

# Harrington Hill Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100256
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hackney
<b>Inspection number</b>	323251
<b>Inspection dates</b>	30 April –1 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Nick Butt

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	236
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	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Fiona Montgomerie
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Kae McSweeney
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 December 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Harrington Hill Mount Pleasant Lane Upper Clapton London E5 9EY
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8806 7275
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8806 3364

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This popular average-sized school has Early Years Foundation Stage provision in the Nursery and Reception classes. The Nursery is a ten-minute walk away from the rest of the school in the middle of a large housing estate. Nine out of ten pupils on roll come from a wide variety of minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being Black Caribbean. Over half speak English as an additional language. A very high proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. These include speech and language problems, and behavioural and emotional difficulties. Pupils often join the school late in their primary education from abroad, with little experience of education and no experience of English. Among others, the school has the Healthy School and the Inclusion awards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Harrington Hill is a good school. The headteacher brings a passion and drive to the provision through her outstanding leadership, very ably supported by the deputy headteacher and the inclusion manager. Together, senior leaders ensure that the school's self-evaluation is excellent through very rigorous monitoring of all that goes on, and acting swiftly to intervene where improvement is required. From starting points that are very low, pupils achieve well and standards are in line with national averages by Year 6. The pace of progress is not consistent across all classes, especially for more-able pupils. Teaching does not always challenge these pupils sufficiently to develop the reasoning and independence skills they need to excel. The school provides outstanding care, guidance and support for all its pupils, resulting in those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities making particularly strong progress, many reaching nationally expected levels of attainment. A very high proportion of parents returned questionnaires. These reflect their interest in their children's progress and commitment to the school, and strongly support its work. One commented, 'There is a strong culture of learning and an excellent emphasis on community and self-help within it.' In view of the school's success in many areas, there is a good capacity to improve further.

Teaching and learning are consistently good and at times outstanding. This is because staff have a shared understanding of what helps pupils to learn best and use their assessments very well to plan new activities. The curriculum is good, with innovative and creative approaches that engage pupils well and make a strong contribution to their outstanding enjoyment of school. The pastoral care of pupils is excellent, with very well-established procedures in place to support pupils facing any kind of difficulty, and outstanding links with other agencies. The school's highly effective team of support staff work together very well to meet the needs of all pupils, including providing opportunities for those with behavioural and emotional difficulties to develop their social skills.

Pupils' personal development is good, as they behave well and respect one another's cultures and faiths. One pupil said, 'The school gives you the opportunity to shine.' Pupils are very enthusiastic about school, and thoroughly enjoy all it has to offer them. This partly helps to explain why attendance is much better than it was at the time of the last inspection, combined with the impact of the school's many systems to tackle persistent absence. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy, taking part in a wide range of activities to promote healthy lifestyles. They feel safe at school, and contribute well to the school community. Pupils not only leave the school with the expected basic skills, but are also well prepared for secondary school because of the confidence they develop and their love of learning.

The impact of leadership and management on pupils' achievement is good. Responsibilities are devolved well and all leaders are clear about their roles. Pupils' performance is tracked carefully and systematically, and a very thorough 'pupil improvement cycle' holds teachers to account for how well their classes are doing. Governors know their school very well and are rightly proud of its many achievements. They keep a close eye on its development, but are not proactive enough in seeking support to improve the school's buildings and facilities.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children join the Nursery with skills and abilities that are very low, especially in speech and language, and in personal and social development. Staff work effectively together as a team and provide a wide variety of interesting and stimulating tasks for children to enjoy, linked to the topics they are studying. For example, in the Nursery children loved pulling soil up the climbing frame in buckets, and tipping it down plastic tubes. Other children were planting out containers as part of their topic on 'living things'. Effective provision means that children achieve well, even though many do not meet the expected early learning goals by the time they leave Reception. The fact that the Nursery is so far away from the rest of the school means that it is difficult for there to be a cross-fertilisation of good practice, as staff cannot spontaneously 'drop in' to support one another. There are inconsistencies in the way planning is developed and in how effectively assessment is used and presented between the Nursery and the Reception class. Transition is managed well, with Year 5 pupils used as 'mentors' to help Nursery children settle into Reception. Teaching is good, and there is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Effective use is made of the outdoor areas in both settings to give children experiences in the full range of learning areas, and staff model language well for the children, encouraging them to develop their speech. There is good leadership and management aimed at uniting good practice across the whole key stage, but a constraint is the fact that the Nursery is so isolated from the rest of the school.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in national assessments by equipping them with the reasoning and independence skills they need.
- Promote more consistent approaches in the Early Years Foundation Stage between the Nursery and Reception classes.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Current standards are average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2, an improvement on 2008 national tests when they were below average. Achievement is good and continuing to improve, as there are excellent systems in place to identify and support pupils who are struggling in their learning. Consequently, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make outstanding progress. Attainment in Year 2 is a little below average, especially in writing, although a new approach to teaching writing is proving successful in increasing progress. Standards in Years 3 to 6 are affected by pupils' mobility, with pupils often joining the school from abroad, with little English and poor standards. It is significant that almost all the pupils in Year 6 not assessed at the expected Level 4 or better are recent arrivals. Too few more-able pupils reach Level 5 because they do not have the higher-order skills necessary to extend their learning, especially if English is not their first language.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They work and play together well, and are considerate towards one another. Behaviour is generally good, although there is the occasional lapse. Pupils take good care on the school's sloping site. They know how to keep

