

The Highway Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101624
Local Authority	Bromley
Inspection number	335757
Inspection dates	30 November –1 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Madeleine Gerard

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	186
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeff Wickett
Headteacher	Susan Kenneth
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' work in books, reports from advisers working with the school, the school's development planning, tracking data showing the progress pupils are making and the standards that they reach, and 86 responses to the questionnaire sent to parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how consistently pupils are learning well and making good progress through the school
- how well leaders and managers ensure that teaching is consistently good
- how successfully the school's curriculum and the care and help it provides secure strong outcomes for all pupils.

Information about the school

The Highway is a smaller than average primary school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average. Most of these pupils have speech, language and communication difficulties. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is slightly smaller than that found nationally. The proportion learning English as an additional language is below the national average and very few are at an early stage of learning English. The school has achieved a number of nationally recognised awards including the Activemark and the Healthy School award. The Nursery, which shares the school site, was not inspected because it is managed separately.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The Highway Primary is a good school. The school provides an inclusive environment where all pupils are valued and enjoy themselves in the school's safe and caring atmosphere. Parents who responded to the questionnaire confirm this. One wrote, reflecting the views expressed by many, 'My children love The Highway and are happy to go to school every day.' This is also shown in pupils' consistently good attendance. Opportunities to make a contribution to school life by taking on responsibility, for example in the school council and the 'eco team', help to develop pupils' social skills. Participation in performances in the school and at local cultural centres helps self-confidence to grow. Relationships are warm and friendly.

Children join the school with a range of skills and capabilities but generally, they are at the expected levels for their age. Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage to reach average standards by the end of the Reception Year. Detailed records of continuous observations are kept but these are not used rigorously enough to plan the next steps in children's learning to improve children's progress.

Teaching through the rest of the school is good. As a result, rates of learning and progress have improved and are good. Although attainment remains broadly average, it is improving. For example, in 2009, results in tests in English and science at the end of Year 6 were the highest for the last four years. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are motivated to do well because teachers plan interesting work for them to do. French, music, themed weeks and a wide range of clubs are particular highlights of the good curriculum. Marking and target setting are used well to make clear to pupils how to improve in order to move up to the next level in their work. However, as the school recognises, there is a wide range of abilities in most classes and some pupils are occasionally given tasks that are not sufficiently challenging, particularly more-able pupils. As a result, some pupils do not consistently reach the high levels of which they are capable.

Accurate self-evaluation ensures that priorities for development are the right ones to lead to improvement. Leaders and managers have worked hard to enhance the quality of provision. This, together with the success in improving rates of learning and progress, shows that the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that work is more consistently challenging, particularly for more-able pupils.
- Use assessment information systematically to plan the next steps in children's learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy their learning and achieve well in Years 1 to 6. For example, good learning and progress were observed in Year 6 when pupils discussed their responses to a poem in pairs. They listened to each other's ideas and built on them rapidly. In Year 3, pupils used counting cubes to explore multiplication. They much enjoyed the practical element and concentrated very well, gaining a good understanding. The school's own data and pupils' work in books show that rates of progress through the school are good.

Improvements to provision, for example opportunities in English for pupils to spend time regularly writing in a variety of styles, have resulted in a steady rise in literacy attainment in national tests. The above average Year 6 results for English in 2009 were particularly praiseworthy as these pupils' Key Stage 1 scores had been below average. Since then Key Stage 1 results have improved. Year 6 mathematics results had risen very steeply the year before but dropped back a little in 2009. However, current pupils are making good progress in mathematics. Pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties and pupils who need additional help in class make good progress as a result of the support they receive.

In lessons and around the school, behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and friendly. One parent of a child in Reception commented, 'My child has made friends with children in other years and even children in Year 6 are kind and talk to him.' Pupils feel safe and are confident that adults will help them should any problems occur. They have a good awareness of how to keep themselves fit and healthy. The popularity of the extra-curricular sporting clubs as well as the school's success in achieving the Healthy School award and the Activemark confirm this. Good gains in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enable pupils to appreciate the achievements of others and show care and consideration to one another. Charity fund-raising develops pupils' awareness of those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and local community. For example, the 'eco team' are enthusiastic about developing the school's outdoor spaces and play leaders take their roles seriously to support the smooth running of break-time activities. Pupils' well-developed personal and social skills, their regular attendance and good learning and progress in basic skills prepare them well for the next stage in their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Pupils appreciate the variety of tasks they are given. They enjoy opportunities to discuss their learning in pairs and to work together in groups. Teachers explain new learning clearly and use computers well to model explanations and what pupils are expected to do. This ensures pupils are clear about what they are supposed to be learning. This, together with opportunities for pupils to measure for themselves how successfully they have completed the tasks in lessons, helps pupils to have a clear understanding of how well they are doing. Good assessment systems enable the school to check how well pupils are making progress and put additional support in place for anyone falling behind. This information is often but not always used well to match work to pupils' needs, though teachers generally have high expectations of what pupils can do.

