

Hackbridge Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102969
Local Authority	Sutton
Inspection number	308178
Inspection dates	4–5 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Sue Frater HMI

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	395
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alan McIntosh
Headteacher	Mrs Jacqueline Fairhurst
Date of previous school inspection	29 September 2003
School address	Hackbridge Road Wallington SM6 7AX
Telephone number	020 8647 7974
Fax number	020 8669 3762

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school. Over a third of pupils are eligible for free school meals. A higher than average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, mainly moderate learning, behaviour or speech and language difficulties. About a quarter of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, mainly African and Caribbean. This is slightly higher than average. The proportion of pupils for whom English is not their first language, at 15%, is also slightly above average. A high number of pupils leave or join the school other than in Year 1. In recent years this has been a feature at the school, as has a high turnover of staff. The school is part of the Local Authority intensifying support programme.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Hackbridge Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 most pupils make good progress from their below average starting points. By the age of seven, pupils attain average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress. Tracking data of current Year 6 pupils' progress suggests that 2008 standards in English, mathematics and science will be below average. This represents an improvement on 2007. Robust systems for target setting and tracking of pupils' progress are driving the improvements in achievement. The school is also benefiting from the Local Authority's intensifying support programme. The headteacher provides strong leadership and is supported well by her senior leadership team. Monitoring of teaching and learning by senior leaders has improved, but the monitoring skills of new middle leaders are not yet developed well enough to support other teachers. Nonetheless, leadership and management of the school are satisfactory.

Many pupils enter the school with communication, language and literacy skills, and personal, social and emotional skills, that are well below those expected for their age. The school has identified the need to enrich pupils' experiences and vocabulary to extend their ideas for writing. A recent review of the curriculum has resulted in more first hand experiences and visits to places of interest to help pupils in their learning. The curriculum is beginning to impact positively on pupils' progress. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and the proportion of good teaching is increasing steadily. However, teachers' use of assessment, marking and targets is inconsistent across the school and consequently pupils do not always achieve as well as they can in lessons.

Although guidance given to pupils on how they can improve their work is not yet consistent across the school and in all subjects, the school provides a good level of pastoral care and support for its pupils and their families. This includes well attended breakfast and after-school clubs, a family support worker and a social inclusion assistant who helps pupils new to the school to settle in. The social and emotional aspects of learning are developed through a specific programme and the school has achieved National Healthy School status. As a result of the school's provision, many aspects of pupils' personal development and well-being, including behaviour, are good. However, in spite of all the school's efforts, attendance remains well below average due to the persistent absence of a minority of pupils and this impedes their achievement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make a good start in the Nursery. They begin school with skills across the areas of learning that are below what might be expected for their age. In communication, language and literacy, and personal, social and emotional development, their skills are often well below expectations. Good relationships forged with parents help the children to settle quickly into school. As a result, they develop in confidence and respond well to the Foundation Stage routines and high expectations of staff. The curriculum provides a good balance of opportunities for self-initiated play alongside teacher directed activities. Both indoor and outdoor activities are planned well. Teaching is good, learning is fun and the children make good progress. Their progress is monitored through observational assessments that contribute effectively to formal progress tracking and inform the level of planned activities. As a result, most of the current

