'fine tune' the evaluation of initiatives to improve aspects of its provision. However, the successes so far, such as improving attendance and the achievement of younger pupils, along with the school's thoughtful approach to school evaluation and improvement illustrate its good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

When children enter the Nursery, for most it is their first experience of education outside the home. For many, it is also their first experience of an English-speaking environment. As a result, their attainment on entry is below national expectations. Staff make sensitive arrangements to introduce children to their new environments and they become increasingly secure and confident in joining in activities with their peers. Consequently, children's social development is consistently good. Staff plan activities to build on the skills which children acquire in the Nursery and to extend these in the Reception classes. The outdoor curriculum is a weaker area.

For example, Reception children do not have independent access to outdoor learning and the outdoor nursery environment and facilities need improvement. Although few children meet or exceed the nationally expected early learning goals by the end of their time in Reception, most make satisfactory progress to be working securely within these.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards further and accelerate pupils' achievement at Key Stage 2, particularly in mathematics.
- Improve the proportion of good teaching by ensuring pupils have consistently good opportunities for collaboration and self-assessment.
- Develop the use of targets to evaluate the success of initiatives.
- Enhance the outdoor provision in the Foundation Stage.

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.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The majority of children join the Foundation stage with skills which are below those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress, so that most are working securely within the nationally expected early learning goals by the end of their time in Reception. As a result of the school's work, standards at the end of Year 2 have risen and pupils make good progress and achieve in line with national expectations. Standards at the end of Year 6 were well below average in 2006 in English, mathematics and science. Extra support from the local authority has helped to improve how well teachers use tracking to identify and support under-performing pupils and this is improving standards and pupils' progress. For example, attainment in English, mathematics and science was broadly average in 2007, and a higher proportion of pupils attained the higher levels. However, mathematics remains a weaker area and the school's tracking indicates that pupils' progress across Years 3–6 is uneven and not all pupils met their targets. The school tracks the progress of different groups of pupils and is continuing to address the differences between how well boys and girls achieve in English. Well-focused interventions help vulnerable pupils and those with learning disabilities or difficulties to make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. The good opportunities pupils have to reflect and share their feelings and celebrate their good work in assemblies means they voice their opinions very readily and sensibly. Pupils enjoy opportunities to take on responsibilities, for example, by mentoring younger pupils, joining the school council or acting as monitors in the classrooms. They are keen to influence the school but feel opportunities to do so are sometimes limited. For example, they, and their parents would like to see further improvements to the toilets and outdoor areas.

Pupils enjoy school greatly because 'children are friendly and teachers help us understand'. They take pride in their work and show respect for each other and for the many cultures within the school. Behaviour around the school and within lessons is good. Pupils know and follow the 'Golden Rules,' which identify a clear moral code. Bullying and racist incidents are rare.

Pupils identify that, where they do occur, they are treated seriously by adults and dealt with effectively. Pupils are very positive about the work of the school and how they are supported during playtimes and in their personal and health education. The school has worked successfully to encourage pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles. They have a good awareness of how to live healthily, although healthier lunch options sometimes receive a mixed response.

Attendance is about average and improving, which is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. However, a minority of pupils are regularly late for school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. In most lessons, teachers give clear explanations so that pupils know what is expected of them. Their good behaviour means that lessons are not disrupted. Support for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is well focused and teaching assistants are used effectively to address individual needs. In good and outstanding lessons observed, there was good pace and pupils were involved fully in planning their work. For example, in one mathematics session, a planning wheel was used very effectively to involve the pupils in their own learning and self-assessment. 'We look at it every day', commented children enthusiastically and the classroom was alive with learning. However, such independent learning is not yet common across the school and in some lessons there is too much focus on instruction and too few opportunities to participate more actively. This means that introductions are overlong and pupils do not have enough opportunity to put their skills and knowledge into practice or to work collaboratively with others.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets statutory requirements. The school has provided more opportunities for pupils to develop and apply skills across different curriculum areas. One successful example is a project where pupils collaborate to produce a working vehicle that would help put out the Great Fire of London. Another is the exciting 'Beijing Project' involving Year 5 pupils in making videos and video-conferencing with its link school in China. The recent purchase of portable wireless laptops is helping to extend pupils' use of information and communication technology in all subjects. All pupils benefit from a good programme of personal, social and health education and a recent project has improved pupils' enterprise skills and economic awareness. Pupils enjoy physical education and many participate enthusiastically in sporting activities at lunchtimes and after school. There is a good range of clubs and trips, as well as themed weeks which are popular with pupils and staff.

