

Lady Bankes Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102389
Local Authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	335888
Inspection dates	17–18 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Alison Cartlidge

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	344
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rebecca Spencer
Headteacher	Sheila Tuffey
Date of previous school inspection	9 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors saw 11 teachers at work in 14 lessons. Meetings were held with governors, parents and carers, staff and pupils. The school's work was observed and pupils' books, information on pupils' progress, safeguarding and other documents were evaluated. Questionnaires from 111 parents and carers and 42 members of staff were scrutinised.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work, looking in detail at the following:

- the learning and progress of pupils in Years 1 and 2, especially of boys in writing
- provision in the Reception classes, and the use of the outdoor area
- the impact of all leaders, including the governors, on provision and progress
- how the school's support for families helps pupils to achieve and to enjoy school.

Information about the school

The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The school has a broadly average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most, but not all of these pupils, have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties or autism. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds, with a high proportion speaking English as an additional language. A few of these pupils are at the early stages of learning to speak English and their main home languages are Russian and Polish. The school has received several awards including the Activemark and the Healthy Hillingdon Award.

A private nursery and breakfast club are run by an external provider and were not part of this 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Pupils enjoy attending this welcoming and successful school. Parents and carers greatly appreciate the outstanding care, guidance and support that help their children to have fun and to achieve well. They feel very well supported and appreciate the way the school cares for the 'whole child'. This outstanding partnership between the school and parents and carers supports learning well. Parents and carers were right when they told the inspectors: 'The warm and friendly atmosphere helps children to feel at home and to settle quickly' and 'There are fun activities and a real community feel.'

Children get off to a good start in the Nursery where they gain confidence and are keen to try new things. Once in the Reception Year, they build steadily on what they have already learnt, although they have limited opportunities to make choices. In addition, while there are many attractively prepared activities, children are not always given enough support when they are working independently to make sure their learning moves on quickly. The rate of learning picks up again in Years 1 and 2 and pupils make good progress in these year groups because their differing needs are met well. Pupils' attainment is above average by the end of Year 2, although boys' writing is slightly less well developed than their reading and mathematics. Leaders are exploring ways to make writing topics more appealing, particularly for the boys. Pupils are polite and friendly. They demonstrate the positive way they feel about school by making comments such as: 'My friends keep me safe and happy' and 'Teachers are kind and help you to learn.'

There are good procedures for self-evaluation that enable the headteacher, senior leaders and governors to know what needs to be done next to improve the school further. Swift action is taken to tackle any minor areas of weakness. This ensures that pupils achieve well and enjoy learning, and demonstrates the school's good capacity to continue improving. Senior leaders are aware that subject leaders do not always have enough opportunity to find out from their own observations how well the provision and pupils' progress are developing in the subjects they manage.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure children in the Reception Year have sufficient opportunity to make choices in their learning and are supported well as they explore their own ideas.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing by ensuring that all writing tasks motivate girls and boys to do their best.
- Help subject leaders to monitor and evaluate provision and pupils' progress themselves.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress and learn quickly because they enjoy school and participate in activities sensibly. For example, in history in Year 2, pupils enjoyed taking part in role play about the work of Florence Nightingale. Their realistic groans helped develop their understanding of surgery without anaesthetic or adequate pain relief. In a literacy lesson in Year 1, pupils enjoyed taking imaginary photographs and practising writing with their fingers along their arms before writing interesting descriptions of magic objects. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported well with visual prompts enabling them to learn to speak English quickly.

Attainment has risen over the last few years and is now above average by the end of Year 2. Attainment and progress in writing lag slightly behind that in reading and mathematics, because not all writing tasks are sufficiently motivating, especially for the boys. The school has started to tackle this issue and attainment in writing is improving. Pupils' good reading, numeracy and personal skills prepare them well for the next stage of education and later life.

Pupils tell us that they feel safe at school and that rare instances of unkind behaviour are dealt with swiftly by members of staff. As one pupil put it, 'If someone is really naughty, the headteacher sorts it out.' Above-average attendance demonstrates the pupils' keenness to learn. Pupils behave well and work together sensibly in lessons. They occasionally become inattentive when not fully engaged in an activity. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility for helping each other by being 'busy people' and are enthusiastic about raising funds for charity.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They show tolerance and respect for each other and an awareness of various faiths represented by the school community. They enjoy taking part in physical activities at playtime and through the school's sport partnerships. They mostly choose healthy options for their packed lunches and know that 'lots of sleep' is beneficial to their health and emotional well-being.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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

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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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
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 Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Enthusiastic teachers provide playful, practical activities that engage the pupils' interest and help them to enjoy learning. For example, pupils in Year 2 enjoyed pretending to help the National Aeronautics and Space Administration by carrying out speedy calculations when adding two and three digit numbers together. Teaching assistants are confident and help to provide good support for groups and individuals. Pupils are taught in classes set according to ability in English and mathematics, and this enables teachers to meet their different needs accurately. Modern technology, such as digital cameras and interactive whiteboards, is used well to support learning. Occasionally, when addressing whole classes, there is a slight drop in pace when teachers go on talking for too long.

