

Isleworth Town Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102492
Local Authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	308027
Inspection dates	15–16 July 2008
Reporting inspector	David Scott

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	466
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miss S Dixon
Headteacher	Mrs E Sheedy
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2003
School address	Twickenham Road Isleworth TW7 6AB
Telephone number	020 8560 5701
Fax number	020 8569 7589

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Addition Inspectors.

Description of the school

Isleworth Town is a larger than average primary school. More pupils than is typical nationally are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Over a third, higher than average, has a home language other than English. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is almost double the national average and the number of pupils with specific learning difficulties is just above average. The school is oversubscribed but more pupils than is typical nationally join or leave the school at other than customary times of the year.

The school holds the Sports Activemark and the Healthy Schools Award and is a fully extended school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Isleworth Town is a good and happy school, a view endorsed by the staff, parents and pupils. As one parent commented, echoing the views of the majority, 'Isleworth Town is a fantastic school. My children are thriving and I am extremely pleased with their progress.'

A real strength of the school is the way pupils develop as responsible young people in a friendly, safe environment. High quality care, guidance and support result in good personal development. The overwhelming majority of pupils enjoy school, attend regularly and behave responsibly both in and out of class. They have a thorough understanding of healthy living and are keen participants in physical activities, including after-hours sports clubs. Pupils contribute regularly to school improvement, offering good ideas and suggestions at school councils and assemblies. They follow the strong moral lead given by adults and this is reflected in their good spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Pupils value their differences and celebrate the many traditions among them. Pupils make a good contribution to the lives of others in the wider community by raising money for charity and participating in local events.

At the heart of this positive picture is the strong and determined leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by her senior team. Since the last inspection, following a period of significant staffing challenges, much needed stability has returned. Leadership and management are now good and this has made a significant difference to pupils' future life chances. From often very low starting points in the Nursery, children reach just below average standards and make good progress by the end of Year 2. Many pupils arrive and leave the school at different times of the year. Progress accelerates as pupils move through the school so that they reach average standards by the end of Year 6 and achieve well. The headteacher and governors have an accurate view of the school's performance. They are clear, for example, that standards in science are higher than those in mathematics and English.

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons engage pupils well and encourage them to share ideas and work well together. However, some lessons lack the necessary challenge for pupils to work independently and achieve as well as they can. In addition, teachers do not always provide consistently clear advice to pupils as to what they need to do to move to the next level. The good topic-based curriculum is well managed and enables pupils to enjoy a wide range of interesting work, such as setting a budget for the making and selling of pizzas and sandwiches as a business enterprise project. Out-of-hours activities such as cookery, choir, dance and many sports, effectively promote children's good personal and academic development.

Governance is good. Governors are able to challenge and support the school with increasing confidence. The school is proud of its good partnership with the parents and the local community and works hard to engage the support of parents through regular newsletters as well as 'drop-in' opportunities to meet staff. As one parent commented, 'I could not have chosen a better school for my child'. The positive changes over the last year show that the school's capacity to improve is now good.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage. They join the school with a range of skills that are below those expected for their age. Excellent relationships with parents help children settle quickly. The well-led Foundation Stage team effectively nurtures the children's social

and emotional development. A stimulating curriculum and high quality care and secure environment support them exceptionally well and contribute to their personal development. They learn to co-operate with each other, developing good attitudes to learning. Assessment is used well to identify the children's specific learning needs, irrespective of when children start the school. Teachers are careful to identify those with little knowledge of English who are able learners. As a result, all groups of children, including the most vulnerable, make good progress and achieve standards that are just below that expected for their age by the time they start Year 1. This is due to the sharp focus given to the steady acquisition of essential skills for learning that many lack when they join the school. The attractive and imaginative outdoor area adds much to children's enjoyment of learning. The newly created garden, complete with log cabin, stimulates children's imagination well for role-play activities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teaching consistently challenges pupils to achieve as well as they can.
- Improve the consistency of academic advice so that pupils benefit from more precise ways on how to improve their work and performance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Most pupils enter Year 1 with levels of knowledge and skills that are below those normally expected for their age group, particularly in communication, language and literacy skills. They progress well in Years 1 and 2 to reach just below average standards by the end of Year 2. Pupils' progress accelerates as they move through the school so that by Year 6 they reach broadly average standards, demonstrating good progress.

