

Sunnyfields Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101311
Local Authority	Barnet
Inspection number	323446
Inspection dates	12–13 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Nigel Grimshaw

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	246
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 Ros White
Headteacher	Miss Alison Godfrey
Date of previous school inspection	4 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Hatchcroft off Greyhound Hill Hendon London NW4 4JH
Telephone number	020 8203 3113
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Sunnyfields is a primary school of average size, serving an area of considerable cultural diversity. More than two thirds of the pupils have a first language other than English and nearly half of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is well above average and many of them have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the usual times is high. The school has gained a range of awards, including Healthy School and Activemark awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Sunnyfields is a good school. The school has come a long way in the last five years. The headteacher and her deputy headteacher have driven this improvement and have been well supported by an increasingly effective leadership team and a strong governing body. Standards are rising at all key stages and pupils make good progress because teachers make learning interesting and fun. Pupils enjoy school and consequently attendance has also improved. Parents are overwhelmingly positive. As one parent wrote, 'Sunnyfields is a great place with dedicated and well motivated staff'.

The school leaders have created a strong sense of teamwork that involves the staff, governors, pupils and parents. Relationships are excellent between the pupils and the staff alike. One child eloquently summed it up when saying, 'The school has a community atmosphere - we're all really close just like a big family'. The senior leaders and governors have a very clear understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas for improvement because their monitoring procedures are robust and provide accurate information. This has ensured that appropriate plans are in place to maintain the good progress being made by the school. The budget is used effectively to deploy resources and the school has recently achieved the Financial Management Standards in Schools. The school has established good links with the local community and is rightly conscious that pupils' awareness of broader issues related to this country and the global community is an area for development.

The quality of teaching has improved significantly because expectations have been raised. Teaching is now consistently good, with some outstanding practice. Planning generally meets the needs of all pupils well, especially those with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language. These pupils are particularly well supported by outside expertise and the school staff. Pupils say that teachers always try to make learning fun and therefore they are enthusiastically involved in lessons. The next priority is for all pupils to be consistently more aware of their own next steps for improvement so that their enthusiasm can be channelled to develop them as independent learners. At present, not all teachers are consistently providing guidance to pupils through the marking of work or in giving pupils clear targets on how to improve their work.

The school works hard to enrich the curriculum with many activity clubs, visits and visitors. During the time of the inspection the school was holding a 'Science Week' and every class visited a local museum as part of the programme. The pupils came back enthused about what they had seen. They had used individual tape recorders to record their notes, illustrating the improving use of information and communication technology to support learning.

Better teaching and an enriched curriculum have led to pupils making good progress from when they start in the Early Years Foundation Stage right through to when they leave at the end of Year 6. Standards are below expectations for their age when pupils enter the school and are above average when they leave, reflecting good achievement.

Pupils value the safe and caring environment provided by the school. They are well aware of healthy lifestyles and the school promotes this aspect well through providing a good range of physical activities for the pupils and through working hard with pupils and parents to ensure healthy lunch boxes while school meals are not currently being provided. Pupils take an active involvement in local community activities, particularly through music, sport and a range of visits and visitors. Pupils very clearly enjoy school and consequently work together exceptionally

well. Coupled with rising standards and good progress, the pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

