

Edgware Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101277
Local Authority	Barnet
Inspection number	323437
Inspection dates	27–28 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Rob McKeown HMI

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	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	341
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Kristine Cronhelm
Headteacher	Ms Alison Holding
Date of previous school inspection	28 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	High Street Edgware HA8 7EQ
Telephone number	020 8952 1696
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Age group	3–7
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Edgware Infant School is situated in an urban area in North London. It is larger than average and caters for children from a very diverse social, cultural and ethnically mixed community. A very high proportion of pupils come from families in which English is the second language; pupils speak many different languages at home. Black African and White British pupils make up about 40% of the school population; other pupils come from a wide range of different ethnic groups. Many pupils move in and out of the school during the year. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is typical for this size of school. Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with skills and aptitudes that are well below those usual for three- and four-year-olds. The school runs an early morning breakfast club. It has achieved the Artsmark Silver and Healthy School awards. The headteacher has led the school for four years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Pupils from many different backgrounds learn together successfully in this good school. Staff know their pupils extremely well and have established very positive relationships with them and their parents. The care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding and meet the needs of all pupils, including the high proportion of those who find learning more difficult or who face other challenges. Almost all the parents who returned the inspection questionnaire rightly believe the school is providing well for their children. They appreciate the efforts of 'the dedicated staff who work hard to do their best for all the children'.

Pupils' achievement is good but the standards they reach are below average. Most pupils make good progress in their time in the school and those who stay for three years or more generally do better. Children's low starting points and the fact that several pupils join the school through the year, many with little or no spoken English, make the attainment of average standards challenging. By the time they leave Year 2, a majority of pupils have reached the expected Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. A significant minority, however, are not reaching standards that are high enough to provide a secure platform for their future learning. Positive action taken to improve the teaching of early reading skills has laid the foundation for higher literacy standards in the next two years. The school acknowledges that more emphasis needs to be placed on improving pupils' numeracy skills to help raise standards in mathematics.

Pupils say they enjoy school and they work enthusiastically in their lessons. Behaviour is good and most pupils play well together at breaktimes in a well-equipped playground. A small number of children whose behaviour is challenging receive good support from the school's learning mentors. Attendance is below average and punctuality for a small number of pupils is unsatisfactory. The school's records show that pupils who are absent too often, or who arrive late for school, make less progress and miss the targets set for them by the end of Year 2.

Teaching is good and succeeds in encouraging an enjoyment of learning and good achievement. Teachers use a range of practical activities well to help develop pupils' skills and understanding. Skilled support staff make a very positive contribution to ensuring that pupils who find it harder to learn, or who are learning to speak English, are fully included. The strengths in a good curriculum do much to broaden pupils' experiences and support their personal development. Attractive displays around the school exhibit the extensive range of creative learning opportunities that children benefit from in lessons and in enrichment activities. They also demonstrate the strong commitment to equal opportunity and racial and social harmony.

The headteacher and senior management team lead the school well. They have built a determination among all staff to do their best for all the pupils at the school. Leadership and management responsibilities are distributed widely and several key leaders make a significant contribution to the school's overall management; this results in positive outcomes for pupils. Diversity and inclusion are at the heart of the school's ethos and the promotion of community cohesion is an outstanding feature of its work. Governance is satisfactory. Although governors give the school their support, the role they play in challenging for improvement is currently underplayed. The school has successfully developed its provision since the last inspection. It continues to have a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make a good start in the EYFS. Very good relationships with parents help children settle quickly. One parent wrote, reflecting the views of others, that their child 'has come on in leaps and bounds in many areas in a short period of time'. Children join the Nursery with skills that are well below those expected for their age. They make good progress but their skills and aptitudes are still below expected levels on entry to Year 1. Last year, children's literacy skills were stronger than their skills in numeracy. Teachers know their children well and, as a result, all groups of children, including the most vulnerable, make good progress. Over the last four years, achievement has improved and children have left Reception with increasingly better skills and knowledge. The well-led EYFS team effectively nurtures the children's social and emotional development. Teachers are skilled at adapting a stimulating curriculum to respond to children's interests. The attractive and imaginative outdoor area, particularly for the youngest children, adds much to children's enjoyment. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Excellent care and a very secure and safe environment support all children exceptionally well and contribute positively to their development and enjoyment of learning. Assessment is used effectively to identify the children's specific learning needs. Through careful self-evaluation, teachers have already identified the need to improve the consistency of judgements across the EYFS and good steps have been put in place to do this. Teaching is good but there is some inconsistency. It is often lively and well focused but occasionally, although teaching remains satisfactory, some children become restless and their learning slows when teaching is less dynamic.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' attendance and punctuality.
- Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics, so that pupils leave Year 2 with higher attainment.
- Strengthen the role played by governors in monitoring the work of the school and in challenging for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Year 2 pupils who left the school last year made good progress from their starting points in the EYFS. Targets set for pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics were challenging and most of them were met. The school analyses pupils' assessments to identify any individuals or groups of pupils who may not reach sufficiently high standards. These profiles are passed on to the junior school and some of them reveal that pupils failed to meet their targets because of poor attendance. Additional teaching groups are organised for pupils who need to catch up, are new to speaking English or who need more challenging work. Although these are well organised and pupils make good progress, the school acknowledges that the impact of these sessions is not evaluated rigorously enough. The systems for tracking progress have also been strengthened in the last year and teachers are building up a more detailed profile of how much progress pupils are making from term to term.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, and social development is good and their cultural development is outstanding. This is reflected in the mutual respect between all pupils and adults. Pupils know how to stay safe and always have an adult to turn to if they have a problem. They are able to share their feelings in personal, social and health education sessions. Pupils like the early bird scheme, which aims to encourage them to get to school on time and reminds them of the importance of punctuality. Pupils understand and follow the Edgware set of Golden Rules, which are displayed around the school in the many home languages. Pupils report that, if there is any bullying, staff deal with it swiftly. Pupils develop a sense of responsibility to their community and raise money for charities. They have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and know about healthy eating, drinking water and taking exercise. Older pupils accept responsibilities quite readily and are given many good opportunities to put forward their ideas and talk about themselves. They are pleased to help others in the playground and to be involved in making rules. A strong emphasis on personal development, enjoyment of school and a practical curriculum is preparing pupils well for the next stage in their learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and teachers and support staff plan together effectively. Lessons are characterized by warm and caring relationships which create an atmosphere that supports learning well. Senior teachers work alongside their more inexperienced colleagues to model effective teaching strategies. The organisation of ability groups for letter and sound teaching each day helps to ensure that pupils' learning needs in this area are met successfully and that they make good progress. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) is developing and, where this is working well, teachers use strategies such as recording pupils' work with cameras and using interactive whiteboards and iPod recorders to develop communication skills. In a small number of lessons seen during the inspection, the pace of learning was less than good and, occasionally, it was interrupted by the teacher having to respond to instances of unsettled behaviour. Although teachers observe and question pupils to assess their learning, pupils themselves are not involved enough and this requires further development. Teachers' marking in books helps pupils to understand how well they are doing, but it does not always tell them simply how they can improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides many exciting and well-planned learning experiences for all pupils. The curriculum includes a good range of out-of-school activities, visits and visitors to the school which promote racial and social harmony. This helps pupils to understand ethnic and cultural diversity by appreciating shared values and contributes positively to community cohesion. For example, 'culturally inclusive learning outcomes', which are included in lesson planning, have been effective in developing a pride in pupils' heritages. This is further strengthened through curriculum theme weeks, such as Refugee Week and Black History Week, which also contribute well to pupils' enjoyment and to learning. The focus on improving phonics is beginning to raise standards in reading and writing across the curriculum. The school acknowledges that a similar

