

Herringham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114931
Local Authority	Thurrock
Inspection number	311763
Inspection dates	14–15 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Nichola Perry

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	360
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	49
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ian Yuille
Headteacher	Mrs Victoria Reid
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	St Mary's Road Chadwell St Mary Grays Essex RM16 4JX
Telephone number	01375842407
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Herringham Primary School is a larger than average school, which provides for pupils in the local area. The school has become a Centre of Excellence. It has gained the Healthy Schools award and is currently working towards the National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE) challenge. The school works closely with a wide range of local providers, including staff from the on-site children's centre which, when fully open, will support vulnerable pupils and their families. The provision includes the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum in the Reception class. The attainment of pupils currently in Years 3 to 6 on entry to the Reception class was below nationally expected levels. Current attainment on entry is broadly in line with that expected nationally because of improved pre-school provision. Numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups have increased significantly in recent years and are now above the national average, although few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals and those identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is significantly higher than the national average. Numbers of pupils moving in and out of the school in all year groups has also increased significantly.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Herringham Primary School is a satisfactory and improving school. It has particular strengths in the good standards of pupils' personal development and in the quality of care it offers to pupils. The headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher, provides very effective leadership so that her crystal clear vision and unrelenting focus on continuous improvement is shared by staff, governors, parents and, increasingly, the pupils themselves. Subject leaders are contributing satisfactorily to school improvement. However, for the school to make more rapid progress, there needs to be a more rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluating the impact of their subjects on pupils' learning. Governors are positive and determined to do their best for the school. Parents are very pleased with the provision, care and support for their children. The overwhelming majority recognise improvements and, in particular, the improved behaviour of pupils. Comments that sum up the views of many include: 'You can be happy and confident in the support and learning provided for children.' and 'Families and the community feel a part of the school.'

Although academic standards remain below average by the end of Year 6, pupils' achievement is now satisfactory across the school and there are signs of improvement in English in the latest Year 2 and Year 6 tests. This is because the school has increased its level of challenge in lessons and now expects greater progress in all year groups. There are weaknesses in maths across the school. Work on this is already leading to improvement. Effective systems of pastoral care contribute strongly to pupils' well-developed personal skills. Attendance is satisfactory. Behaviour is good for the majority of pupils because it is well managed. Good strategies and support help a few pupils who still struggle with their behaviour. Pupils love their school and enjoy learning. They are very proud of the new building and appreciate the dynamic displays along the corridors and in classrooms. Pupils say they feel safe and show a good understanding of how to lead a healthy life. The good range of sports activities and physical education lessons and the high quality school meals contribute well to this aspect of learning. Pupils are developing into confident and friendly children who make a significant contribution to the life of the school community and that outside the school. Older pupils enjoy additional responsibilities around the school, especially in the playground, where they help younger pupils play and be safe.

The satisfactory curriculum is improving. It is enriched by a range of out-of-school activities and is increasingly being adapted to meet the needs of the school. Teaching quality is satisfactory. Improvements in teaching have eradicated weaknesses identified at the last inspection. While some teaching is good, it is not consistent enough to ensure the greater progress of pupils and higher standards across the school. In the past, too much has been left to the good teaching in Year 6 to make up the lost ground. There are now more effective systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress which are bringing about necessary improvement year on year. Effective use of external agencies and in-school support for vulnerable pupils ensures their full participation in all aspects of learning and their satisfactory progress.

The headteacher and governors are well aware of how well the school is performing and where it needs to be. There has been good progress since the previous inspection and the school shows satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Good relationships are established with children and their families, which helps children settle quickly in the Reception class. Parents are happy with the start their children make. Behaviour is good and children clearly enjoy school. The learning environment, both inside and outside, is stimulating and well resourced. There is an appropriate balance between learning indoors and outdoors and lots of opportunities provided for children to make choices in activities and other aspects of their learning and development. This helps children develop good self-confidence and independence. Staff know the children well and take account of their interests when planning work. Planning is good and structures pupils' learning and development well. Teaching is satisfactory. Routines are not yet secure and this results in some time being wasted and some lack of rigour. While children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1, progress in language, literacy and problem solving, reasoning and numeracy is often good. Leadership of the EYFS is satisfactory. The school is aware of the need to carry out more comprehensive assessments of children's achievement across all areas of learning early in their first term in the Reception class.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching so that there is greater consistency and more examples of good teaching.
- Raise standards and improve progress made in mathematics across the school.
- Develop further the role of subject leaders, specifically in monitoring and evaluating their subjects, in order to accelerate the pace at which the school is improving.