Teachers are encouraged by senior staff to broaden and adapt the curriculum to match the needs of pupils and raise achievement. For example, ways are being tried to capture boys' interest in English more and to involve pupils at early stages of learning English in assessment of their own learning. However, much of this work is at relatively early stages and so is not yet fully effective.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are strong with good attention to the personal and social well-being of pupils. Relationships are good, both between pupils and between pupils and adults. One pupil stated, 'There are people to talk to if you feel sad'. As a result, even at this early stage in the term, vulnerable pupils feel well supported. These pupils, including those who are looked after by the local authority, are given good guidance to improve their standards and develop their self-esteem. Provision for pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities is good and means they make good progress. The school works closely with parents and makes very good use of specialist staff and agencies. Procedures are in place to keep children safe.

Academic guidance has improved as more use is being made of the tracking of pupils' achievement. Academic and social targets are set regularly and these are becoming more challenging as staff become more familiar with the use of data to improve achievement. Not all teachers are consistently involving pupils in their own assessment in lessons, however, and some pupils are less clear about what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and deputy work well together to identify the school's strengths and weaknesses and seek out ideas that will improve provision for pupils. For example, teachers are encouraged to participate in research projects to stimulate the development of teaching and the curriculum. Staff have a thorough knowledge of the school which is supported by regular surveys of the views of parents and pupils. Teachers have clear responsibilities for subject and specialist areas and take an active role in evaluating and improving the school, as do the well-informed governors who support and monitor the school's work. However, until recently, their efforts lacked a sharp enough focus on raising pupils' achievement.

The school sets realistic targets which are largely achieved. Over the past year, targets have become more challenging and teachers have been more involved in setting these. However, despite this improving picture, the measures have not yet resulted in pupils making consistently good progress in Years 3 to 5. The school recognises that there is more work to be done to use targets to inform and evaluate the impact of initiatives in order to improve its work. The school promotes equality well through its staffing, codes of behaviour and practices.

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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?	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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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	2

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	2
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	2
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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	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

24 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Fryent Primary School, London, NW9 8JD

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. All the inspectors really enjoyed meeting you and your teachers and sharing in some of your lessons and activities. We particularly enjoyed hearing about all the things you and parents like about your school. We agree with you that:

- your teachers take good care of you and support you to learn
- you work hard in your lessons
- you learn about all sorts of interesting things
- your teachers help you develop into well behaved, thoughtful and healthy young people
- all the adults in your school work together well.

We judged that your school is satisfactory overall as although there are many good things, there are some things which could be better. Your teachers think this as well. They have been working hard to make sure that all of you make good progress, especially as you get older. They have already done some good work to make sure you all do well so we have asked them to carry on with this, especially in mathematics as some of you find this more difficult. We have asked them to make sure they give you chances in your lessons to work together and to get involved in thinking about what you are learning and how well you are doing. They are already doing this in your best lessons. Your teachers have been investigating different ways to improve the school. We have asked them to test out whether the changes they make are working well or not. They may ask you what you think about this too. We would also like to see even better opportunities for children in the Nursery and Reception classes to learn outdoors.

You already help the school in lots of ways, such as working hard, keeping your 'Golden Rules' and getting along well with each other. Another way to improve is by making sure you always get to school on time in the mornings.

It was good to see that you were already settling in well with your new teachers and we hope you all enjoy the year ahead.

With best wishes

Nicola Davies, Lead Inspector