

Edgware Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101276
Local Authority	Barnet
Inspection number	354973
Inspection dates	20–21 October 2010
Reporting inspector	David Townsend

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	315
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Kristine Cronhelm
Headteacher	Mr A May
Date of previous school inspection	10 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. They observed 13 teachers in 18 lessons and carried out a review of work in pupils' books. Meetings were held with governors, groups of pupils and staff. Different aspects of the school's work were observed and documentation scrutinised, including that relating to safeguarding practices, the school's self-evaluation and development planning. Questionnaires from 87 parents and carers, 113 pupils and 17 staff were also analysed.

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

- how well the school supports pupils who speak English as an additional language, especially those who join or leave the school partway through their junior education
- the quality of the guidance given to pupils, through marking and individual targets, in order to help them know what they need to do to improve their work
- how effective leadership and management at all levels are in improving teaching and addressing weaknesses in pupils' learning.

Information about the school

This large junior school serves an ethnically diverse community. The pupils come from a range of backgrounds and heritages, including Asian, British and African. A significant proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language and 43 languages are spoken in the school. Around a fifth of pupils, especially those from families of refugees, join and leave the school partway through their junior school education. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average, and their needs relate to social, emotional, communication and moderate learning difficulties. There have been a number of staff changes in the last two years. To assist the school in managing this transition, which has involved reforming the wider leadership team, the local authority has provided support from a local executive headteacher.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to improving pupils' attainment and progress.

This school's overall effectiveness is inadequate because there is too much underachievement within year groups and attainment remains below national averages, particularly in writing and in mathematics. The school is aware of the situation, arising from weaker teaching in the past. Since July 2009, concerted and effective action has been taken to strengthen and refocus the leadership team. During this transition period, the local authority continues to give good support to the school. The headteacher and senior leaders have focused strongly on improving teaching, sharpening the accuracy of assessments and tracking pupils' progress through the school. This strong focus has had an impact in securing better classroom practice, improving pupils' progress and helping raise levels of attainment, but the past underachievement in key skills means that pupils are not yet adequately prepared for the next stage in their education or later-life. ♦

Teaching is satisfactory overall. Some good lessons were seen, progress rates are generally better now and gender differences in attainment have narrowed, but there is not yet enough good teaching to ensure that pupils can catch up lost ground in their learning in all classes. In particular, the many pupils who speak English as an additional language do not do as well as similar pupils in other schools. Despite good small-group support from bilingual assistants, some lessons are still too teacher-led and the emphasis placed on developing pupils' oracy and comprehension skills remains too variable to ensure that pupils new to learning English can make sufficiently rapid progress in learning the language. In the weaker lessons, expectations are not high enough and pupils are not stimulated to engage in their learning by a varied range of activities that are planned at just the right level for their differing abilities. In such cases, pupils' ongoing learning is regularly checked and advice on how they might improve their work is given but this is not always followed up to ensure that they understand and heed the guidance given.

Parents and carers speak highly of the good levels of care, guidance and support their children receive at the school. The school is particularly successful in supporting pupils with complex emotional and social needs. Thorough systems to increase attendance among pupils from more families whose circumstances have made them vulnerable have secured marked improvements in attendance this year, but some pupils are still absent too often and do not always arrive in lessons ready for work.

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The school has continued to make good provision for pupils' personal development, as reflected in a range of positive outcomes, including their good behaviour, good contribution to life in school and locally, and their excellent appreciation of the benefits of healthy living. Their spiritual and moral development is good, and the knowledge and understanding pupils have of cultural and social diversity is a particular strength. The curriculum is enriched by a range of special activities and well-attended clubs such as those for swimming, street dance, netball, musical theatre and cheerleading. A renewed accent on addressing the deficit in some pupils' basic skills is reflected in the curriculum for literacy and numeracy, but there is insufficient use of technology to support learning.

Monitoring by leaders and the governing body is much improved and now rigorously provides a clear picture of where strengths and weaknesses lie. The many improvements already made, combined with improved self-evaluation practices, mean that the school is suitably poised for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in reading, writing and mathematics for all groups of pupils by ensuring that challenging lesson activities consistently encourage all ability groups to aim higher in their work and work more independently.
- By July 2011, raise the quality of teaching and learning so that the great majority is at least good by:
 - using analysis of monitoring data to identify and spread best practice in supporting pupils at the early stages of learning English
 - making sure teachers always check pupils have been able to follow the advice given to them on how to improve their work.
- Establish good workplace skills by:
 - building on the current systems to promote good attendance and punctuality
 - establishing the effective use of information and communication technology for teaching and learning in all classes.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

The levels of attainment seen in lessons and pupils' books confirm that many pupils are not doing as well as they should. Variation in rates of progress remain across classes and year groups, and attainment is still below average. In 2009, lower- and middle-ability girls made progress that was too slow, and last year many less-able boys did so. This is because expectations of what they might achieve were too low and basic skills were not taught systematically. Some pupils still lack confidence in lessons. They make errors due to poor presentation and weaker basic skills in number calculations, spelling and grammar. The improvements made last year have been sustained and an increasing proportion of pupils are now making up lost ground more quickly. Adaptations to teaching have helped raise levels of enthusiasm and interest in learning. Pupils who join the school partway through their junior school education are closely supported and make satisfactory progress, as do those with more complex special educational needs. However, despite the good extra support offered, some pupils with moderate learning difficulties are still underachieving. The large group of pupils who speak English as an additional language

