

Viking Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101908
Local Authority	Ealing
Inspection number	335805
Inspection dates	21–22 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Christine Pollitt

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Amanda Hancock
Headteacher	Mrs Susan Townson
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 17 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work and looked at policies and documentation on teaching and learning, the curriculum, the procedures for assessing and tracking children's progress, the school development plan and information about the Early Years Foundation Stage. They analysed a total of 62 parents' questionnaires.

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

- the achievement of higher attaining pupils and whether teaching is sufficiently challenging, especially in writing
- the effectiveness of provision to support learning for vulnerable pupils
- the strength of the provision, the Early Years Foundation Stage and other outcomes
- the effectiveness of monitoring by leaders and managers to support improvement.

Information about the school

This school is of average size. Over three quarters of pupils are of minority ethnic heritage, about three times the national figure. They come from many different cultural backgrounds and are predominately Black African Heritage. The majority of pupils enter the Nursery in the Early Years Foundation Stage at the early stages of speaking English. Their skills and abilities are generally much lower than expected for children of three years of age. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is just above the national figure; these are mainly language and communication needs. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school during their primary education is higher than that found in 80% of schools nationally. The school has achieved Healthy School status and Activemark in sport. The school is part of the Northolt extended schools partnership.

The inspection was conducted during Eid and 46% of pupils were absent on the first day of the inspection.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory education for the pupils. Some elements of its work are outstanding. Attainment on entry is typically well below national expectations and many of the pupils joining later in the school are at the early stages of learning English. Consequently, their attainment in English when they leave the school is still low.

From their starting points, children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1, reaching standards that are below average on entry into Key Stage 2. Pupils make outstanding progress through Key Stage 2 in mathematics. Consequently the school has in the past three years been in the top 5% of schools nationally for learning and progress in mathematics. One reason for this is the excellent opportunities pupils have to apply their knowledge in practical investigations and problem solving activities. Pupils do not do as well in English as they do in mathematics. There are too few opportunities in lessons for pupils to participate in speaking and listening activities. Consequently pupils, especially the more able, do not always progress as well as they should.

Pupils enjoy their time at school. They behave well and relate well to each other. The impact of the work done as part of the national awards is seen in their secure knowledge of how to keep safe and healthy. They contribute well to the work of the school when working as school councillors and when performing office duties. Unfortunately, not all pupils attend regularly enough. The school realises the need for further improvement in working with families and consulting pupils about the provision of before-school activities.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall because there is too much variation in the quality of teaching in English. Some outstanding teaching was observed on which the school can build, and progress was good for pupils in these lessons. In the satisfactory lessons seen, learning does not challenge all pupils well enough because work is not closely matched to their needs, and expectations of what they can achieve are not as high as they could be. Marking is appropriate overall, with some good examples seen in writing, where pupils receive good guidance as to how to improve their work, but this is not consistent across all classes.

Staff know the pupils well and take good care of them. Pupils feel welcome and included. Parents and carers much appreciate this aspect of the school's work. Comments such as, 'There is a real community spirit and a strong sense of self-worth is instilled in the children' and 'We view Viking as our extended family' are typical of those received.

With the good support of the assistant headteachers, the headteacher and staff are

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working closely to improve the school. They have led extremely successful improvements in mathematics that have had an excellent impact on standards. Senior leaders have recognised the need to focus the school on raising the achievement of specific groups such as more able pupils, and have achieved some success in this area, although there is further work to be done in literacy and science. Subject leaders manage satisfactorily, although their monitoring, evaluating and development planning role is underdeveloped. Self-evaluation is satisfactory and the school identifies relevant aspects for development. However, there has not been sufficient emphasis on improvement in English, and literacy leaders have not been regularly included in senior management meetings. The system of action planning in literacy does not always make best use of specific success criteria against which it can measure impact. The success of senior leaders in raising standards in mathematics is having a positive impact on developments in other subjects, and contributes to the school's satisfactory capacity for improvement. Governance is satisfactory. Individual governors are supportive of the school, but their role as 'critical friends' is not sufficiently developed, and they do not hold leaders sufficiently to account for the quality of the school's work.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in literacy in all year groups by June 2010 by:
- Improving the quality of teaching and learning by sharing outstanding practice across the whole school and by:
 - raising teachers' levels of expectations of pupils' attainment
 - ensuring pupils' self-assessment and teachers' marking clearly guide pupils about what they need to do to improve their work
 - including speaking and listening activities in every lesson.
- Strengthen school leadership by:
 - including literacy leaders in weekly senior management meetings from September 2009
 - prioritising clear literacy action plans with targets to be measured in December, February and May 2010
 - increasing the extent to which school governors act as 'critical friends' to oversee provision and hold the school to account.
- Increase attendance so that by July 2010, local authority targets for attendance are met by:
 - improving the effectiveness of liaison with parents with regard to emphasising the importance of regular attendance
 - providing before-school activities in consultation with the pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

In one mathematics lesson, pupils were seen to use electronic and mini whiteboards to

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work together on problem solving. They enjoy learning in this active way and achieve well. School leaders recognise that some more able pupils have not achieved well enough in recent years in literacy. Inspectors observed that effective strategies are being added to the English curriculum to improve pupils' progress and attainment has improved in reading; writing remains weaker.

While pupils' learning and progress is generally good, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those needing higher levels of individual support, the inconsistencies in pupils' performance between subjects mean that achievement over time is only satisfactory.

