

Minet Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102391
Local Authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	307990
Inspection dates	28–29 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Linda McGill HMI

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 (total)	436
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Roy Hill
Headteacher	Mr Steve Foot
Date of previous school inspection	2 November 2004
School address	Avondale Drive Hayes UB3 3NR
Telephone number	01895 671973
Fax number	020 8573 6647

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Minet Junior School serves an ethnically and culturally diverse area close to Heathrow Airport in west London. It is a large primary school with over 400 pupils on roll. It has seen some changes to its intake since its last inspection, reflecting what is happening in the local area. For example, many more pupils are in the early stages of learning English, and the number of pupils who leave and join the school throughout the course of the school year is higher and increasing. Some of these new entrants have little or no experience of schooling in the United Kingdom. Many of the families face challenging circumstances, and some are refugees or are seeking asylum. A high proportion of the pupils are eligible for a free school meal. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also high. These pupils have a wide range of additional needs, encompassing learning, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Most of the pupils join Minet Junior School having attended the adjacent Infants' School.

The school has achieved Healthy School status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Minet Junior School provides an oasis of calm and stability for the pupils and their families. The headteacher and staff share an unswerving commitment to providing the best for every pupil. To this end, they successfully strive to help the pupils overcome the many barriers to learning that some of them face, and enable them to become confident, sociable young people who are eager to learn.

The school's overall effectiveness is good. Some aspects of its work are exemplary. Pupils join the school with levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics that are well below that of typical seven-year-olds. In addition, some have noticeable social and emotional difficulties. The school's inclusive, warm and supportive ethos enables pupils to grow and thrive. The quality of teaching is good and helps the pupils to make good progress. There is a growing proportion of outstanding teaching, and the school is well placed to spread this still further. Although the school's test results are below national figures at the end of Year 6, the gap is much narrower than at the start of Year 3.

Key to the school's success is the meticulous attention given to meeting individual needs. The care, guidance and support for pupils are exceptional. Even in such a large school, everyone is well known. The staff regularly review all the information they have about pupils' attainment, progress and particular circumstances, and adapt teaching - or make one of a wide range of interventions - to meet their needs. Excellent partnerships with outside agencies supplement the school's provision. Support for pupils learning English as an additional language is outstanding. Well-focused, stimulating teaching, and a strong emphasis on talking, reasoning and explaining, help the pupils to rapidly gain confidence in speaking, reading and writing. They develop an understanding that goes beyond the literal, for example appreciating humour in writing. Similarly, pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make very good progress, because provision is exceptionally well managed and support precisely meets their individual needs.

The school's provision enables the pupils to take great strides forward in their personal development, which is outstanding. Pupils' behaviour is good, and is sometimes excellent, for example when they sing together with evident enjoyment, enthusiasm and pride. It is not always as good as this, however, and the school is working hard to support a few pupils who have difficulties in managing their own behaviour. The pupils are keen to learn; indeed, they are sometimes reluctant to stop work at the end of lessons. They work productively in pairs and small groups, and take their responsibilities in school very seriously. The 'buddy' system for pupils newly arrived at the school is an excellent example of how pupils look out for each other. These positive attributes are another reason why pupils make good progress.

The headteacher and senior leaders provide strong direction to the school's work. Staff and governors share their vision of continuing to strengthen the school's place at the heart of the local community. Leaders and managers are reflective, and constantly seek to improve the quality of what is provided for the pupils. However, their plans are sometimes too wide-ranging, and lack a sharp enough focus on the key things that will bring about rapid improvement. The school's commitment to equality of opportunity and to the promotion of community cohesion is beyond question. One parent aptly summed this up, saying, 'I really feel the school represents the world today - different nationalities, religions and cultures. My child is learning to respect the wider community and tolerate differences at an early age.'

What the school should do to improve further

Boost the pupils' achievement and bring standards closer to the national average by:

- identifying the key features of outstanding teaching, and supporting all teachers to work towards this
- refining plans for improvement to bring a sharper focus on fewer, important priorities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well during their time at Minet Junior School. Although the standards they attained in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2008 were below national averages, their progress was good. Pupils have clear targets to help them understand what they need to do to get better at specific aspects of their work. Teachers regularly review how well the pupils are doing, and adapt these targets so that individuals and groups continue to progress well. The support given to pupils who start at the school throughout the course of the year not only makes them feel welcome but also ensures that they make good progress from their first day. The school does not solely put its efforts into supporting those who may find learning difficult or challenging. Special provision is also made for pupils who have the potential to reach high standards, ensuring that they, too, make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' outstanding personal development contributes well to their good achievement. Pupils are polite, well behaved and mature in their approach to learning. They collaborate well, and thoroughly enjoy talking about what they are doing. Their positive attitudes to learning and their enjoyment of school show in their good attendance. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of how to lead a healthy life and keep themselves safe. They also relish the many opportunities that they are given to take responsibility. Members of the influential school council are proud of the ways that they participate in school life, such as in helping to run the school's summer fete, raising money for a wide range of charities, and taking ideas forward from their classmates. Pupils are especially proud of the work they do when being a 'buddy' to pupils that are new to the school and the country. Their spiritual moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The pupils grow into mature and thoughtful young people who are tolerant and supportive of the many different cultural and religious groups represented in the school. They demonstrate a good understanding of the rights of individuals and the need to respect themselves and others. This prepares them well for the next stage in their education, and for life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