There is very effective provision in helping children to make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children enter with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age and they make good progress in both the Nursery and Reception classes to achieve the learning goals expected of five-year-olds. In particular, they are helped to learn and develop communication, language and literacy skills well, which are at a particularly lower level on entry. The leaders of the Early Years Foundation Stage have improved the way the children learn and develop. They have created well-resourced, welcoming and attractive learning areas. The skilled staff team provide well-planned indoor and outdoor activities that stimulate learning and interest the children so they enjoy school and learning. The welfare of children is promoted well and adults use assessment effectively to record children's all-round development. Children's well-being is ably promoted through food activities, constructional and imaginative play, use of the interactive whiteboard to develop numeracy skills, and opportunities to record their ideas. The personal development and well-being of the children is good, with an appropriate emphasis on their social and emotional development. Parents say that they appreciate the fact that the staff work closely with them to ensure that the children feel happy and safe and are making good progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency of academic guidance to pupils through marking and individual target setting.
- Increase pupils' awareness and understanding of current issues affecting the UK and global communities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with abilities that are below the levels expected for their age, and well below expected levels in language skills. In the Nursery and Reception classes children make good progress and standards overall are broadly average when they enter Year 1. Standards by the end of Year 2 had been declining between 2004 and 2007 but improved considerably in 2008. From lesson observations and analyses of work, this progress is on track to be maintained in 2009. By the end of Year 6 standards improved in 2007, improved still further in 2008 and are on track to remain above national averages in 2009. Pupils make good progress and achieve well because they achieve the challenging targets set for them by the school. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because they receive effective adult support and work is well matched to their needs. Those pupils who have social and behavioural difficulties are well supported by the school's pastoral care programme and through good behaviour management systems that are consistently applied. The upturn in pupils' performance is the result of effective leadership that is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching across the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including aspects of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. The good opportunities experienced by pupils to reflect and share their feelings in Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) and celebrate their good work in assemblies, mean that they voice their opinions with confidence. Pupils enjoy opportunities to take on responsibilities, for example, by joining the school council, acting as junior road safety officers or helping in the eco-garden. They are keen to contribute to improving the school but this role is not fully developed. Pupils enjoy school greatly because there is a real 'family atmosphere and everyone is here to help us'. They take pride in their work and show respect for each other and the many cultures prevalent in the school. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. Bullying and racist incidents are rare. Pupils identify that, where such incidents occur, they are treated seriously by adults and dealt with effectively. The school has worked successfully to adopt healthy lifestyles and pupils have a good awareness of how to live healthily. Attendance is now average with an improvement since the previous inspection. The pupils' ability to cooperate with each other, and their improving basic skills, ensure that they are well prepared for their future education and beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers are beginning to combine subjects to make learning more relevant to the pupils, such as in an outstanding lesson in Key Stage 2 that combined music with design and technology. In this, and other good lessons, teachers had high expectations of work and behaviour. Planning and resources were used well to provide a structure to the lessons. Pace is good in almost all lessons and this keeps the pupils motivated and enthusiastic. Staff usually ensure that pupils' differing needs are met, although, in a small minority of lessons, the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Support for pupils who have learning difficulties is a strength of the school and credit for this includes the good work of the teaching assistants. Support for pupils for whom English is not their first language is outstanding because staff act on advice from specialist support and focus on the needs of each individual pupil. The quality of marking is inconsistent and consequently does not always provide pupils with enough guidance on their next steps for improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy their education and achieve well because the curriculum serves their needs effectively. It meets statutory requirements in full and responds effectively to local needs, for example in catering for parents' needs as part of its provision. The school takes account of pupils with differing abilities while already recognising the need to further develop the provision for higher-attaining pupils. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, which provide additional enrichment to pupils' learning. Visits to museums and other places of interest enhance pupils' cultural awareness and there is a strong and effective focus on promoting sport to the extent that several teams achieve well in local competitive events. A music specialist teaching throughout the school brings added verve and colour to pupils' prowess and learning in music.

There is a clear plan in place for developing the use of information and communication technology to support learning across the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care and support are consistently strong with good attention to the personal and social well-being of pupils. Relationships across the school are a strength. Vulnerable pupils are very well supported. They are given good guidance to improve their standards and develop their self-esteem. Provision for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and, consequently, they make good progress. The school works closely with parents and makes outstanding use of specialist staff and agencies. Effective procedures are in place to ensure the safety of pupils, and child protection procedures are rigorous. Although in most classes academic targets are set, pupils' awareness of them is not yet consistent and so they are not always clear about the aspects of their work in need of improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide very strong leadership for the school through a relentless drive for improvement while maintaining excellent relationships with pupils, staff and parents. They are now well supported by key stage and core subject leaders whose leadership and management roles have improved since the last inspection. There is a strong sense of teamwork within the school. This is coupled with a clear focus throughout the school on raising standards through the identification of clear, manageable priorities and detailed plans to support them. As a result, pupils throughout the school make good progress and results have improved in all three key stages over recent years. Assessments are more accurate than previously and, consequently, the tracking of pupils' progress is more rigorous and informative. With the very wide range of cultures within the school and the evidence of genuine harmony, community cohesion within the school is good. The school is inclusive and has an appropriate involvement within the local community. However, some pupils lack awareness of issues that affect other communities in the wider United Kingdom and international contexts, and the ways in which people can work together for improvement. There are excellent links with other local providers and support services. Governance is good because governors are well informed, actively involved and care deeply about the school. They provide good levels of challenge and have a clear view of the strengths of the school and the priorities for improvement.

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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 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?	2
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	1
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?	2

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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**

26 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sunnyfields Primary School, London, NW4 4JH

Thank you for making Mrs Ewing, Mrs Bennett and me so very welcome and talking to us so openly when we came to inspect your school. We really enjoyed the lessons we visited, looking at your work and joining you during lunch and break times.

We could see very clearly that you enjoy coming to school and we can understand why you do. We found many good things, especially the improving progress you make in your work and the excellent way you all get along with everyone else at the school. We were impressed with your behaviour both in lessons and outside and you told us that this was much better now. We liked the way you work hard in lessons and we noticed that the teachers always try to make your lessons interesting and fun for you. Everyone we spoke to said that you feel safe and cared for at school and that the adults look after you very well. Miss Godfrey and everyone else who works for the school are working incredibly hard to make things better still and they have a good plan in place to make this possible.

We have asked Miss Godfrey, the staff and governors to do the following things to make your school even better.

- Make sure that you know what you need to do next to improve your work. You can help by looking at the marking in your books and remembering your targets and, of course, working hard to achieve them.
- Help you to be more aware of the issues affecting this country and abroad and ways in which we can all work together to improve things.

Yours faithfully

Nigel Grimshaw

Lead Inspector