

Harmondsworth Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102384
Local Authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	323635
Inspection dates	28–29 April 2009
Reporting inspector	Barry Jones

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)	241
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	Mr Nicholas Taylor
Headteacher	Miss Eleesa Godfrey
Date of previous school inspection	17 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Road Harmondsworth West Drayton UB7 0AU
Telephone number	0208 759 1718
Fax number	0208 564 9491

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	28–29 April 2009
Inspection number	323635

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is situated close to Heathrow airport. The school says that the proposal for a third runway at Heathrow has led to changes in the intake of the school. There are an increasing number of pupils joining or leaving the school at unusual times that is now slightly higher than in most schools. There are higher than average proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and for whom English is an additional language. Eleven pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a little above average. These are mainly for specific learning or speech language and communication difficulties. The school has Healthy School status and the Activemark award.

There is provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage through Nursery and Reception classes. Currently, half the children enter Reception in September and the other half in January. From next year, all children will start Reception in September.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Harmondsworth is a good school. Pupils achieve well as a result of the good teaching and leadership of the school. Their personal development is outstanding because pastoral care is excellent. The school has retained its 'village' character as exemplified by the strong links with parents and the local community. Parents are overwhelmingly positive and, as one parent wrote, 'I am very proud that my child is a member of the school.'

Children make an excellent start in the Nursery. When recent Year 6 year groups joined the school initially, they came with skills broadly expected for their age. By the end of Year 6, standards fluctuate a little from year to year but are above average generally. This reflects good achievement by pupils during their time at school. Pupils' writing skills lag behind those of their reading skills. The school has successfully bid for substantial funds for collaborative projects with other schools. It intends to devote some of these resources to improving standards in writing. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers make effective use of assessment data to plan work for different abilities. This helps all groups to make good progress. There is very thorough tracking of pupils' attainment which means that the school readily identifies dips in performance by individuals and groups of pupils. For individual pupils, the school has several strategies to correct underperformance when it occurs. These include booster classes, additional support and challenging targets. Two years ago, the school also recognised that pupils made slower progress in Years 3 and 4. It introduced more rigorous monitoring and raised expectations of what pupils could achieve. As a result, pupils' progress in these year groups has accelerated. This is an inclusive school and there are no underachieving groups. Pupils who have learning difficulties receive strong, well-coordinated support and consequently make good progress academically and excellent progress socially.

The family ethos in the school underpins the high quality of relationships that exist between pupils and between adults and pupils. Pastoral care is excellent and means that pupils feel very safe. They say that there is always an adult they can turn to if they have a problem. Pupils respond very positively. They make an outstanding contribution to making this a very harmonious community and are much involved locally too. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. The 'golden rules' are prominently displayed and are understood and followed by pupils. Staff implement the behaviour policy consistently which also contributes to the very orderly community. The school council say their views are valued. They talk enthusiastically about their leading role in preparing for Harmondsworth to be an 'eco school'. Pupils enjoy school and participate fully in the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer. They would welcome more opportunities to participate fully in some lessons and this is the inspectors' view too.

