

Hereward Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114935
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	326093
Inspection dates	15–16 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Paul Cosway

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)	337
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 Raymond Warner
Headteacher	Mrs Geraldine Blair
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Colebrook Lane Loughton Essex IG10 2LS
Telephone number	020 8508 6465
Fax number	020 8508 8428

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large primary school serves a residential area near the centre of Loughton. The proportion of pupils for whom English is not their first language is well below the average for similar schools. There are higher than average numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the proportion with statements of special educational needs is much higher than the average nationally. These needs vary but there are more pupils than normally seen with complex learning needs and physical disabilities. Attainment on entry to the school is very low for children of a similar age. The school has an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) comprising of a Nursery and two Reception classes. It has received a Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school, which develops in its pupils, highly positive attitudes to education. They are responsible, hardworking and extremely well-behaved. As a result, they learn quickly and genuinely want to succeed. Personal development is outstanding. Many enter the school with poor social skills. Through the EYFS the secure building blocks are laid for future growth. Children learn to listen, work with others and take great pride in their work. Almost all parents praise the school. A typical comment was: 'A wonderful school: our children love it here!' Pupils enjoy school very much and appreciate their roles as part of the school and local communities. Their preparation for their future lives is excellent. They have an exceptional understanding of the importance of keeping safe and healthy. There are high levels of racial harmony within the school.

Children's attainment on entry is very low. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, results are close to national average in the assessments for seven-year-olds. Achievement through Key Stage 2 has been rising steadily in recent years. For the last three years, pupils have made excellent progress and, in the 2008 national tests for 11-year-olds, they reached above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Some of the younger pupils, especially boys, find it difficult to express themselves well in writing. The school is aware that writing needs to be developed further and is providing very good opportunities for extended writing, especially for older pupils.

A key to the school's success is the quality of teaching, which is outstanding in its impact on learning over time. All teachers manage their classes exceptionally well and have very positive relationships with their pupils. They make their lessons interesting and often fun, so that the pupils enjoy their learning. Teachers plan a range of tasks to meet the varying needs of all pupils in their classes, so that all are working at an appropriate level and making excellent progress. Outstanding support from teaching assistants helps pupils who find learning more difficult, and those at an early stage in learning English, to master the skills they need to achieve very well indeed. Support, care and guidance are good. The pastoral support and guidance is highly effective, but academic guidance is less consistent. Many teachers, especially of older pupils, mark work very helpfully so that pupils know what to do to improve, but this is not consistent across the school. The curriculum is good, especially in the provision for literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology, and it is enriched by many visits and clubs.

Leadership and management is excellent. The senior leadership team and subject coordinators provide highly effective leadership. They analyse data very well to discover where pupils underperform and deal with the issues raised effectively, to improve pupils' progress. The school's provision for community cohesion, which includes links with community groups and the wider world, is of a good quality. Governance is good. The school has improved significantly since the last inspection and is very well placed to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Nursery with levels considerably below those expected for children of a similar age and make good progress, although they are still well below expected levels at the end of their Reception year. Good teaching ensures that children learn well. They demonstrate

positive attitudes to school, are happy and friendly towards each other and play together harmoniously. They have trusting and caring relationships with the adults who take care of them and behave well. Learning opportunities are focused on meeting the needs of all children and help them to achieve well in relation to their abilities. Children demonstrate a fair understanding of what they are learning and are able to select their own activities as well as participating in adult-led learning. They benefit from a wide range of resources and a good balance of indoor and outdoor activities. There are regular assessments. Some of these do not always accurately reflect the progress the children have made and so teaching is not always matched closely enough to children's learning needs. The Nursery and Reception staff work well together as a team with a common sense of purpose. They are well led and managed by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic EYFS leader.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality and accuracy of pupils' written work, especially of boys in Key Stage 1.
- Improve the consistency and rigour of marking and assessment in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 classes, to guide pupils so that they are clear about the next steps in their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils enter Year 1 well below the expected levels for their age, especially in literacy skills. They make good progress through Key Stage 1 as a result of a well-balanced curriculum with a clear emphasis on basic skills. National assessment results and school data show that standards are average by the time they reach the end of Year 2. Standards in reading and mathematics are in line with national averages, but writing standards, especially of boys, are below average.