Achievement is good and standards are average by the end of Year 6. Work in lessons indicates that currently pupils achieve well from below average starting points. Pupils achieve most successfully in science with national test results showing consistently higher results than those of English and mathematics. This has been due to a concerted focus on helping pupils to apply their knowledge of scientific vocabulary. Pupils' reading skills are improving and standards are higher than in writing because of the school's focus on encouraging pupils to read widely. Some reading tasks in lessons are not always as challenging as they could be, and this slows pupils' progress in reading. All groups of pupils do well, including those who have a home language other than English. Those at the early stages of English make rapid gains in fluency as a result of excellent individual attention. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties also achieve well because of the high levels of personal and academic guidance and the good teaching they experience.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is reflected in the mutual respect between pupils and between staff and pupils. They feel secure and behaviour is good because of their positive attitudes to learning. Most learners come to school eagerly and enjoy their learning. However, a small number of pupils miss valuable learning time as a result of holidays being taken in term time.

Pupils have good knowledge about what constitutes a healthy life style and high numbers take part in sports and physical activities, reflecting their strong commitment to fitness. Pupils know

how to choose healthy lunches and are aware of the benefits of a healthy diet. The school council provides pupils with an influential voice and they take an active role by assisting in the smooth running of the school, by acting as playground monitors. In the wider community, pupils make a good contribution through a range of activities including fund raising for charities and carol singing for local elderly residents. Pupils prepare well for the next stage of their education through well-managed transition procedures and through good progress in basic skills. A small number of parents felt behaviour was an issue. However, the vast majority rightly believe that behaviour is good in the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teaching has improved since the last inspection because of rigorous monitoring and effective professional development. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and as a result, pupils behave well and attitudes to learning are good. Lessons are well structured and teachers clarify what pupils are to learn from the outset. This enables pupils to reflect on their own progress. Pupils make good progress when lesson planning accurately builds on what they already know. Resources using information and communication technology (ICT) are creatively harnessed, and the activities are engaging. Support by classroom assistants is well directed and there is a good balance between whole-class teaching and group work. However, in some lessons, tasks are not pitched at the correct level to challenge all pupils, particularly those of higher ability.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The well managed curriculum is good and provides a broad and interesting range of work which motivates pupils. The topic-based approach allows all pupils, including those with moderate learning difficulties, to be fully included in learning activities. Themed projects such as creative arts week and musical productions, for example, add richness to different areas of learning. Sports clubs contribute very well to pupils' positive attitudes to keeping fit and healthy. Pupils delight in being able to study French for the first time. Out-of-hours activities range from orchestra to yoga and are well attended. Pupils enjoy using the computer suite, but they do not have enough opportunities to apply their ICT skills in lessons. The school makes good use of the local area for interesting visits to places of worship, museums, theatres and galleries.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Personal guidance is good. New pupils settle quickly and happily into the school throughout the year because of good induction procedures. Arrangements for health and safety, safeguarding and risk assessments are robust and promote a safe and supportive learning environment. Pupils are confident that there is always an adult they can turn to if they have a problem. Support for vulnerable pupils is strong as their needs are swiftly identified and their progress is carefully tracked. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties receive good support tailored to their needs. The school works well with outside agencies to find the best support for these pupils. Most pupils know their targets but are less clear as to what they needed to do in order to progress to the next level.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's inspirational leadership and clear vision for taking the school forward is shared whole-heartedly by staff and governors. The senior team form a cohesive group who complement and support each other and the school well. Governance is good. The governing body is highly committed to helping the school develop and improve. The headteacher and governors know the school well and they have an accurate view about its strengths and areas for development, for example, improving pupils' performance in literacy and developing more effective assessment systems. Links with the local community are strong. The senior leadership team places significant trust in middle leaders and allows them much autonomy to develop their roles and interests. Staff are very appreciative of the genuine opportunities afforded them in the good professional development activities. However, the monitoring role of subject leaders is currently a focus as some are relatively new to their roles and have not had time to impact fully on pupils' achievements.

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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?	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?	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	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?	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?	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

01 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Isleworth Town Primary School, Isleworth, TW7 6AB

Thank you very much for making us so welcome and for being so friendly when we visited your school recently. We did enjoy our visit. We were very pleased to hear from you how much you enjoyed school and to see how well you worked in lessons.

We think you go to a good school that not only helps you to learn well, particularly in science, but it also looks after you very well. We were impressed by your behaviour and the way you work well together. There are many things that are good about your school but we would like to single out your teachers and helpers who encourage and support you both in lessons and in the interesting clubs. You say grown-ups listen to your ideas and they are always willing to listen if you have a problem. You do well in learning how to live a healthy life and in learning about people from different countries and religions. You have an exceptional headteacher who is very well supported by senior staff and governors. They are working tirelessly on your behalf to ensure you get the best possible education.

Before we left, we talked to your headteacher about how the school could do even better. She agrees with inspectors that staff need to do some more work with you to help you make even better progress by setting you more challenging work in lessons so that you do your very best, and by providing you with more precise advice on how to improve your work.

We hope you will continue to cooperate well with your teachers and pay good attention to the advice they give you.

We wish you well in all that you hope to achieve for yourselves in the future.

Yours sincerely

David Scott

Lead Inspector