

# Hermitage Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102405
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hillingdon
<b>Inspection number</b>	307992
<b>Inspection date</b>	8 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alan Jarvis

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	240
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs P Ash
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms L Hodgkinson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 May 2004
<b>School address</b>	Belmont Road Uxbridge UB8 1RB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01895 234871
<b>Fax number</b>	01895 258711

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the reasons why standards and progress have been changing
- strengths and weaknesses in teaching
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels.

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

Hermitage is an average sized school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Pupils' difficulties relate mainly to speech, language and communication, hearing impairment or physical needs. Most pupils are White British. However, one third come from a wide variety of other ethnic backgrounds with Black Caribbean, Asian Indian and other White backgrounds being the largest groups. The school is oversubscribed. The governors have experienced difficulties in appointing a permanent headteacher. The deputy headteacher has acted as headteacher since last September pending the arrival of a permanent headteacher in September 2008. During the inspection, a supply teacher taught pupils in Year 1.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Hermitage is a satisfactory and improving school. A significant minority of parents expressed concerns that standards have declined and that the school has been without a permanent headteacher since September. The inspection confirms that standards have fallen. Nevertheless, the acting headteacher and her assistants have led the school well. They have clearly identified where improvement was most needed and taken firm action to reverse the decline. As a result, the vast majority of pupils are achieving at least satisfactorily.

At the start of this school year, the senior managers swiftly identified that the key reason for the downturn in standards was that teaching was not good enough. To address this they implemented a robust programme of lesson observations and good support to help teachers address any weaknesses. This has been beneficial. Teaching is now satisfactory and improving term by term. Better teaching has helped quicken and even out progress although inconsistencies remain in the pace and challenge in learning. Several strengths are evident. Teaching is good in Year 2 and throughout the Foundation Stage. Behaviour is well managed, teachers have good relationships with their pupils and, as pupils say 'make the lessons enjoyable'. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well in lessons. Teachers share learning objectives with pupils at the start of each lesson. Better planning has sharpened these. However, not all teachers use learning objectives to focus their pupils very clearly on the task in hand and on what they need to do next. Marking remains inconsistent. Whilst it is often encouraging, not enough pupils have a clear understanding of their next steps in learning.

The senior managers' analysis also revealed weaknesses in the monitoring of pupils' progress and standards. Again, remedial action has been taken. Accurate, termly assessments in reading, writing and mathematics are undertaken. These are carefully analysed and shared with staff. As a result, teachers have a much clearer idea of how their pupils are doing. Teachers are generally using the information to better effect to tailor learning more closely to pupils' individual needs. However, this practice is not fully embedded or always sharp enough. Nevertheless, academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils have challenging targets that provide a spur for learning. Teachers are increasingly using pupils as 'talking and writing partners' and encouraging them to reflect on how much they have learnt in each lesson. This is helping them gain a better idea of their progress, but there is still some way to go before this is fully effective. Far fewer pupils are underachieving this year because the senior leadership team uses the information well to provide additional support to any individual or groups of pupils who are in danger of falling behind. The school keeps good information about the pupils on the register of special educational needs. This ensures their learning and other additional needs are met in class and that good support from external specialists is provided.

Pupils are making satisfactory progress in Year 1 and good progress in Year 2. By the end of Year 2, standards are average in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress is satisfactory throughout Years 3 to 6. By the end of Year 6, standards are average in English, mathematics and science. This provides pupils with a sound start to their secondary education. Currently, nearly all pupils in Year 6 who reached level 3 in Year 2 are on course to reach level 5, which is an improvement on last year.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership team shows no complacency and realises that both standards and progress should be even higher. Consequently, leaders are rightly focusing on improving standards in writing and ensuring more pupils attain the higher

levels throughout the school. The huge improvements in ICT show that leadership and management in this subject are very good. However, the effectiveness of other subject leaders remains inconsistent because strategies for checking the impact of provision on pupils' progress are not fully effective. Governors support the school well but are realistic about their effectiveness in monitoring its work. They are working closely with the acting headteacher to ensure they evaluate the work of the school more accurately and improve communications with parents. The marked improvements in teaching, assessment and the more consistent progress in learning this year indicate there is a good capacity to make further improvement.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is satisfactory. This is because of the sound provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. However, some other aspects of pupils' personal development are stronger because pastoral care is good. Attendance is above average and pupils enjoy coming to school. Behaviour is also good and exclusions are extremely rare. Pupils feel very safe and say adults quickly deal with any problems they have. They adopt healthy lifestyles and are working to provide more healthy snacks at break time. The very active school council has raised funds for charity, helped choose new play equipment and is keen to develop a pupils' newspaper. However, pupils' involvement with the wider community is not as strong as it might be.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. 'My daughter loves the nursery' and 'My child receives excellent care and attention in Reception' typify the views of many parents. Children enter the nursery with skills that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Learning is brisk. Teachers and other adults know the needs of the children very well and tailor activities closely to their individual needs. The inside and outside areas are used well. The outdoor area in reception is being improved to bring it in line with the already good quality provision in the nursery. The balance between activities chosen by children and learning led by adults is gradually adjusted as the children approach the end of Reception. This aids a smooth transition to Year 1. At the end of Reception, most children are working in line with expectations and some exceed them in more than one area of learning.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards and quicken pupils' progress by ensuring that teaching is consistently challenging and enables all pupils to achieve as well as they can.
- Use assessment information to sharpen learning and help pupils assess their work more effectively so that they reach their challenging targets.
- Develop the role of subject leaders and governors so that they rigorously monitor progress and ensure all staff are accountable for the standards achieved.

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

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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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	3

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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	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	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

21 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hermitage Primary School, Uxbridge, UB8 1RB

As you know, I visited your school recently to find out how well you are doing. Thank you for your warm welcome. I enjoyed finding out about your school, watching your lessons and talking with some of you. My report says that yours is a satisfactory school and improving school. This means that some things are good but there are others which could be better.

I particularly liked the strong start made by the children in the Foundation Stage. You told me you enjoy coming to school and your teachers make your lessons interesting. I can see that your good behaviour in class, keenness to learn and the good relationships you have with your teachers help you make satisfactory progress. By the time you leave school you reach average standards in English, mathematics and science which enable you to make a sound start to secondary school. Your attendance is good. Well done! You have an active school council which is doing a good job in helping the school get better. There is very little bullying. You have learnt how to lead healthy lifestyles and how to keep safe.

Your acting headteacher has worked hard this year and has made a big difference. She wants to do much more to improve teaching and learning so that you make faster progress and reach higher standards. You can help by working hard on your learning objectives. This year many of you have started to assess how well you are doing in class. I would like you to take this very seriously so that you can be more confident in your learning and exceed your targets. Your teachers and governors are also very keen to develop their work so that you make faster progress and standards do not slip as they have done in the past.

I am sure you will play your part in helping your teachers succeed in their quest to make Hermitage primary a really good school. I wish you the best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Alan Jarvis

Lead Inspector