

Minet Nursery and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	102392
Local authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	376715
Inspection dates	28–29 February 2012
Lead inspector	Jane Wotherspoon HMI

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	477
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Moules
Headteacher	Judith Lynch
Date of previous school inspection	July 2009
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Age group	3–7
Inspection date(s)	28–29 February 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Jane Wotherspoon

Her Majesty's Inspector

Teresa Davies

Additional inspector

David Webster

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 23 lessons and parts of lessons involving 18 teachers, including sessions of phonics (the links between sounds and letters). In addition, they looked at samples of pupils' work in books and displayed on the walls, and a sample of pupils from Year 1 read to inspectors. Inspectors met with senior staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including data on pupils' progress and attainment, the school's monitoring information on the quality of teaching, and records of pupils' behaviour. Inspectors analysed the 179 responses to the parental questionnaire, as well as response to the staff questionnaire.

Information about the school

The school is larger than most primary schools. It serves an area of wide ethnic, cultural and religious diversity that is reflected in the heritages of its pupils. Around half of the school's pupils come from Somali, Indian or Pakistani heritages and a number of other ethnic groups are represented in small numbers. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is high at 85%, with many joining the part-time nursery provision speaking little or no English. Pupils who join the school at various times of the year include the children of families seeking asylum in this country. The proportion of disabled pupils and those identified as having special educational needs is higher than average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is similar to other schools in the country. A high proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals.

Since the previous inspection there have been many changes in teaching staff. Six teachers joined the school at the start of this academic year, including four new to the teaching profession.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. The positive ethos and strong relationships ensure that pupils learn in a safe environment. The school provides a wide range of interesting and memorable experiences that contribute much to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Improvements to the quality of provision in the nursery since the previous inspection mean that children now make a good start to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school cannot be graded as good overall because teaching has not ensured that all pupils make consistently good progress to raise attainment above a low level at the end of Key Stage 1.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress and an increasing proportion make good progress from their low starting points. Pupils’ progress in reading is good and attainment is edging closer to average levels. Standards in mathematics are also improving. Writing is lagging behind, although the previously wide gaps in attainment are narrowing.
- Teaching is satisfactory. Changes to staffing have not helped to sustain the consistently good teaching needed, year-on-year, to secure better progress for pupils over time. Teachers plan together well but lessons sometimes lack enough pace and challenge to ensure good progress.
- Pupils’ behaviour is good around the school and in lessons. Pupils from all cultural backgrounds get on well together in this harmonious community.
- Good leadership from the headteacher and senior staff has been the driving force behind securing improvements in teaching. Rigorous monitoring of the quality of provision holds staff to account for the progress their pupils make and has led to training and support for staff to improve their practice. The progress of individual pupils is analysed effectively but data are not always analysed in depth during the year to check how well groups of pupils are progressing.

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Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing by:
 - helping staff to diagnose the weaknesses in pupils' writing
 - ensuring pupils use their phonic skills when writing
 - ensuring that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are encouraged to experience opportunities provided to develop their early writing skills.

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good by:
 - increasing pace and challenge in lessons so that pupils make good progress
 - reducing the time that teachers spend talking and giving instructions so that pupils have more time to complete tasks
 - providing training for teaching assistants to develop skills in supporting pupils
 - improving marking and feedback to pupils so that they know what they need to improve next.

- Strengthen systems for analysing pupils' progress by:
 - enhancing systems for assessing children's needs when they start school
 - analysing data in a more systematic way during the academic year to track the performance of groups of pupils.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Historically, standards have been low by the end of Year 2. However, in 2011, teachers' assessments showed that attainment was broadly average in reading. Although still low in writing and mathematics, it was not as far below the national average as in previous years. Overall these figures were the best for five years and an indication that attainment is rising and the gap is narrowing. This was especially the case for pupils who speak English as an additional language (82% of that year group), disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those eligible for free school meals, who attained standards in line with or, in the case of reading, better than these groups nationally.

