

Meadlands Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102893
Local Authority	Richmond Upon Thames
Inspection number	308151
Inspection dates	10–11 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Andrew Saunders

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	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr M Kelly
Headteacher	Mr R Meakin
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2003
School address	Broughton Avenue Ham Richmond TW10 7TS
Telephone number	020 8940 9207
Fax number	020 8255 2488

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a slightly smaller than average school in Ham in Richmond. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than average. The number of pupils from a very wide range of ethnic minorities and with English as an additional language is also higher than average. The proportion of pupils with moderate learning difficulties is lower than average. There are a slightly higher proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at expected times. The school has one of only two modular, experimental classrooms in the country, seen as a model of possible classrooms of the future. There is a nursery run by the school during the mornings and an early morning homework and breakfast club. The school has the Activemark award, Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark 2, Artsmark Gold award, Investors in People award, Healthy School award, and Intermediate status of the British Council International award and the Department for Children, Schools and Families Extended School award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Meadlands is a good school. It has many strengths including the personal development and well-being of the pupils. This is because of the outstanding care, guidance and support that they receive and the excellent curriculum the school provides. From starting points that are often well below expectations for children when they start school, pupils make good progress across the school. In 2007, they reached standards that were broadly average at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2; however, the most recent school assessment and test data shows that standards are likely to be higher this year.

This comes about because the inspirational leadership of the headteacher has ensured that staff are clearly focused on the learning of each individual. As a result, pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning and delight in coming to school; attendance is good. All parents are highly supportive of the school. A typical comment was, 'Meadlands encourages a fantastic community spirit and allows children to be themselves'. Behaviour is exemplary and effective systems help all pupils to participate in this learning community.

Teachers deliver stimulating, sometimes outstanding, lessons that help to promote good learning. While teachers make good use of targets to help pupils know what they need to do next and ensure that pupils get clear verbal advice, marking is not always used effectively to improve pupils' work. The exceptional curriculum ensures pupils know how their work relates to 'real world' situations; it is well organised to ensure there is a planned progression in the knowledge and skills that pupils acquire.

Pupils play amicably and safely together in the playgrounds when using equipment. They feel confident that they can chat to someone if they are worried and say they feel very safe around the school. They are well aware of what they need to do to stay healthy and many consciously choose to walk or ride to school. Opportunities to get exercise at break or after school are taken up enthusiastically.

The school plays a pivotal role in the community in many ways. The focus on family learning is highly regarded, as is the support for international families. Many of the learning activities involve parents in some way and the school encourages parents to participate in many events, such as the wonderful exhibition on Chinese culture. The school ensures there is good provision for basic skills including information and communication technology (ICT). This means they are well prepared for the next stage of their learning and the world beyond school. The teachers and the leadership continually evaluate what they do and their impact on learning, so that the school has good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The Foundation Stage is outstanding. The children in the Nursery and the Reception class have a positive start to school life because of the very good, enthusiastic teaching, and a curriculum that is imaginative and exciting. Well-planned sessions help to challenge and promote the enjoyment of learning, and ensure children explore, discover and inquire. Adult-led tasks are purposeful and extremely well focused. Where children choose activities themselves the adults interact sensitively, and stretch children's learning to reach a higher level. Meticulous records ensure that children's achievements are recognised and compared to the goals set for pupils of a similar age. This shows that children make good progress from their starting points. Although