safe and are aware of the dangers of smoking and illegal drugs. They demonstrate excellent understanding of keeping healthy, taking plenty of exercise, including making good use of the exercise machines installed in the playground. The school's Healthy School Award means pupils know all about eating sensibly. This was reinforced when they took part in a healthy version of the game show 'Ready Steady Cook'. Pupils see the school as a haven of peace. The school council is very effective at putting forward the pupils' voice, for example securing more sports clubs and some goalposts. Pupils contribute to the school community in a variety of ways, developing an eco-garden, and recycling and composting. They take part in borough events such as the Hackney Festival of Voices. Some pupils also ran in the London mini-marathon. A pupil said, 'It was a great experience.' A work experience week at the end of Year 6 helps to equip pupils well for the next stage of their learning, as they build their confidence in facing new situations.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is characterised by very good relationships between pupils and staff. It is well paced and enthusiastic, with thorough planning supporting the learning objectives for the lesson. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning, helping individuals and groups of pupils. Classes are organised well and there is good management of behaviour, especially where pupils have some emotional and social difficulties. Tasks are matched well to the learning needs of pupils, although some more-able pupils are not challenged enough to develop the skills of reasoning and independence they need to attain the higher levels in national tests. The teaching of writing is now a strength in Years 1 and 2, following some disappointing results in the past. Year 1 pupils thoroughly enjoyed writing about the life cycle of the butterfly through direct observations of caterpillars in their classroom, anticipating the next stages in their development.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good use has been made of the building to develop a stimulating learning environment, set in well-laid-out grounds. The school has been richly decorated with attractive displays of work, the walls saturated with colour, creating an oasis of interest, reflecting how well the staff value pupils' efforts. The pupils have taken to heart the headteacher's belief that 'deeper thinking comes from linking', with imaginative diagrams (mind maps) on the walls of their classrooms reflecting discussions that have explored aspects of the topics they are studying. This helps to make learning relevant and personal to pupils, as well as involving those who are learning English as an additional language. While the curriculum has many strengths, there is not enough use of computers to link learning in different subjects, and to support more-able pupils in developing their research skills. Excellent enrichment of the curriculum ensures that pupils really enjoy school, with a wide range of clubs such as orchestra and 'Nuts about Numbers', and good use of visits and visitors.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 1

The school makes excellent use of its multilingual staff to assess pupils' progress and work closely with families. Teaching and support staff speak Turkish, Polish, Spanish and several Asian languages, making a positive contribution also to local community cohesion. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and learning difficulties and/or disabilities is outstanding, with highly effective systems in place to identify and support a wide range of needs, including speech and language and moderate learning difficulties. The school's Inclusion Award recognises the high priority all staff give to making a difference for every child. A pupil reflected, 'With this school I feel much more confident.' Progress is tracked systematically, and the impact of intervention groups is measured, to ensure that pupils benefit from the support they receive. All safeguarding arrangements are fully in place. There is good academic guidance. Older pupils use 'rubric books' to assess how well they are doing and all pupils know what their targets are for improvement. Marking contains helpful comments, but it is not clear that pupils always have opportunities to respond to these.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The school's pursuit of its aim - 'everyone a leader' - means that all staff have good opportunities to develop their skills and to take on new responsibilities. The introduction of a tier of middle management in the form of phase leaders that cuts across key stages is having a beneficial impact on progress, particularly at transition points such as from Year 2 to Year 3. Phase leaders are beginning to develop their skills of analysing data, but have not had much experience so far. The highly effective senior leadership team of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and inclusion manager have a real vision for the school, and are both reflective and passionate about improving pupils' life chances. The school's management is very well organised, with clear procedures to ensure its smooth running and to promote learning. Joint observations of lessons by senior leaders and phase leaders, as well as close monitoring of planning and pupils' work, help to give a very clear picture of the quality of provision. What the school calls its 'pupil improvement cycle' also includes discussions with the pupils themselves and assessing the learning environment. This clear overview is reflected in a concise and accurate school improvement plan that is constantly under review.

The school's promotion of community cohesion is good, both in the way that it understands and supports its local community, and also in reaching out to pupils in schools in Bulgaria, Australia, the USA and Malawi through web links and pen pals. There is scope for the school to develop more links with organisations and other schools nationally to further develop pupils understanding of cultural and ethnic diversity.

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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
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**Overall effectiveness**

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

**Achievement and standards**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	1

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<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	1
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	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

**Annex B**

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

18 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Harrington Hill Primary School, London, E5 9EY

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. Yours is a good school. These are some of its strengths.

- You make good progress in your work and reach the same standards as other pupils in schools around the country.
- You really enjoy school, and have an excellent understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle.
- The teaching is good and helps you to do your best.
- There are plenty of clubs for you to enjoy.
- The school cares for you extremely well, and makes sure you get all the support you need if you are finding anything difficult.
- The headteacher leads the school very well, and knows exactly what works well and what could be improved.

We think those of you who find learning easy could do even better and have asked your teachers to find ways of really challenging you to develop the skills you need. Children in the Nursery get off to a good start, but it is a shame you are so far away from the rest of the school. We have asked staff to work closely with staff from the Reception class to make sure everybody is doing things in a similar way.

Thank you once again for your help. We enjoyed meeting you.

Yours faithfully

Nick Butt

Lead Inspector