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

A legacy of underachievement has affected standards across the school. However, achievement in all year groups is improving because of the strong focus on raising performance. Tracking data shows that pupils in all year groups are currently making at least satisfactory progress this year, pushing up overall results. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Although the 2008 end of Year 2 assessments showed improvement in reading and writing, standards remained below average, with too few pupils reaching the higher levels. Assessments show current Year 1 and 2 pupils on track to reach the national average in reading, writing and mathematics because of more focused teaching. Pupils in Year 6 reach below average standards in all three subjects. The 2008 test results showed improvement, particularly in English, with more pupils achieving the higher level 5. Standards in mathematics are not high enough across the school, although improvements in teaching and a greater focus on mathematics are starting to reverse this trend, particularly in Key Stage 1. The 2009 targets are significantly higher than in 2008, reflecting the school's ambitions to improve further. Pupils with LDD are supported well. They have clear targets which enable them to make sound progress from their starting points. The achievement of pupils learning English as an additional language is satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They show good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and keep themselves safe, for example, in relation to road safety and the internet. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall, although their moral and social awareness is good. They know right from wrong and the behaviour of the majority of pupils is good throughout the school. Many pupils are increasingly taking responsibility for their own actions because teachers now have higher expectations. Pupils show high levels of confidence when talking in lessons and to visiting adults. They are polite and mostly pay good attention to their teachers and each other. This is because their teachers always listen to them and value their views. Contribution to the community is good, both in school through the school council and in the wider community through raising money for a range of charities and participating in the cluster school council. Older pupils relish opportunities to take on additional responsibilities around the school. The development of skills to support pupils' future economic well-being is satisfactory. Attendance is average. The school works very hard to promote good attendance and punctuality and monitors these aspects rigorously.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Good teaching, such as that seen in Year 6, is having a significant impact on pupils' achievement by helping them make satisfactory, and often good, progress. The brisk pace, relevant success criteria, challenge and range of teaching styles ensures pupils are mostly keen and attentive learners who enjoy learning. This happened, for example, in a lesson looking at how to calculate mean, median and mode where pupils enjoyed working in groups and discussing ideas. However, teaching is not consistent across the school and there is currently insufficient good teaching. In some lessons, the pace of learning is not brisk enough and there is a lack of challenge: this slows pupils' progress. The school has laid good foundations to bring about improvements. Lesson planning is detailed, with strong focus on raising achievement and a consistently applied programme to improve behaviour and learning. Pupils speak highly of this programme and have a good understanding of how it works from an early age. Being in the 'learning zone' is viewed with pride. Teachers treat pupils with great respect and have very good relationships with them. Marking is frequently used well to give pupils guidance on what they should do to improve, especially in English. On-going assessment is also used well to guide lesson planning, so that work challenges and engages pupils of all abilities. Pupils with LDD are well supported by teaching assistants who have a good impact on their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is generally well matched to the needs of pupils and enables all to engage actively in learning. As a result, pupils are developing positive attitudes, enjoy learning and developing their key skills. The recent push towards a themed approach to learning covering several curriculum areas is beginning to help pupils see links between subjects, as well as increasing relevance. Emphasis on improving provision in English over the past few years has had an impact on performance, but this has been at the expense of mathematics. There is good

provision for information and communication technology and this is increasingly having a positive impact on learning. There is a good range of clubs, extra curricular activities and visits. Visitors to the school enrich the curriculum and contribute much to pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

A warm and welcoming atmosphere pervades the school. This is due to the very strong focus on pastoral care, underpinned by the school's core values. Robust systems exist to ensure pupils are safe and well looked after. Effective procedures for identifying pupils' individual needs, for managing vulnerable pupils or those at risk of exclusion, ensure that no individual or group is disadvantaged in any way. Induction procedures for new pupils are very effective and make sure pupils settle easily and quickly. This is particularly valuable for the many pupils who enter the school in all year groups, often towards the end of Key Stage 2. Strong links are maintained with outside agencies to ensure the welfare of pupils. Monitoring of progress is robust and effective. Pupils have good information about their progress, particularly in English, but also increasingly, in mathematics and science. They are given clear guidance about how to improve their work. Many pupils are able to state at which level they are working, what their target is and what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Staff work effectively as a team because the headteacher provides strong leadership. She has successfully steered the school through a difficult and turbulent period during the amalgamation of the two schools and subsequent building works. A sudden high turnover of staff, along with significant recruitment difficulties, has slowed the rate of improvement while new staff are welcomed and settled. The recent staffing changes have necessitated a revision of priorities in order to re-establish a strong team. Already there is evidence of this happening. The development of subject leaders' roles is involving them fully in whole school planning, monitoring and evaluation. However, some are new and inexperienced subject leaders, whose skills are not yet developed enough. Self-evaluation is a strength in the school. It is accurate, involves all staff and governors, and is being used effectively to raise expectations across the school. Increasing use of data to regularly track pupils' progress and set challenging targets is now helping to raise achievement throughout the school. The school promotes community cohesion well through its links with the local and wider community. Pupils are learning to value their peers and adults. They recognize and experience the diversity of other cultures. Governors' role in holding the school to account is improving, which is helping them to be more active in moving the school forward.

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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
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
The extent to which 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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	2

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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

16 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Herringham Primary School, Chadwell St Mary, RM16 4JX

This letter is to thank you for your help when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed our time with you. We were impressed by your lovely new building and the super displays in the corridors and in classrooms. We saw in lessons and around the school, as well as from talking to you, how you obviously enjoy being at school and how well most of you behave. It would be really good if some of you who don't always come to school try harder to attend more regularly.

We think you go to a lovely school where you are able to do lots of activities, including sport and games. The education that you receive is satisfactory; it has some good features. You told us how safe you feel and we were pleased to see how much you know about keeping healthy. We saw lots of you trying hard in lessons and paying good attention to your teachers. We thought you were very polite and we were impressed at the way many of you talked to us.

Your headteacher, deputy and all the teachers work hard to make sure they know a lot about the school and about you and we have seen that you are starting to do better in reading and writing, and sometimes in science. But we think that you could do even better. So we have asked your headteacher to do some things to help you.

- Help to improve the teaching further - you can help them do this by trying your best in all your lessons.
- Make sure that all of you, from the Reception class upwards, make better progress in mathematics.
- Ensure that teachers in charge of subjects check very carefully what the school needs to do to improve.

Carry on enjoying your school and trying your best.

Best wishes

Nichola Perry

Lead inspector