The curriculum ensures that pupils have a wide range of interesting work to do and contributes well to their enjoyment of school as well as their positive personal development. Some links are developing between subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 were developing their skills in writing factual texts through exploring facts about sharks. However, these links are not consistently in place to ensure that pupils have opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across a range of subjects. Extra-curricular clubs are popular and include cookery, basketball and orchestra. Themed weeks such as book week, and events organised to inspire pupils' in their writing, including visits from a traditional storyteller and an alien landing in the playground, bring the curriculum to life. Pupils enjoy opportunities to learn French in Years 3 to 6 and older pupils are enthusiastic about residential journeys to Norfolk and the Isle of Wight.

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Pupils who need extra help receive good support from additional adults so that they learn and progress well. Good links with a wide range of outside agencies, specialists and local secondary schools promote pupils' learning and development. Before- and after-school provision is well organised and welcoming.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders have a shared vision for the school. They work well together and as a team with the staff and governing body to embed ambition and drive improvement. Action taken has successfully secured improvements in teaching and in pupils' enjoyment and achievement over recent years. The school is aware of the slight disparity between progress of the more able and other pupils, and has plans to improve. Consequently, the school promotes equality and tackles discrimination well. Procedures to promote pupils' health, welfare and safety are good. Governors are well aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. The school works hard to harness the support of the parents and involve them in their children's learning, for example through regular newsletters and weekly achievement assemblies. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good. Pupils' awareness of themselves as part of the school and local community is strong. The school is actively ensuring pupils develop their knowledge of those who live in communities other than their own through developing links with schools in this country, in France and in South Africa.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's personal, social and emotional development is well supported and adults ensure their welfare is well promoted. Opportunities to visit the Reception class before they start and routines that promote their independence help children to settle quickly when they join the school. Children are happy and form positive relationships with adults and other children. They work and play well together, share equipment and are keen to take on responsibility, for example, for tidying toys away. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Leaders have rightly increased the focus on letters and sounds and the use of the outside areas, and have put in place a better balance between opportunities for children to select activities for themselves and those led by adults but these changes have not been in place long enough to show their impact. Planning is coherent and takes account of children's interests. However it does not always take enough account of what particular children can already do, so activities are not always tailored to children's specific needs.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents responding to the survey are happy with their children's experience of school and judge that the overall management of the school is good. Almost all agree that teaching is good and that the school meets their children's individual needs, although a few parents feel that more-able pupils could sometimes cope with more challenging work. Inspectors uphold the parents' views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Highway Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 86 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 186 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	71	83	15	17	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	67	78	19	22	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	38	44	47	55	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	50	40	47	3	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	52	60	33	38	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	47	43	50	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	58	35	41	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	34	40	43	50	4	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	50	58	32	37	4	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	44	51	38	44	2	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	47	39	45	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	58	67	27	31	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	60	70	25	29	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



2 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Highway Primary, Orpington, BR6 9DJ

Thank you very much for your friendly welcome and for helping us when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed our visit and particularly enjoyed hearing Year 5 practising their drumming and hearing you all singing so well together in assembly.

The Highway Primary is a good school. These are some of the good points about it.

- You like coming to school, attend regularly and your parents like the school too.
- You behave well, get along with one another and are keen to learn.
- You enjoy all the interesting work the teachers plan for you.
- You particularly enjoy all the extra-curricular clubs that the school organises.
- You make good progress in your learning and standards are rising.
- The staff check carefully how well you are doing.
- Those of you who need additional help are well supported and make good progress.
- You have a good understanding of how to keep yourselves fit, healthy and safe.
- You are enthusiastic to take on responsibilities within the school.
- All the adults work well together as a team and make sure you are safe.

To make the school even better, we have asked the staff to make sure that all of you are set work that is at the right level of difficulty. You can help by telling your teachers if the work is too easy or too difficult. Children get off to a satisfactory start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We have asked the school to make sure that the children in the Reception class make faster progress in their learning by planning work that takes more account of what they can already do.

Yours sincerely

Madeleine Gerard

Lead inspector

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