Pupils are well mannered and polite. They work and play well together and are keen to take part in the range of school activities offered. However, this is not reflected in their levels of attendance, which are no better than average. The school is well aware of this concern, and has taken action to make the improvement needed, but to date these are having insufficient impact. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their future well-being because their skills, although below average in literacy, are outstandingly well developed in numeracy. They have good information and communication technology skills. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils have a good moral understanding of right and wrong and have good social skills. They form good relationships and respect each other's opinions.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3

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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The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory rather than good because it is inconsistent. Good or outstanding lessons feature knowledgeable and confident teaching that interests and motivates pupils. The skilled use of questioning, both in whole-class teaching and with individual pupils, is an exceptionally strong feature of the higher quality teaching. In other lessons, pupils make only satisfactory progress because activities are not sufficiently challenging. Pupils are not always involved in assessing their own learning, which results in occasions when they are unclear about what they need to do to improve their work.

Although the curriculum is adequately matched to the interests and needs of learners, there are too few opportunities for them to participate in speaking and listening activities. Aspects of health, safety and citizenship are dealt with well and contribute to pupils' good personal development. A good range of after-school clubs, visits and visitors stimulate learning well. Pupils particularly enjoy mathematics, and take part in a wide range of sporting and other activities.

Relationships are good and pupils are cared for well. The attractive classrooms are well managed, with clear expectations of behaviour, and provide pupils with a good learning environment. The work the school does to support vulnerable pupils is excellent, and these pupils are supported and guided sensitively to help them integrate with others. The school has identified attendance as a concern, and is working with parents to address this.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Overall, leaders and managers demonstrate a satisfactory effectiveness in embedding ambition and driving improvement. They accurately identify areas for improvement and address them appropriately, particularly in mathematics. The school is committed to ensuring that issues are tackled and that the rate of progress for pupils is quickened. Leaders recognise that there is still much work to do, particularly in raising the achievement of more able pupils in English and science. Procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and sharing good practice in many subjects, especially English, are

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less successful.

Safeguarding arrangements are secure and meet legal requirements. The school understands the need to regularly assess the level of supervision at break times to ensure safety, especially around the climbing apparatus. The school keeps appropriate information about its pupils and their performance and satisfactorily promotes equal opportunity and tackles discrimination. Community cohesion is well promoted. The school is very responsive to the needs of families who come from a wide range of faiths, cultures and backgrounds. The curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of international children new to the school and to life in Britain. As a result, pupils' understanding of equality and diversity is well developed and the school is highly regarded in the local community.

Although individual governors are committed and supportive of the school, the governing body has not acted swiftly enough in the past to deal with underachievement because its role as 'critical friend' to the school is not sufficiently developed.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good leadership and management have secured close working partnerships with parents, the local Children's Centre and other Early Years Foundation Stage providers. These vital links ensure children settle quickly and enjoy school. Parents welcome the many opportunities to become involved in their children's learning. A safe, caring and stimulating environment is established and the staff have a good understanding of children's individual needs. Clear expectations support learning well, resulting in good

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progress. There is a good balance between activities directed by adults and activities chosen by the children. Teachers ensure that there is an appropriately strong emphasis on supporting language and communication skills, an area of weakness for a significant number of children. Children are encouraged to use their number skills in their play, for example building with numbered green bottles.

This year, attainment on entry remains well below average. However, good teaching helps ensure that the children achieve well. Teachers and their assistants use good questioning strategies to encourage children to think carefully about their learning. However, assessments of children's learning are not always accurate and the school has actions in place to address this which include additional training. Children listen carefully and speak confidently. Welfare is a priority and staff respond sensitively to the needs of each child. Personal development is good. At the time of the inspection, the majority of children are very new to the school. Already they are happily sharing equipment and are confident in their relationships both with other children and with adults.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The questionnaires indicated a high level of support and confidence in the school. A number of parents made additional comments and there was much consistency in what was said. Parents spoke particularly strongly about how much their children enjoy school, and of the care and commitment of the staff in developing pupils' confidence in themselves and their abilities. Parents appreciate the support provided by the teachers and their assistants and enjoy positive relationships with them.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Viking 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 inspector received 62 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 236 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	66	20	32	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	34	55	28	45	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	34	55	25	40	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	50	29	47	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	47	33	53	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	53	28	45	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	55	22	35	4	6	1	2
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	55	22	36	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	52	22	36	2	3	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	50	27	44	1	2	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	37	35	56	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	34	55	25	40	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	62	21	34	2	3	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.



23 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Viking Primary School, Northolt UB5 6HW

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We certainly enjoyed talking with you and were impressed by your politeness and the way you get on with your teachers and each other. We think yours is a satisfactory school and we know from talking to you and reading your questionnaires that you enjoy school and being with your friends.

Mrs Townson and the staff make sure that you get along well with each other and you make good progress. They are ensuring that those of you who sometimes find learning difficult receive the help you need. We were pleased to see how well you take pride in your school and look after it. We were also pleased to see how you accept responsibility and are willing to do jobs and help around the school.

I have asked Mrs Townson, the staff and governors to try to make your school even better by doing the following things:

- Make sure that there is more good teaching in the school so that you make better progress in literacy.
- Check how well you are doing in your work and make it very clear to you what you need to do to get even better.
- Involve school leaders and governors more in checking how well the school is doing in its work.

I hope you will play your part by coming to school every day and continuing to work hard.

I wish you every success in the future.

Yours faithfully

Christine Pollitt

Lead inspector

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