There are considerable strengths in the teaching. Lessons are often exciting and challenging, enabling the pupils to move on quickly in their learning. Teachers are generally confident and assured, and lessons are well prepared and resourced. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring that the pupils talk productively during lessons, and they respond very well to opportunities to discuss their ideas and to share them with the class. The teachers use questions very well to probe understanding, and to help the pupils explore hypotheses and develop their thinking,

although not all are equally skilled at building on the pupils' responses to challenge them even further. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect in lessons; the teachers enjoy their teaching and the pupils are eager to learn. The teachers increasingly use information and communication technology with confidence and skill to enhance their teaching. This all contributes to the good progress that the pupils make over time. Teaching assistants work well in partnership with class teachers and make a strong contribution to the pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the learning and development needs of all groups of pupils very well. National guidance is adapted appropriately and imaginatively, and there is a wide range of special provision for different groups of learners. Year groups sometimes undertake in-depth and extended work in some subjects to boost knowledge and understanding. The extensive range of extra-curricular activities, including sports and study support in pupils' home languages, is very well attended. Good use is made of the local community to bring relevance to pupils' learning. The curriculum emphasises the five Every Child Matters outcomes through projects such as 'Young Enterprise'. The programmes for personal, social and health education, and for citizenship, are particular strengths; they make important contributions to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and emotional development, and to their understanding of how to stay safe, keep healthy and be happy. Curriculum links with the adjacent infants' school are developing, and should ensure greater continuity in pupils' learning; however, there is scope to broaden and strengthen this work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The attention given to caring for the pupils and ensuring their well-being is outstanding. The staff have excellent relationships with the pupils and their families, and provide a caring and supportive environment. The well-attended breakfast club helps parents, and also gives pupils a positive start to the day. All staff manage pupils' behaviour consistently, and expectations for how pupils should behave are very clear. The effective work of the learning mentors helps pupils understand and manage their emotions. This in turn helps vulnerable pupils with their learning in the classroom. Because pupils make excellent progress in their personal development, incidents of bullying and racism are very rare. Pupils are confident that such occurrences will be dealt with quickly and fairly. Arrangements to protect children and keep them safe are robust. The school's concerted efforts to reduce absence are paying dividends, and attendance has risen steadily. The pupils are given good guidance to help them make progress in their work. Pupils know their targets. In every lesson, teachers identify clear 'steps to success' make sure that everyone understands what they need to do next. The school is working on improving marking so that it makes a stronger contribution to pupils' progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

There is a strong culture of teamwork and mutual respect at Minet Junior School. Morale is high, and staff at all levels are clearly proud of what they help the pupils to achieve. Everyone pulls in the same direction. This common purpose stems from strong leadership at the top. Although many of the staff are long-serving, they are by no means set in their ways and are

keen to keep moving forward. The school offers much to the local community; different faith and community groups regularly use the premises. The school has successfully recruited teachers and support staff who share the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of many of the pupils.

The school knows its strengths and weaknesses well; all aspects of provision and outcomes for the pupils are monitored regularly. However, the resulting plans for further improvement focus on much more than the most important things, and the criteria by which success will be measured are not always specific enough. The governing body is supportive of the school, and makes sure that proposals for future development are fully discussed and justified. The clear improvements since the last inspection demonstrate that the school has a good capacity to continue to improve.

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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 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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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 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

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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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**

12 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Minet Junior School, Hayes, UB3 3NR

Thank you so much for the warm welcome you gave me and the other inspectors when we visited your school recently. It was a great pleasure to meet and talk to you and to see you at work and play. I am writing to let you know what we found out about your school. I hope that those of you who speak English very well will translate what I say for your classmates who may not fully understand just yet.

We found that Minet Junior School is a good school. There are so many things that you can be proud of, too many to list here, so these are the headlines.

- The teachers and other adults look after you exceptionally well.
- You are really keen to learn, you work hard in lessons, and you make good progress.
- Your teachers teach you very well and this helps you make good progress, too.
- The way the school helps those of you who are learning English, those who find lessons hard, and those who sometimes have trouble behaving properly, is excellent.
- You are growing up to be polite, mature, thoughtful and responsible young people.
- Your school plays an important part in your local community.

We have asked your headteacher, all the staff and the governors to do two things that will help you learn even more. First, although your teachers are doing a really good job, we think they can get even better and make teaching excellent. We have also asked that the school's plans for what will happen next concentrate on the most important things that will help you with your learning.

We hope that you will also rise to the challenge to learn even more!

Yours faithfully

Linda McGill

Her Majesty's Inspector