Reception aged children are set to begin Year 1 having met the Early Learning Goals across the six areas of learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6.
- Ensure the needs of all pupils are met effectively and consistently in lessons.
- Improve attendance.
- Develop leadership and management roles and responsibilities at all levels.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is beginning to improve as a result of improved teaching and learning. This is particularly evident in Key Stage 1 where pupils make good progress. For example, in the 2007 assessments for pupils in Year 2, standards were below average overall. However, pupils in the current Year 2 are attaining average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This demonstrates their good achievement given that their attainment was below average when they started in Year 1. In Years 3 to 6 pupils' achievement is satisfactory; however, this also represents an improvement. In 2007, the Year 6 national test results in English, mathematics and science declined significantly to well below average. This is attributed to the high mobility of pupils and staffing difficulties for that year group. However, standards in English, mathematics and science have now improved to below average. Pupils with learning difficulties and / or disabilities, pupils from ethnic minority groups and those with English as an additional language, progress as well as their peers. The poor attendance of a minority of pupils impedes their progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are satisfactory. Pupils have a good understanding of moral issues and work together well. They demonstrate care for others and enjoy taking part in charity events and fundraising. Pupils are well aware of the need to lead healthy lifestyles, through healthy eating and participating in sport. They feel safe in school, saying there is very little bullying and that behaviour has improved; pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils show a good enjoyment of school and particularly like the wide range of clubs. They make a positive contribution to the school community as school councillors, playground buddies and young sports leaders. Their basic literacy, numeracy and information, communication and technology (ICT) skills, together with their ability to work well together, prepares them satisfactorily for their future learning and employment. The school works hard to raise the overall level of attendance, but it has remained well below average since the last inspection.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are beginning to improve and the proportion of good teaching is increasing steadily. Good examples are particularly evident in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. This is because assessment is used well to pitch activities and questions effectively to meet the varying needs of pupils. For example, during the inspection, the Nursery teacher successfully developed the children's listening skills by encouraging them to consider how to ask questions of the characters in the book – a difficult task to master! As a result of good questioning and support, the children made good progress. Good lessons were also seen in other year groups but the quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school. This is because not all teachers are meeting the different needs of pupils well enough. For example not all are using assessment information to challenge appropriately those pupils who are more able or to support those with learning difficulties. As a result, some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The recently reviewed curriculum better reflects the needs of the pupils, for example by providing experiences that enrich their knowledge and provide a stimulus for learning. It is beginning to promote learning from first hand experiences and includes visits to places of interest, including the science museum, but there is more to do. A large proportion of pupils enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular activities that enhance the curriculum. The curriculum is also enriched by the opportunity to learn French from Reception to Year 6. Due emphasis is given to the teaching of literacy and numeracy following national guidance, and the key skills of reading, writing and mathematics are being targeted through the school's involvement in the Local Authority's intensifying support programme. However, as the full impact of the school's work has yet to be seen in terms of pupils' improved achievement, the curriculum overall is satisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school is a caring community. Most parents agree that their children are safe and well cared for. The school is fully compliant with all safeguarding requirements. Good use is made of the social inclusion assistant and teaching assistants to support pupils with emotional or learning difficulties and/ or disabilities and those with English as an additional language. The school works effectively with a range of agencies to promote pupils' personal development and well-being, including their behaviour. However, the many strategies employed by the school to improve attendance have little impact. Academic guidance is satisfactory. All pupils have targets in writing to help raise their awareness of what level they are working at and what they need to do next. However, pupils are not always helped to know how to improve other work, particularly through teachers' marking.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Strong and committed leadership and management by the headteacher and deputies provide clear direction for improvement. However, too much responsibility rests with this senior leadership team. The skills and knowledge of middle leaders are not yet developed well enough to carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively, and this results in inconsistency in the quality of teaching and learning. Through appropriate self-evaluation, the senior leadership team knows the school's strengths and weaknesses, and improvement planning focuses on appropriate priorities. Challenging targets are beginning to improve standards. Procedures for monitoring are now robust, however, their impact has yet to be seen fully in terms of pupils' attendance and consistently good quality teaching. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities and those with English as an additional language is well led and managed. However, while the school is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination, not all pupils are yet achieving as well as they can. Governors are now better informed and they are beginning to challenge the school in its work to raise standards further. Given the progress made in addressing the issues raised at the last inspection and recent improvements in pupils' achievement, the school demonstrates satisfactory capacity to improve further and provides satisfactory value for money.

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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	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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	4
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	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

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?	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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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

17 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hackbridge Primary School, Wallington, SM6 7AX

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you in lessons and at playtime. We were very impressed by your behaviour and how well you get on with your work in lessons. You are good at helping one another and taking responsibility. This helps to make the school an enjoyable and friendly place in which to learn. It also means that any new pupils settle in quickly and feel welcome.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. Your headteacher and staff work hard to care for you and to make sure you feel safe. Support staff are good at helping those of you who need extra special help. You told us how much you enjoy all the clubs you attend. Your progress in lessons is monitored very carefully and most of you in the Nursery, Reception, Years 1 and 2 are making good progress. Although those of you in Years 3 to 6 make satisfactory progress you do not always achieve as well as you might and so we have asked the school to help you do even better by working to raise standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science. We want your teachers to keep working hard to make their lessons just right for you. We have asked them to make sure you find the work interesting and not too easy or too hard, so that you all achieve as well as you can.

You have had lots of new teachers and your headteacher works hard to help them settle into school. We have also asked your headteacher to train up more of the staff as managers so they can help her to lead and manage your school.

We are worried about your attendance which, for some of you, is not as good as it should be. You, and your parents, can help to improve your progress by making sure you attend school every day. When you miss lessons it makes it hard for you to catch up and you fall further behind other children. This will make it difficult for you as you go through this school, and secondary school, and when you are grown up and looking for work. So we are asking you to make sure you attend school every day. We want the staff to work even harder with your families to make sure that your attendance improves.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Sue Frater

Her Majesty's Inspector