This improving picture was replicated in the outcomes for those children who were assessed on leaving the Reception Year in 2011. These children also did better than in previous years, although speaking and writing were below the average figures. Other areas of learning were broadly in line with the national average and, given

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their low starting levels, this points to good progress made over this key stage. Inspection evidence shows that pupils currently in Year 1 are building well on this positive start. Pupils in Year 2 for whom provision in the early years was not as good as it is now are catching up, especially in reading. The school's focus on teaching phonics in a systematic way is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment, on their attitudes to reading and on their enjoyment and confidence in reading. They read competently with reasonable understanding, using their phonic skills to sound out unfamiliar words.

The picture of progress in writing is more mixed, although satisfactory overall. Pupils are not consistently using their phonic skills to sound out the spelling of words when they write. They are learning to write in different styles for different purposes and to use features of language such as adjectives, connectives and speech marks. Their writing is often based on first-hand experiences such as the visit of the 'animal man'. The school's data show that mathematics is improving and pupils are on track to reach attainment that is closer to average at the end of Year 2.

Observations during the inspection and the school's assessment information, although difficult to analyse, show that children currently in the Nursery and Reception classes are making good progress. They are settled and learning to socialise well with others when, for example, sharing resources. Children respond positively to the wide variety of activities on offer both indoors and out. For example, they watched with fascination and wonder as one of the eggs in the incubator hatched into a chick. Adults do not always intervene to encourage children to choose from the range of opportunities to develop early writing skills.

Parents consider that their children make good progress. Inspectors found this to be the case in nursery and reception classes although it is satisfactory in the school as a whole.

Quality of teaching

Although parents are confident that the quality of teaching is good, inspectors found that it is not consistently so. Despite some strengths it is variable in quality and satisfactory overall. Teachers from the same year group plan together so that pupils have a common experience. Strong cross-curricular links mean that activities are often exciting and stimulating. Teachers provide a range of activities, frequently based on first-hand experiences, to stimulate pupils' interest, capture their enthusiasm and widen their horizons. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the animals brought in by a visitor as part of their topic on rainforests, for example, showing the activity had effectively promoted their spiritual and moral development.

By and large, teachers plan tasks at different levels to meet pupils' different needs. The success of this in practice is more variable and is more consistent in nursery and reception classes. Teachers modify plans as a result of pupils' responses in the previous lesson and, in the best examples, make changes during a lesson to deal with misconceptions. For example, in a lesson where pupils made good progress they

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assessed for themselves how confident they felt in solving division calculations through sharing. Those that were confident moved ahead with further challenges while those less confident were taught the process in a careful step-by-step approach that helped to secure their understanding so that they could apply the method for themselves. Most teachers use strategies such as paired work and talk partners; these successfully develop cooperative skills, help check pupils' understanding, give pupils confidence to answer questions and help them to learn from each other.

The pace of learning is slow at times so not all pupils are challenged to achieve their best. When teachers talk too much and pupils sit for too long listening rather than being actively engaged in their learning, their attention begins to wander. In addition, pupils do not have enough time to complete tasks, especially writing tasks.

Pupils' written work shows that not all teachers provide clear feedback on what pupils need to improve. Teachers' marking does not always diagnose points for improvement that relate to the content and structure of writing to raise its quality. Variations in the quality of pupils' presentation and in the pride they take in their work reflect different expectations of teachers.

The quality of support from additional staff is inconsistent. While many are well trained and effective, others do not intervene quickly enough to support pupils to make progress. In nursery and reception classes too, there is some variability in the quality of interaction between support staff and children. Intervention programmes for pupils with specific learning needs are well taught by support staff. The school is selective about its use of such programmes following evaluation of their impact on the progress pupils make.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and respond particularly well in lessons where pace is good and they are actively engaged. Very occasionally low-level disruption occurs when the teacher talks for too long. They enjoy earning stickers for good work and wear them proudly. The youngest children, in nursery and reception classes, are interested in activities and learn to share and take turns. They develop positive relationships with each other that develop as they get older. Pupils are kind to each other and polite and courteous to adults, including visitors. They develop a secure understanding of right and wrong and respond positively to the messages from assembly. Displays in classes and around school help pupils to understand and celebrate their diverse cultural backgrounds.

