

Joseph Hood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102634
Local Authority	Merton
Inspection number	308072
Inspection dates	8–9 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Jane Chesterfield

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	188
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alan Burbridge
Headteacher	Mrs Anita Saville
Date of previous school inspection	7 June 2004
School address	Whatley Avenue Raynes Park London SW20 9NS
Telephone number	020 8542 2471
Fax number	020 8542 2325

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than many primaries and serves a mixed residential community. Almost half the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, and a quarter are learning English as an additional language. Both these figures are double the national average. The largest groups in the school are of White British, Arabic or Eastern European origin. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is average, but the proportion with statements of special educational needs is very high. These difficulties are mainly moderate learning, autism, and speech and language. Mobility of pupils is high. The school changed from being a first school to a primary school seven years ago, and has had pupils in Year 6 for the last five years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Joseph Hood is a good school where pupils achieve well and get a good start to their education. Pupils are happy at school. 'It's a friendly place and a nice environment to be in', said one. Parents too are pleased to have chosen the school for their children. One commented, 'Joseph Hood may be small in size but it's big in community spirit', echoing the views of many. Parents feel that their children thrive in a caring, close-knit school.

Pupils make good progress because staff know them well and try hard to meet their different needs. Many arrive at Nursery with a level of skills well below that expected for their age, particularly in language, as an increasing number are new to learning English. They make good progress, reaching standards that are just below average when they enter Year 1, and average standards by the time they enter Year 3. Pupils' standards by the time they leave the school have fluctuated above and below average during the five years that the school has had a Year 6, often because of the high level of mobility in and out of the school. This year, though, they are on target to reach average standards in English, mathematics and science, which represents good progress for this year group, who were below average on entering Year 3.

Good teaching and a well balanced curriculum mean that pupils enjoy their learning. Teachers are skilled in meeting the needs of pupils new to English, putting an emphasis on opportunities for speaking and listening, checking pupils' understanding carefully and making good use of visual aids. These methods are also very supportive for pupils with speech and language difficulties. Pupils with other learning difficulties or disabilities, including autism and moderate learning difficulties, are well supported in class so that they make good progress. However, teachers do not always make the best possible use of other adults working in their classrooms to ensure that all pupils' needs are met at all times.

The school pays very good attention to pastoral care and the well-being of its pupils. This helps them to feel safe and secure in their surroundings, so that they can develop well as individuals. The school is keen to foster pupils' strengths and offers them a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents beyond the classroom. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. However, they do not receive enough academic guidance through marking or the setting of individual targets. This hinders them in taking responsibility for their own learning, and understanding what they can do to improve. Pupils are motivated and well behaved, and build very good relationships with adults and with one another. The headteacher, capably supported by the deputy, sets the tone for the caring ethos of the school and has a determination to see the school improve further. There is a clear focus on raising achievement and standards, and in developing staff to make sure this happens. Improvements in the use of tracking data to target support for pupils more closely this year, for example, have led to better progress for all groups of pupils. Consequently, the school has a good capacity to improve further. As one parent said, 'I think Joseph Hood is a wonderful place for children's learning to happen'.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage. They enter the Nursery with skills that are well below for those expected for their age, and are helped to develop good attitudes to learning, and good social and emotional skills. The focus on speaking and listening helps all children to achieve well, including those for whom English is an additional language. Teachers

and teaching assistants work together to provide a stimulating environment that encourages children to explore the world around them, and develops their independence. The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all children, and it challenges and stimulates their interest successfully. Children make good progress in all areas of learning because of good teaching, assessment and support. The outdoor area is attractive and well organised, but is not currently planned to give enough support to the language work going on in the classrooms.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of marking and target setting to involve pupils more fully in the next steps of their learning.
- Ensure that all teachers make full use of support staff to meet the needs of all the pupils in their class.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Across the school, teachers match work well to the needs of pupils so that they achieve well. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach broadly average standards compared with national levels in reading, writing and mathematics, making good progress from their starting points. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' progress has accelerated this year, because of the improved use of data to target support, and better planning of different work for pupils of different abilities. A greater number of pupils are on course to reach the higher levels in English, mathematics and science compared with last year, because teachers are providing increased challenge for the more able pupils.