focus would help strengthen pupils' basic mathematical skills. The use of ICT across the curriculum has improved since the last inspection and pupils' regular opportunities to use ICT in their learning is helping to raise standards. A new scheme of work and a system for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have also been introduced this year.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and safety is a high priority and staff respond to any concerns promptly. Risk assessments are rigorous and arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements. As a result, pupils feel safe and well cared for. Child protection procedures are thorough and all staff are appropriately trained. A well-chosen programme of strategies, excellent individual learning plans and the very good support provided by teaching assistants ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress. Another strength is the excellent support provided for pupils who are learning to speak English. Higher-ability pupils are also targeted well by experienced teachers who provide a range of challenging activities to ensure that they work towards achieving higher standards. The learning mentors make a significant contribution to pupils' good social and emotional development, working closely with pupils, parents and teachers to support behaviour and attendance. Clear systems for monitoring and responding to persistent absenteeism and lateness are in place but so far these have not had a sufficiently full impact on improving attendance. More rigorous assessment and careful tracking of pupils' progress have enabled the school to target underachievement and this is helping to raise standards. The newly introduced Every Child a Reader programme is proving effective in helping those pupils who need to make up lost ground in reading. Learning targets are shared with pupils and parents but pupils do not always know what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Teamwork and staff morale are very good and newly appointed and less experienced teachers feel valued and well supported. Performance management systems are well established and thorough. All staff benefit from regular observations and feedback on their teaching. There are clearly defined priorities for improvement recorded in the school's development plan and these are based on a systematic evaluation of provision and an analysis of pupils' attainment and progress. Subject leadership is stronger than at the time of the last inspection, with a sharper focus in subject action plans and evaluations on improving outcomes for pupils. Positive action has been taken to raise standards in literacy and promising developments are under way to improve provision and achievement in ICT. Links with local support agencies and transition arrangements with the partner junior school are good. Communication with parents is good and the school works hard at increasing parents' involvement in supporting their children's learning. Governors meet regularly to discuss the school's work and to receive reports from staff on the quality of provision. Individual governors are now linked with subject leaders to help increase their knowledge of the curriculum. Some key governors make visits to the school but the outcomes from these are not reported formally.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	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?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

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	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	1

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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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	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**

10 February 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Edgware Infant School, Edgware, HA8 7EQ

Thank you for helping us with our inspection work when we visited your school. We enjoyed the two days we spent with you. Please thank your parents for completing the questionnaires about their views of the school. They think that Edgware Infant School is good and we agree.

We enjoyed visiting your lessons and seeing you take part in all the exciting activities your teachers prepare for you. We were pleased to see so many happy faces and were impressed with how well you all get on together. The displays around the school told us a lot about the useful things you are learning, how important it is to work together and how you learn from each other. There are many things to celebrate in your community. We liked the way you get together in groups to work on phonics and reading activities. We thought that your behaviour was good and noticed how the adults helped you play together well at lunchtime. The 'early bird' award is a great idea to encourage you to get to school on time. We know that Ms Holding and all the staff do their very best for you and care for you very well. They all work very hard to make your school a safe place where you can learn successfully and achieve well.

At the end of the inspection, we asked Ms Holding, the staff and governors to work at improving one or two things to make your school even better. We asked them to make sure that you do not miss too many school days or arrive late to school; your parents can help with this. We also asked them to help you make more progress in the time you are at the school, so you do better in reading, writing and mathematics. Lastly, we asked the governors to keep a closer check on how well the school is doing so they can help with the improvements too.

You have much to look forward to in the rest of the year. I hope you do your best and enjoy it.

Yours faithfully

Rob McKeown

Her Majesty's Inspector