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are not attaining as well as they should be because there has not always been sufficient emphasis placed on helping them to articulate their own ideas and discuss these with their peers.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is generally good and effective support is given to pupils who need extra help in managing their behaviour. The pupils contribute well to life in school and locally. They regularly raise funds for good causes, through links with local businesses. They readily take on responsibilities and have a voice in decision-making in school, telling inspectors they wish to extend the scope of this further. The celebration of cultural diversity has a high profile through visits from community and faith leaders, curricular events and displays, and pupils show a deeper appreciation of their own and others' heritages and beliefs. There are high rates of participation in physical activities such as the Year 6 fitness programme and many after-school sports clubs. From a young age, pupils show a finely-tuned appreciation of relevant health risks and the importance of positive action to secure their well-being.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

In most lessons, learning objectives are clear, teaching assistants give effective support to small groups and the classroom atmosphere is conducive to learning. The more effective lessons seen are characterised by a brisk pace and high expectations. For example, in one Year 4 science lesson, questioning was used carefully to challenge pupils of all abilities to

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extend their understanding about the impact of forces in everyday life. Teachers set relevant and inspiring tasks and use a range of strategies and multi-sensory resources to engage all pupils, and especially those at earlier stages of learning English, in active learning and speaking and listening in groups. Where teaching is less effective, there is still too imprecise a match between the work set and the differing abilities and needs of pupils. In these lessons, steady gains in learning are made but they are not enough to ensure that pupils catch up on lost ground.

Until last year, assessments of pupils' work were not always robust and this led to inaccurate target setting. With support from the local authority, the school has now established reliable systems for assessing, setting targets and tracking pupils' attainment and progress over time. Teachers are conscientious in their marking and typically provide written guidance on how pupils might improve their work, but this is not always followed up to check that the pupil has acted on the advice. The opportunity for pupils to evaluate their own work and that of their peers against agreed criteria for good learning is apparent in some lessons, but not all.

Links between subject areas are clearly established through thematic approaches and special focus weeks, for example about the Second World War or money management. There is a concerted emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills through regular teaching of phonics for reading and spelling and developing pupils' sentence construction skills in writing, and in number awareness. It is too soon to see their full impact on achievement. The match of the curriculum to pupils' needs and interests is improving but reflects the variability of teaching. Not enough use is made of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning, especially for pupils at the early stages of learning English.

Arrangements for pupils' care and welfare are an important strength of the school, especially as the school caters for a high proportion of potentially vulnerable pupils. The school works effectively with a range of external agencies to support its families. Parents and carers unanimously agree that their children are safe and well looked after and that the school goes 'the extra mile' to help overcome the significant barriers to learning that exist for some pupils, especially those with complex needs, including emotional and behavioural difficulties. Links with the nearby infant school and academy are good. Induction into the school into Year 3 and for those pupils who join late are well managed, resulting in better continuity of learning for pupils this year. New systems to promote good attendance and reduce unnecessary absence have had a notable impact in raising attendance this year.

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

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How effective are leadership and management?

Parents and carers, pupils and staff are united behind the new leadership team in driving improvement. The school took determined action, with close support from the local authority, to address the shortfall in academic results in 2009. This has met with particular success in the way the profile of teaching has improved markedly, due to the effective support given to individual teachers in developing their practice. Governance has improved. The governing body know the school's strengths and weaknesses well and offer robust challenge as well as support to its leaders.

There is a strong commitment to inclusion. In many respects, equal opportunities are promoted well, especially in relation to vulnerable pupils and the personal development of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, there remains underachievement in lessons where teaching is not focused enough on ensuring pupils of all abilities make the progress they are capable of. Arrangements for pupils' safeguarding meet government requirements, as do systems put in place for checking on pupils' safety and for dealing with child protection concerns.

The school engages effectively with parents and carers, particularly those who are harder to reach. Its extensive partnerships with neighbouring and international schools, local authority agencies and community groups do much to enrich the curriculum for pupils, support the more vulnerable and successfully promote community cohesion.

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	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	3
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	4

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are positive about most aspects of school, particularly about how well the school keeps children safe and helps them develop healthy lifestyles and to develop as well-rounded young people. Several noted the improvements that they have seen this

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year, although some concerns were voiced about whether pupils were making sufficient progress and how well they behaved. Inspectors looked carefully at pupils' progress during this inspection and judged it to be inadequate, but judged behaviour to be good both in lessons and around the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Edgware Junior 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 87 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 315 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	61	33	38	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	49	56	35	40	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	38	44	46	53	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	38	44	51	7	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	39	45	45	52	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	38	49	56	5	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	43	46	53	3	3	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)	30	34	52	60	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	32	50	57	4	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	32	44	51	10	11	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	36	45	52	4	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	31	36	47	54	4	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	48	43	49	2	2	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 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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 pupils' 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.



22 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Edgware Junior School, Edgware HA8 9AB

Thank you for being so welcoming to us when we came to visit the school. We could see that Edgware Junior School has improved a lot over the last year. However, it still has further to go to ensure that you are all making as much progress as you should be. Your school has therefore been given a 'notice to improve', and an inspector will visit the school again to see how well things are improving.

The school needs to improve how well you achieve in writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6, as too many of you are still not doing as well as you should in readiness for the move to Year 7. We have also asked the school to check that the work you are set is not too easy or too hard, and that computers and other interactive resources are used more often in class to help you learn. We think you should have lots of opportunities to discuss your ideas, work with partners and in groups, and develop your own thinking. There is a role you can play too. We would like you to check carefully that you understand the advice you have been given on how to improve your work. This means listening carefully and always taking care to read your teachers' comments and then trying hard to follow their advice.

Your behaviour in class, around school and in assembly was a credit to you all. It was also very pleasing to find out how well you understand the importance of living healthy lives and about living together and respecting each other. There really is a strong community spirit at Edgware Junior School. It was good to see how much attendance has improved, although some of you are still missing too much school. Staff take good care of you, especially when you need extra help, so that you feel safe and secure at school.

Thank you again for being so helpful on our visit and our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Townsend

Her Majesty's Inspector

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