Curriculum activities, such as 'pedestrian training', teach pupils how to keep themselves safe. Pupils understand what bullying is and are confident that it is rare. Some name-calling occurs at times but pupils have been taught to say, 'Stop it, I don't like it.' Pupils are confident that adults will help sort out problems if needed and so they feel safe and secure in school. They think that behaviour is good. Movement around school is calm and orderly, and playtimes are a positive experience with

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plenty to do. Parents, too, are confident that behaviour is good and any bullying is dealt with effectively. Pupils' attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is average overall. Figures are affected by absence for religious observance.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, supported well by the senior team, sets a very clear direction for school improvement. She is passionate about improving teaching so that pupils can make better progress and so that the school can become good. The capacity to meet that aspiration can be seen in the improvements made so far in, for example, the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in raising standards in reading. The governing body is both supportive and challenging. Pupils' safety and well-being are given high priority and statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils and tackling discrimination are met.

Self-evaluation is realistic and based on a wide range of rigorous monitoring activities. Plans for improvement are thorough and focus on the right key priorities. Monitoring of teaching quality and well-targeted training and support have had a good impact on, for example, improving the teaching of reading. However, high staff turnover has had a negative impact on the school's ability to improve teaching to a consistently good level.

A positive start has been made on a new system for assessing children when they start nursery and so improve the monitoring of their progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, the school is not yet fully confident that the data about start points are accurate and so the information they have is not easy to interpret. Attainment data from the end of each key stage are analysed thoroughly to check that various groups of pupils are achieving as well as they can. Challenging targets are set and information on the progress of individual pupils is checked termly to ensure that none are falling behind and to enable teachers to intervene quickly as required. Termly meetings to discuss the progress of each pupil are used effectively by senior leaders to hold teachers accountable for pupils' achievement and to set performance targets. However, data are not routinely analysed during the academic year to monitor the progress of different groups of pupils. The school works effectively to break down any potential barriers to pupils' learning, including working effectively to encourage parents and carers to become involved in their children's learning. Parents and carers appreciate the 'soft start' to the day that enables them to enjoy activities with their children before the school day begins. The school hosts adult courses for parents and carers to improve their literacy and numeracy skills.

The broad curriculum contributes strongly to pupils' personal development and is increasingly securing better achievement. A wide range of enrichment activities, which includes sports to boost pupils' self-esteem as well as develop physical skills, is funded by the school and involves a large number of pupils.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons. and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



1 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Minet Nursery and Infant School, Hayes UB3 3NR

Thank you for making us welcome when we inspected your school. We enjoyed meeting some of you, hearing some of you read, and seeing you enjoying all the things the teachers give you to do. We have judged your school as satisfactory.

We were pleased to hear that you feel safe in school and that everyone usually behaves well. We saw that for ourselves as we watched you all getting along with each other in the playground and in lessons. You told us that there is not much bullying and you know that you must say, 'Stop it! I don't like it', if you need to.

We were pleased to find that the Nursery has improved and to see how many different things the youngest children learn. All of you are getting on well with learning to read and your numeracy work is improving too. You need more help to improve your writing and we have asked your teachers to make sure they tell you what you need to improve when they mark your work. You told us you like learning and we have asked teachers to get you to work a bit faster in some of your lessons.

We have asked your headteacher, the other staff and the governors to improve the way that they check how well you are doing. The inspectors are sure that your school can keep getting better. You can help by making sure you come to school every day, if you can.

We wish you all the best in the future.
Yours sincerely

Jane Wotherspoon
Her Majesty's Inspector

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