Links between subjects are being developed well and the school is looking at ways of ensuring that there are more boy-friendly writing topics. Support for pupils with English as an additional language is strong, with plenty of visual resources used to support understanding. Effective assessment procedures are firmly in place and are used to set individual targets, although the latter are not always written in child-friendly language. The school's excellent care and support for pupils are evident in the way pupils are confident and happy at school. Parents and carers told us that the school supports the whole family, particularly when families are going through difficult times. For example, special homework clubs are set up to give pupils an extra boost as required.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

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How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and other senior leaders provide strong leadership. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision based on the rigorous monitoring of teaching and pupils' progress. They use the information collected well to embed ambition and to drive improvement. Lesson observations are used effectively to identify the next steps for improvement and to provide the necessary support and training. The school is good at promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination. For example, the school has been successful in increasing the proportion of pupils working at higher levels this year. Assessment information is being used rigorously to help prevent dips in progress and there are suitable plans to extend the responsibility of subject leaders.

Governors are knowledgeable and supportive. They are becoming increasingly challenging and are ensuring that new governors have clear guidance on their responsibilities. At the time of the inspection, the school's safeguarding arrangements were found to be good. Procedures for keeping pupils safe and making them feel safe are thorough and almost all parents and carers are confident about this aspect of the school's work, demonstrating the exceptionally strong partnership between the school and home. Leaders have good relationships with external agencies, enabling them to provide good support for pupils who are finding life difficult. The school promotes community cohesion well. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn from visitors and visits and there are clear plans to extend provision by forging stronger links with a community in 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	1
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	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

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Early Years Foundation Stage

The majority of children join the school working within the levels expected for their age. They make good progress in the Nursery and satisfactory progress in the Reception Year. Attainment is broadly average by the time children enter Year 1. Speaking and listening are supported well in the interesting and popular role-play areas. For example, children in the Nursery were enthusiastic about planting for their garden centre and the Reception children enjoyed serving each other in the outdoor caf. Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are cared for well. Exceptionally close links with parents and carers and a warm welcome enable children to settle quickly into school routines and to behave well. In the Nursery, members of staff are skilled at working alongside children as they work on activities they have chosen for themselves. In the Reception classes, the hard-working and enthusiastic teaching team is newly established and is growing in confidence. A wide range of potentially interesting activities is planned but children have too little opportunity to make choices about how and where they are going to work. In addition, members of staff are not always available to ensure that when children are working independently they plan and carry out suitably challenging work. When this happens, children's interest is not always maintained well enough and they do not work purposefully.

Leaders have improved provision for outdoor learning recently and are providing intensive training for new members of staff. Assessment arrangements are thorough and used well to track the progress of individuals, but not enough use is being made of this information to pinpoint differences in progress between classes and areas of learning.

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

There was a good response to the parents' questionnaire. Almost all parents and carers are delighted with the work of the school. They are particularly pleased with leadership and management and that their children are happy at school. They praise the caring, family atmosphere and its positive impact on pupils' achievement and enjoyment. The inspection team agrees with parents' and carers' positive views. A very few parents and carers expressed concerns over the way they are informed about their children's

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progress and how well the school deals with their suggestions and concerns. The school provides ample opportunities for parents and carers to find out how well their children are doing, although leaders recognise that the spring consultation evening for children in the Nursery class did not take place this year as planned. The school provides an open invitation to parents and carers to discuss any concerns and provides information in different languages on the school website.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lady Bankes Infant 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 111 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection.

In total, there are 344 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	91	82	19	17	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	88	79	22	20	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	64	58	46	41	0	0	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	81	73	29	26	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	81	73	27	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	77	69	32	29	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	79	71	31	28	0	0	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)	55	50	42	38	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	68	61	37	33	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	54	49	50	45	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	62	56	41	37	0	0	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	92	83	16	14	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	85	77	25	23	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



19 May 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Lady Bankes Infant School, Ruislip HA4 9SF

Thank you for being so helpful during our visit to your lovely school. We are pleased to say that your school is doing a good job.

These are the best things about your school:

- You enjoy school, learn quickly and do well, especially in reading and mathematics.
- You behave well and are polite and friendly.
- You are right when you say the teachers help us to learn'.
- Your headteacher and other leaders know what needs to be done to make the school even better.

These are the things we have asked your school to do next to make it even better:

- give those of you in Reception more help to plan and carry out your own ideas so that you learn more quickly
- always give those of you in Years 1 and 2 interesting things to write about, especially the boys, so that you always do your best work
- make sure that teachers who look after subjects check for themselves how well you are doing.

Thank you once again for talking to us about your school and showing us your work. You could help your teachers further by making sure you always do your best writing.

Yours sincerely

Alison Cartlidge

Lead inspector

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