The national test results at the end of Year 6 show the proportion of pupils that reach the expected levels in English, science and mathematics is above average. In 2008, around 95% of pupils, including many diagnosed with learning difficulties, made two levels of progress or more from the levels they attained in their Year 2 tests, compared with around 80% nationally. While almost no pupils reached Level 3 when they were in Year 2, the proportion reaching Level 5 at the end of Year 6 was in line with the average nationally. This represents exceptional progress. Numeracy skills are well developed, and the proportion of pupils attaining the nationally expected level in mathematics is well above average. Attainment is also above the nationally expected level for their age in physical education and information and communication technology because of the excellent provision in these subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Almost all parents praise pupils' behaviour and inspectors agree with the view that behaviour is outstanding in lessons and around school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They enjoy school greatly. One child said: 'The best thing about our school is that the children are always nice to each other.' Pupils are kind and considerate to one another. Many take on extra responsibilities willingly. There are excellent relationships between teachers and children. Attendance is satisfactory in spite of high numbers of parents taking children on holiday in term time. The school council is very effective. It gives pupils a real say in the running of the school and is presently contributing views to the much needed refurbishment to pupils' toilets.

Multicultural development is very good with links to different aspects of the curriculum. Pupils of different ages are involved in, for example, Black History week and visiting a Hindu temple. They learn about French culture through the language programme and there are very few racist incidents in school. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities that encourage teamwork and commitment. Pupils are particularly proud of their sports teams and are very involved in community activities, especially through music and sport. They are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of education through developing their abilities to work independently, speak and listen confidently and use information and communication technology to support their learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

All teachers manage behaviour exceptionally well, resulting in lessons that are well-ordered, with pupils keen to do their best. From the start of their time in school, pupils are taught the learning skills that will help them to succeed. Teachers ensure that pupils learn how to work independently, listen carefully and follow instructions. They plan work to match varying pupils' needs and use a very good range of strategies to help to retain pupils' interest and enthusiasm for learning. They make lessons fun by introducing hands-on activities and modern technology, making excellent use of interactive white boards. They consolidate learning by regularly revisiting work done previously. Teachers of older pupils give very clear guidance on the criteria by which their work is being judged and how to improve their work to raise their grades. All teachers work closely with the very effective team of teaching assistants to ensure that they give the many pupils who need additional support excellent guidance and help.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school is responsive to the needs of its pupils. Its curriculum provides an excellent range of opportunities for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties, to develop their basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. As a result, most pupils enjoy their education and achieve very well. However, this concentration on basic skills does reduce the opportunities for extending learning in the arts and humanities. Pupils do benefit from the provision of an enhanced physical education curriculum provided by a specialist teacher. The school has a good programme of enrichment, visits and visitors to make learning interesting and relevant. These include after-school clubs for sports, visits to Colchester Zoo, local farms, Copped Hall and residential trips. These aspects promote strongly pupils' knowledge of how to stay healthy and safe, and the development of social skills important to their future life.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The pastoral care and support provided by the school is outstanding. Pupils' particular needs are identified promptly, especially when new to the school, and the right care and support are put into place very effectively. A parent stated, 'The school is very supportive, attentive and understanding. They give my child every help to make sure he achieves as much as possible.' Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils meet requirements and child protection and health

and risk assessment procedures, are robust and reviewed regularly. The school works very well indeed with parents and outside agencies to ensure that all pupils, including the vulnerable and those at risk, are safe and supported so that they can achieve very well. Procedures to promote good attendance are firmly in place and have had an impact on raising levels of attendance. There are good assessment procedures to track pupils' progress over time. The school is developing a new marking policy to guide teachers on how to use marking to help pupils learn more effectively, but it is not yet implemented across the whole school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The senior leadership team is accurate in its evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. As a result, it is able to make decisions, firmly based on the analysis of performance data, that have produced measurable improvements. For example, the introduction of rewards for coming to school regularly has helped to increase attendance from well below average at the time of the last report to average now. Teachers and pupils are set challenging targets. The school has very effective systems for monitoring and developing teaching and excellent provision for encouraging and supporting pupils who fall behind their target grades. As a result, standards have risen from below average at the time of the previous inspection to the current above national average levels.

Coordinators' monitoring and leadership of their subjects are excellent. Governance is good. There is a genuine commitment to equal opportunities and community cohesion. The school gives excellent value for money.

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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?	1
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	1

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?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

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	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
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?	1
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	1
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?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

19 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hereward Primary School, Loughton, IG10 2LS

Thank you for being so very welcoming to us when we came to your school. You were all very friendly and so helpful in answering our questions. We are writing to let you know what we found out.

You told us that you love your school and we liked it too. It is giving you an outstanding education. All the staff take excellent care of you. Your parents told us they are very pleased with how the school helps to prepare you for secondary schools. Your personal development is outstanding. You are friendly to everyone and you know what to do to keep healthy and safe. Your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting for you and in turn you behave very well indeed and try very hard to do your best work.

We have asked the school to work harder to make sure that boys succeed in becoming good writers. You can help by taking even more care to write accurately and becoming at least as good as the girls! We have also asked teachers to give you more advice about how to improve your work.

We wish you the very best for your future lives and we hope that you continue to enjoy learning in a school that is such a happy place, where everyone is working together for your good.

Yours sincerely

Paul Cosway

Lead inspector