The school also makes good use of tracking data to pinpoint the progress of different groups of pupils. It has noted that White British pupils have been performing better than Eastern European and Arabic pupils who are new to English, and so has ensured that teachers use methods which support those learners. This means that they are now making good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They behave well in lessons and around the school, and show a good understanding of the rules for maintaining good behaviour. Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is satisfactory. They have positive attitudes to school and their learning, though standards of presentation in their books do not always indicate that pupils take a pride in their work. Pupils are happy to take on responsibility, for example when older pupils organise play activities for younger ones. Lunchtime arrangements were successfully re-organised at the suggestion of the school council. Pupils know how to keep healthy through sensible eating and exercise, and enjoy being active.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a good understanding of their own and different cultures through sharing the knowledge and experiences of others within the school. Pupils say they feel safe in school and are confident that there are adults in the school with whom they can share problems. Their good social skills and their improving literacy and numeracy skills mean that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning in the school are good, because teachers know how to interest and motivate their pupils. Pupils commented that, 'Teachers explain things in a fun way', and that they get the chance, '...to learn things in different ways'. Teachers' enthusiasm for their subjects means that pupils are keen to learn. There are good relationships and a positive working environment in all classes, and pupils enjoy the challenges they are offered. During groupwork sessions, teachers make good use of other adults to support groups of pupils of different abilities. This means, for example, that lower ability groups can keep up or that more able pupils can forge ahead. However, during sessions where teachers are talking to the whole class, the skills of teaching assistants are often not well deployed, when they could be offering support or challenge to pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides a good emphasis on literacy and numeracy and good coverage of other subjects. Well developed links between subjects add interest and enjoyment to the curriculum for younger pupils, though for older pupils these links are still developing.

Pupils and parents alike speak highly of the good range of clubs, trips and other opportunities that enhance pupils' learning. Pupils get the chance to discover their talents in, for example, music, sport and creative arts. They build their social skills on residential trips, and explore subjects in more depth through special events such as art and literacy week.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides very good pastoral care and support for its pupils. Pupils thrive in a secure, supportive environment and their teachers know them well. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are rigorous. The school works very closely with outside agencies and parents. Vulnerable pupils and those with particular needs are identified at an early stage, and good support put in place so that they achieve as well as others.

Marking of pupils' work is regular and encouraging. However, guidance on how to improve their work is inconsistent. Teachers set general targets for classes or groups, but pupils do not have individual targets to help them to identify the next steps that they need to take in order to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. There is a strong sense of teamwork fostered by senior staff, and a feeling of commitment to a common purpose of improvement at all levels. Subject leaders are enthusiastic about their roles and play a full part in monitoring and evaluating work in their areas. Systems for self review and school improvement are well established, and senior staff are aware of how to make these sharper and more rigorous. They are planning, for example,

to introduce computerised processes for tracking pupils' progress, so that data can be analysed more quickly and easily.

The governing body fulfils its duties and supports the school well. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and of the role they have to play. The school is outward looking and forward looking, reaching out into the community and welcoming change such as the opportunities offered by the development of a children's centre on the site.

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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

20 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Joseph Hood Primary School, London, SW20 9NS

Thank you for being so helpful and friendly when we visited your school. We really enjoyed meeting you and talking to you. We agree with you and your parents that Joseph Hood is a good school, and we could tell that you like going there. You are doing well in your lessons, because your teachers know you what you need and give you work which is right for you.

We were impressed with your good behaviour in the school and the playground, and we thought that you all get on together very well. The staff take very good care of you, and those of you who need extra help are well supported.

The headteacher and her staff run the school well, and know how to make it even better in future. We have agreed that they are going to make sure that you all understand how well you are doing in class, and what you need to do to improve your work. They are also going to make sure that all of you get all the help you need in your lessons, especially from the other adults who work with the teachers. You can do your bit by letting your teacher know if there is anything you don't understand in class, or in the marking in your books.

Well done to you all, and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jane Chesterfield

Lead Inspector