

Vicar's Green Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101916
Local Authority	Ealing
Inspection number	307849
Inspection dates	17–18 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Olson Davis

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	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Munir Ahmed
Headteacher	Mrs Mary Sergides
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2003
School address	Lily Gardens Alperton Wembley HA0 1DP
Telephone number	020 8997 6734
Fax number	020 8566 8607

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above the national average. Most pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest groups are of Indian, other Asian and Black-African backgrounds. The school also has a small number of pupils from refugee families. Approximately seven out of ten pupils speak English as an additional language with an above average proportion at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils who find learning difficult because of specific learning or behavioural difficulties is just below average. Many more pupils than usual join or leave the school at other than the usual times.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Vicar's Green Primary School provides a good standard of education. Central to the school's success is its outstanding provision for pupils' care, guidance and support, which contributes significantly to their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and good achievement. The school works hard to include all pupils, responding successfully to the needs of pupils from a diverse range of backgrounds. The needs of newly arrived pupils are quickly assessed allowing them to settle quickly and to get the support they need. The highly committed and effective headteacher provides a clear direction to the work of the school. She is ably supported by her assistant headteachers in ensuring that all adults work closely as a team to do their best for the pupils. As a result, pupils feel welcomed, are encouraged to learn and achieve well. Excellent partnerships with outside agencies and with parents enrich the curriculum and provide great benefits for pupils' learning and well-being. Parents are pleased with the school. One parent wrote, '...the school is sensitive to parents' wishes. I am very happy that my child is in good hands both for her education and well being.'

There are some outstanding aspects to pupils' overall good personal development. The school council enables pupils to contribute very positively to improving the school. Through the Green Club and Gardening Club, pupils develop insights in to environmental issues. They make a valuable contribution to the life of the school as they promote notions of sustainability and organise recycling and energy saving. Pupils show an excellent understanding of the benefits of good diet and exercise. Lunch boxes reflect their healthy choices. The school has a 'healthy schools' award and an 'Activemark' award in recognition of its good work in promoting healthy living.

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage because of good provision. As they get older, they continue to make good progress and attain average standards by the end of Year 6. This is the result of good teaching, effective support by teaching assistants, and a rich and varied curriculum, which meets pupils' needs well. There are rigorous systems to track pupils' progress. Teachers use this information well to plan tasks and activities for their classes that build well on previous learning, and this contributes to pupils' good progress. Standards in writing are not as high as in reading, mathematics and science. School leaders have recognised that they need to raise standards in writing and have given it a high priority in the school's well-focused improvement plan.

Clear-sighted and determined action by school leaders and governors has led to improvements since the last inspection. Issues have been tackled successfully. For example, lunchtimes are a pleasure for all concerned because they are very well supervised and provide pupils with a positive social experience. This shows the school's good capacity to make further improvements.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is well led and managed and gives children a good start to their education. Children start the Nursery with low levels of skills for their age and most of them speak little or no English. They make good progress in all areas of learning because of good teaching and well-planned activities, which they can choose for themselves. The stimulating classrooms and outdoor learning areas are well organised and attractive. Bilingual teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the good language provision. This leads to pupils' rapid acquisition of