they do not reach all the Early Learning goals by the end of Reception, they make up considerable ground. The children are well cared for and the recently renovated facilities for the nursery provide good opportunities for all the areas of learning. Excellent cooperation and sharing of information between Reception and the Nursery ensure that the transition from one to the other is smooth. The leadership is outstanding with an accurate grasp of areas to improve. Parents are very happy with their child's progress and as one parent commented, 'We could not have asked for a better start. Thank you.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers' marking of pupils' work is used effectively to identify what pupils need to do to consolidate their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils start school with a wide range of abilities, including many whose attainment is well below that expected for their ages, particularly in personal, social and emotional development. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards have been rising and the most recent data shows they are above average. Standards reached at the end of Key Stage 2 have been variable but unvalidated results this year have improved significantly and are also likely to be above average, particularly in English and science. The school exceeded the modest targets set for this year, particularly in science. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties receive very good support and are given work that is appropriate to their ability so that they make good progress. Those with communication difficulties make similar progress because of high-quality support. In some aspects, particularly mathematics, girls did not reach quite as high standards as boys did, although there were more girls with moderate learning difficulties or with other issues that affected their performance.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The pupils' enthusiasm and interest in the excellent opportunities provided promotes outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They make the most of the wonderful opportunities to develop respect and understanding of worldwide communities and ethnic minorities through the involvement of international families in the school. Pupils hold firm views about justice and fair play and this responsible attitude contributes well towards creating a happy school. 'Golden time', where pupils choose the activities they do, as a reward recognising all good behaviour, is a highlight of the week for many and part of the reason for the excellent behaviour seen. Pupils have a strong sense of respect for themselves and others and are polite, courteous and friendly. They make good use of the opportunities to express their views through the class and school council meetings. They take their responsibilities seriously and are proud of the improvements they have made to the playtime provision; they enjoy organising fundraising activities. Pupils said, 'It's easy to make friends and we get along well with our teachers'. Pupils leave the school as confident and well-rounded individuals.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have created a strong learning culture where pupils are encouraged to explore their own ideas and consider the ideas of others. Well-planned lessons ensure work matches the needs and interests of pupils. Teachers make learning fun and pupils are seen as part of the teaching team. Teaching assistants are highly skilled and effectively involved in nurturing learning with individuals and small groups. There is an emphasis on understanding how to learn, and teachers provide enthusiastic role models of this. They use a very good range of questioning and, in the best lessons, provide thinking time for pupils to consider their responses. In most lessons, teachers make good use of assessment to identify pupils' strengths and areas for improvement. Marking is frequent and encouraging but does not always help pupils improve because it is not sufficiently focused on the next steps pupils need to take and they do not have enough opportunity to respond to it. The pace in most lessons is good so that pupils keep on task and work productively throughout the lesson.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school has worked diligently to provide a curriculum that is innovative and exciting, covering all statutory requirements. The exceptional modular classroom has changed the way learning is viewed by pupils and teachers and the way the curriculum is planned. For example, teachers are more aware of the previous learning of pupils. The 'Super Learning' days are a highlight of the learning experience for pupils and staff and provide tremendous enrichment for curriculum areas. A wide range of visits and visitors help to extend the curriculum beyond the ordinary, such as the visits to Kew Gardens and Hampton Court, and the residential and camping trips. Extra-curricular opportunities are diverse and extremely popular, from knitting to football, and from cooking to judo. Easy access to laptops and the excellent knowledge and skill of the teachers ensures that ICT skills are exceptionally well developed across the curriculum. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities, including trained mediators who sort out disagreements, junior safety officers and playground leaders. Exemplary partnerships with many other agencies strengthen the provision the school makes still further.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Outstanding levels of care, guidance and support are at the heart of the school's work. As parents commented, 'The extra mile that the staff go to is incredible and this is appreciated by us all - their energy is inspirational'. Robust procedures for child protection, risk assessments for school visits and good attention to detail in promoting safety ensure that all pupils are exceptionally well looked after. Pupils' progress is tracked and recorded thoroughly. This leads to relevant targets that are realistic and achievable for each individual, and which are shared and understood by pupils and parents. Where pupils are not making the progress they might, the school provides sharply focused support. For example, girls received support from older pupils at Tiffin Girls' School and participated in 'Try Learning' at the Harlequins' Rugby club. Pupils' academic and social progress is shared with parents, who are encouraged to be part of the learning culture. The school provides a well-regarded breakfast and homework club.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The excellent leadership of the headteacher is widely recognised and provides an exciting vision for the school. Together with the senior leaders, he has accurately identified key priorities. The curriculum leaders are enthusiastic and knowledgeable, working effectively as a team. They reflect accurately on how to improve attainment and have put in place successful strategies. These are having an impact in the classroom and have raised standards significantly. Best practice is beginning to be shared more widely. This is driven by the enthusiasm the teachers have for learning themselves, and for the learning of the pupils. The school's judgements about its success have been modest in some areas. Targets are not always reviewed frequently enough to take more accurate account of the progress made by different cohorts of pupils. However, staff are increasingly aware of the impact on learning of recent strategies. They have made good improvement since the last inspection.

Governors have received appropriate training and are supportive, well informed and are consequently able to work effectively with the school. Finances are well managed to give good value for money. All the staff and governors work as a team with pupils' best interests at heart. The school is well placed to improve further, and there is a strong determination to do so.

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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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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?	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
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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?	1
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	1
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

03 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Meadlands Primary School, Richmond, TW10 7TS

Thank you for welcoming us to your school for the two days of the inspection. There was certainly a lot going on during those days and we were impressed by how much you enjoyed yourselves. It was great to chat to so many of you and you told us a lot about your school; thank you for sharing your thoughts with us.

Many of you told us you thought that yours is a good school, and we agree with you. The adults in your school look after you exceptionally well and as a result, you become very confident young people. You told us that teachers make learning fun and we think they make sure the work you have is interesting. In particular, you understand a lot about other cultures and about people from other countries. You work hard to make sure everyone feels welcome at your school. The Super Learning days sound wonderful and we were very impressed with the special classroom in the playground, where you said your learning is even more exciting than usual.

You do well in your lessons and reach high standards in the tests you do. Those of you who find learning more difficult also make the progress you should because you get good support. The teachers make sure that they know who needs some extra help, and they find ways of providing this. Even though you are doing so well, there is one thing we think your school can do to make sure things get even better.

- Make sure that marking shows you what you need to do to improve and that you use these opportunities to reinforce your learning.

You can also help by making sure you always do your best and use any chances you have to make your work better.

Most importantly of all, you should continue to enjoy your learning and be as friendly as you were to us, so that your school remains such a delightful place to be.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Saunders

Lead Inspector