The school has an excellent knowledge and understanding of its local community. It is an integral part of the village. The school is very successfully preparing pupils to be responsible citizens and to respect other cultures and beliefs. Leadership and management are good and are effective in promoting good achievement and high levels of care. The governors hold the school to account extremely well. Given the school's track record, capacity to improve further is good.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The profile of the children coming into the Nursery is changing. Currently, children join with skills a little below those expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy skills. The provision in the Nursery is outstanding and children make very rapid progress. A particular strength is the very high quality of adult interaction to develop children's language skills. Most children continue to make good progress in Reception. However, some children continue part-time in the Nursery for the autumn term while the remainder are full-time in the Reception. The school has decided that this results in uneven progress during the Reception year. Therefore, a single point of entry will operate from September 2009. Nevertheless, teaching is good and there is a good balance between teacher-led activities and those that the children choose for themselves. Staff make good use of assessment data to provide meaningful and challenging tasks to children. Consequently, most children attain the early learning goals by the end of Reception. The school's provision for children's welfare is excellent throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children grow in confidence and their personal skills improve markedly.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the new initiatives improve pupils' standards of writing.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to participate actively in lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards in the national tests at the end of Year 6 are consistently above average. Consequently, the school meets its challenging targets. However, there is some variation from year to year. In 2008 there was a dip because of lower results in English, particularly writing. The school has reviewed its strategies for writing and this is leading to pupils making more rapid progress. Pupils who are new to English receive effective support. As a result, over time they make the same progress as their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They have a very strong sense of right and wrong and show respect for beliefs different from their own. In an excellent assembly, pupils were given opportunities to relate their learning to people and events beyond the school. Pupils feel very safe. They say there is little bullying and are confident that rare occurrences will be dealt with quickly and well by an adult. One pupil summed this up, 'You feel warm and comfortable because you know everyone is going to be nice to you.' Their positive attitudes are shown by their good attendance. They have an excellent understanding of healthy living issues. This is demonstrated by the awards of Healthy School status and Activemark. Hot meals have recently been introduced, are healthy and very popular. The gardening club is thriving. Pupils readily accept responsibilities, taking on roles such as young leaders and librarians, and older pupils act as buddies for younger ones. The school council is active in issues regarding looking after the environment. Pupils have good numeracy and literacy skills, develop excellent personal qualities and learn to work well in a team. They are exceptionally well prepared for moving on to secondary school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers manage their classes well. Pupils respond positively and so the atmosphere in classes is conducive to effective learning. Teachers use assessment data well to plan work for pupils of different abilities. In an outstanding lesson in the Nursery, effective use of assessment data was a key reason that children's needs were met exceptionally well and their enjoyment of all activities was very evident. Teachers have high expectations for pupils. These are expressed through clear learning objectives. Consequently, pupils know what they are expected to learn. Pupils are usefully involved in assessing how well they and their classmates achieve their objectives. Teachers make good use of talk partners for pupils to explore ideas with one another. Teaching assistants are used well and contribute to the good progress of pupils who have learning difficulties. Teachers make effective use of interactive whiteboards and this adds interest to lessons. A few lessons are too directed by the teacher and pupils are not as involved as much as they would like to be. The questioning in these lessons is too closed. This does not permit pupils to express their ideas fully and they say that these lessons are less interesting.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has adapted well to the changes in intake. There has been increased attention to successfully improving pupils' reading skills. For instance, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children learn to link sounds with letters very well. With two other schools, the school has bid successfully for substantial funds which are allocated to a collaborative writing project. In addition, the school has negotiated a combined venture with a third school to improve boys' writing. These initiatives are at an early stage and so it is too soon to assess their effectiveness. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, which underpins pupils' strong personal development. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities that are attended well. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well in English and mathematics to help pupils improve their literacy and numeracy skills. The school is planning to extend the use of ICT in other subjects too. This is part of the school's drive to provide more links between subjects in line with recent national guidance.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Several parents commented in the completed questionnaires on the exceptional care provided by the school. As one parent commented, 'My daughter suffers from a medical condition which the school have been very supportive with...my daughter loves the school and the teachers.' The school works extremely well with other agencies to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils. Consequently, they are able to participate fully in school life. The school has linked closely with the education welfare officer and has improved attendance. The proportion of persistent absentees has reduced from average to below average. This reflects a resolute approach by the school in the context of discounted holidays being available to some families during term time, because of the school's close proximity to the airport. Academic guidance is very good. There is very thorough tracking of pupils' attainment which is used effectively to support pupils who need it. Pupils are set challenging targets. They have a good knowledge of these and say they are useful to show them how to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The very good headteacher is the driving force that enables the school to maintain good academic standards and high levels of care. She is ably supported by her leadership team. The school has given a high priority to developing all staff, including teaching assistants. This has underpinned the cohesive teamwork. All teaching staff have responsibility for some aspect of the school's work and carry out their duties well. All contribute to procedures for self-evaluation and this means that the school has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The school recognises the value of extending analyses to specifically include the group of pupils who join the school at unusual times. This is appropriate given the uncertainty arising from the proposal to build a third runway at Heathrow. The monitoring of teaching quality is thorough and offers constructive feedback to teachers on how they might improve their practice. In some lesson observations, however, the focus on pupils' learning is not sufficiently sharp. The governors have a good blend of experience and expertise. They have received training to self-evaluate their impact and, as a result, they have extended their role. The link governor role is now established for aspects of the school's work and results in more effective monitoring. The governors give excellent support and challenge to the school and are helping to sustain the school's momentum. The school links well with the adjoining community centre and provides valued management oversight for the centre.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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?	1
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	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

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	1
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	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	1
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**

12 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Harmondsworth Primary School, West Drayton, UB7 0AU

Thank you very much for the help that you gave to us when we inspected your school. You told us that you go to a good school and we agree. Members of your school council told us that their views are valued. They say their ideas were accepted for improving playground equipment and they are very involved with recycling matters. Other pupils said that they feel very safe and enjoy coming to school. We were very impressed with the efforts of your gardening club.

These are the things that we liked most about your school.

- You make good progress in your work.
- You develop into mature, responsible, young people.
- Children make an excellent start in the Nursery.
- You behave very well and respect one another.
- Harmondsworth is a thriving, happy community.
- You have good teachers who have your interests at heart.
- The school is led well by the headteacher and her team.
- The governors serve the school exceptionally well.

The school is not complacent and is constantly seeking new ways of making matters even better for you. Some of you are not as good at writing as you are at reading and other skills. The school has won extra funds to work with other schools to improve your writing. We have asked the school to check that you do improve as intended. You also told us that most lessons are interesting but some are not. We have asked the school to give you more opportunities to be more fully involved in all lessons.

We wish you continuing success in the future.

Yours faithfully

Barry Jones

Lead Inspector