spoken English. There are very close links with outside agencies and parents are pleased with the way that they and their children feel welcomed and are supported. Children are excellently cared for and happy. As a result, they make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and most children reach the levels expected for their age when they enter Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on the current planning and action to raise standards in writing.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Standards are average at the end of Year 6 and this represents good progress from pupils' low starting points in the Nursery. There a number of significant factors that might adversely affect pupils' progress. A high proportion of pupils join and leave the school throughout the year. Just over half of the pupils in the previous Year 6 were in the school at Year 2 and many arrived from abroad with little or no English. Furthermore, those pupils learning English make rapid progress in acquiring fluency in spoken English but their reading and writing skills do not improve as quickly. Nonetheless, the school works successfully to overcome these obstacles to progress. The headteacher has taken purposeful action to raise standards at the end of Year 2 and pupils are now working at levels, which are close to the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. The current Year 6 pupils are on track to exceed their challenging targets but there is room for improvement in writing. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress as a result of the effective additional support they receive. Pupils who find learning difficult and pupils with behavioural difficulties also receive well-focused support and achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils behave well within the school's calm and happy atmosphere. They are polite and friendly, showing respect for the feelings of others. They feel very safe because they say there is always an adult to go to if they are troubled. Pupils understand very well how to avoid unnecessary risks such as when using the internet or cycling to school. They enjoy learning and are keen to do well in their work. However, despite the school's best efforts to minimise absences, attendance is satisfactory. This is because a few parents take their children away for extended periods during term-time and this hinders progress for these pupils.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They are reflective and thoughtful. They experience moments of delight in singing, dancing and painting. Pupils have a strong sense of fairness and show sympathy for people who are less fortunate. Their cultural awareness is very strong because the school takes full account of their diverse backgrounds. Pupils develop an excellent understanding of diversity in Britain through their work in music, art, geography and religious education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Relationships between pupils and teachers are excellent. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic learners and keen to participate in lessons. Teachers make good use of resources such as the interactive whiteboards to support pupils' thinking and stimulate their interest. They check pupils' understanding well through good questioning. Teachers provide interesting work for pupils that is mostly well matched to their abilities. However, they sometimes miss opportunities to add extra challenge to pupils' work in writing. They give clear explanations and encourage pupils to discuss their work. Occasionally, whole class sessions can be too long, restricting the time available for pupils to work independently or in groups. Skilled teaching assistants work closely with teachers to provide good quality help for pupils with learning difficulties and for pupils at the early stage of learning English.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Teachers place strong emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills but they do not provide enough good opportunities for them to practise their writing skills in subjects other than literacy. Provision for information and communication technology has improved recently. Pupils are beginning to use it well to support their work in other areas. Safe and healthy lifestyles are promoted very effectively through well-structured programmes for personal, social and health education and physical education. The school has made good progress in developing a creative curriculum. Every Friday afternoon, there is a wide range of activities to interest pupils and enhance their personal development. Enrichment is strong. There are many clubs for pupils to enjoy and a host of visits and visitors bring relevance to their learning. The strong provision in art, music and humanities supports pupils' cultural development exceptionally well. Pupils' good progress in basic skills and good personal and social skills prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Excellent pastoral care for its pupils lies at the heart of the school's work. All adults in the school show a high level of commitment in promoting the health and safety of pupils. Policies and procedures, such as those for child protection and minimising risks, are securely in place and very well followed by staff. Support for vulnerable pupils is very strong as their needs are identified accurately and their progress is tracked very carefully. Pupils who find learning difficult receive effective support tailored to their needs. There are also well-organised systems for identifying and meeting the needs of pupils at the early stages of learning English and for evaluating their progress. Very effective use is made of staff expertise and outside agencies to support pupils and their parents. For example, the school runs workshops for parents, including a homework club, which enable them to support their children's learning more effectively. Academic guidance is good. Pupils know their targets well and how to achieve them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and senior leaders work very well together to provide a high standard of care for pupils and to ensure a strong focus on raising standards. They are good role models, particularly for the teachers in their first year of teaching. Effective self-evaluation involves all staff members and leads to prompt and successful actions being taken to bring about improvements. School leaders and managers analyse assessment data effectively to set challenging targets for the school and for individual pupils. This information is used to check that different groups of pupils are making good progress and swift action is taken to remedy dips in performance. As a result of these careful interventions, standards at the end of Year 2 have improved significantly and standards at the end of Year 6 are rising even further.

The headteacher and other staff monitor teaching regularly. Teachers are given good feedback to help them improve their performance. This process has led to greater consistency in teaching. However, more remains to be done to ensure that all teachers are providing enough suitably demanding opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills.

Governors are supportive and know the school well through their own effective monitoring. This allows them to participate fully in managing the school's strategic development.

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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?	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?	1
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?	2
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	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	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

27 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Vicar's Green Primary School, Wembley, HA0 1DP

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school recently. We appreciated the help you gave us when we looked at you working and when you shared your ideas about the school.

Your school gives you a good standard of education, which prepares you well for the next stage of your education. There are some outstanding features too, namely your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the care, guidance and support that the adults provide for you. Here are some of the many things that we think are good about your school.

- The work in the Foundation Stage is well organised and gives you a good start in school.
- You make good progress in your learning.
- You enjoy school and behave well in lessons and around the school.
- You are taught well and you are given good help when you find the work hard.
- You take lots of exercise and know a great deal about healthy living.
- The school council represents your views very well and you all help the school to run smoothly.
- You feel very safe because all of the adults in your school make sure that you are very well looked after.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors run the school well and are continually trying to make your school even better for you.

We have asked the staff and governors to carry on working on one important area. This is to help you to improve your writing so that you do as well in English as you do in mathematics and science. You can help by always doing your best work, especially in writing.

We hope that you will help your teachers as they work hard to make your school even better for you.

Yours sincerely

Olson Davis

Lead Inspector