

Hotham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101013
Local Authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	335641
Inspection dates	11–12 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Barbara Atcheson

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	330
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Thomson
Headteacher	Pam Young
Date of previous school inspection	18 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons taught by 11 teachers. They also held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at school policies, including those relating to safeguarding, the governing body minutes, planning documents, pupils' work and questionnaires returned from pupils, staff and 105 parents and carers.

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

- Pupils' rates of progress and attainment in mathematics in Years 3 ♦6
- Pupils' level of achievement in reading in Years 1 and 2.
- The school's strategies and success in improving attendance.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average school. Just over one third of the pupils are White British. The remainder are from a wide variety of minority ethnic groups. Just over two fifths of the pupils are learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is just above average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is just below average. Their needs mainly relate to speech, language and communication difficulties, emotional and social difficulties. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage into a Nursery and two Reception classes. Currently, there are major building improvement works taking place on the school site.

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

This is a good school. Pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching and the school's excellent partnerships in promoting learning and well-being. Parents and carers appreciate the outstanding standard of care, guidance and support their children receive and have overwhelmingly positive views about what the school does for their children. The views of one parent are typical of many: 'Great school with fantastic teaching and care for the children! My child feels proud to be a part of it. ' The school's excellent promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident in the diverse, but cohesive, community which exists and which provides a warm, welcoming and stimulating environment. Pupils' behaviour is good because they feel safe, secure and ready to learn. They have a very clear understanding of what they need to do to live a healthy lifestyle, and take their responsibilities seriously. They play a very enthusiastic part in their school life and the community, particularly through their work on the school council and in the ecogroup. They enjoy greeting each other and responding to simple commands in French as the school takes its first steps towards becoming a bilingual school.

The headteacher's inspirational leadership enthuses others to have high aspirations for themselves and their pupils. The school's commitment to secure equal opportunities and tackle discrimination is outstanding. The staff and senior leaders share the headteacher's passion for improvement and are effectively supported by the governing body. Their concerted action to maintain high standards, based on the school's clear and accurate review of its performance, demonstrates the school's good capacity to sustain improvement. Morale is high as the school prepares to take advantage of the improved opportunities the new building will afford.

Children get off to a flying start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress from the expected levels of attainment on entry. This good progress continues throughout the school. The attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 is significantly above average in English. Attainment in mathematics is average at the end of Year 6. However, mathematics has been significantly above average at the end of Year 2 for the last two years. This is because of improvements in teaching which give pupils a more secure base for their learning journey through the school. The school recognises that sometimes, pupils do not have sufficient practical experience in mathematics and that assessment is not always used to reshape tasks to pupils' needs during lessons. Rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning shows that at times teachers' subject knowledge is inconsistent and that pupils do not always get sufficient opportunity to apply their mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding in other subjects.

Levels of attendance are improving as the school's procedures are beginning to work. However, there is a small minority of parents and carers who take unauthorised holidays.

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Consequently, absence from school remains a barrier to learning for a small minority of pupils.

The governing body makes sure that it is well informed and it challenges and supports where and when necessary. Procedures for safeguarding are good and ensure that all pupils feel safe and that their emotional and social needs are met. The school's strong contribution to promoting community cohesion has ensured that pupils learn from each other within the rich diversity of the school population.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2011, sustain rates of progress made in mathematics by ensuring that:
 - teachers' subject knowledge is consistently good
 - the proportion of practical experience within lessons is increased
 - pupils have the opportunity to apply the knowledge, skills and understanding that they have gained in mathematics, in other subjects
 - assessment is used effectively to reshape tasks during lessons.
- Work with parents and carers to improve pupils' rates of attendance by July 2011.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

A key factor in the success of all pupils is their obvious enjoyment of learning, particularly where they play an active role. Consequently, all pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability, make good progress and achieve well. This was seen very clearly when pupils in Year 4 used money to practise dividing two-digit numbers. The teacher ensured that pupils understood each small step, using their misconceptions well to clarify and make sure that learning was secure. As a result, pupils were not only confident to work on their own but clearly very excited with their success in applying new knowledge and understanding. However, there are occasions when teachers miss opportunities to pick up pupils' misunderstandings and sticking points, and progress slows. Mathematics is currently the weaker subject at the end of Year 6, because despite the school's good intervention strategies, some learning gaps remain from a time when teaching in mathematics in Years 1 to 2 was not as thorough as it is now. Pupils make good progress by the end of Year 2 and reach levels that are average in reading and significantly above average in mathematics and in writing.

High quality support ensures that pupils learning to speak English as an additional language make good progress to reach above average levels at the end of Year 6.

Teaching assistants are skilled in structuring the small steps that help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to build on what they have learnt before.

Intervention groups are significant in helping pupils in Years 3 to 6 to close gaps in their knowledge and understanding because learning is well tailored to pupils' individual needs. In one group, some Year 6 pupils made good progress because the teacher followed their learning closely. They were engrossed in their work, gaining in confidence in the way they used their tables and their knowledge of place value, and responding positively to the challenges placed before them.

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The school takes steps to encourage regular attendance and most pupils come to school regularly. However, a few families take unauthorised holidays which depress the school's levels of attendance. Pupils work and play harmoniously, and behaviour is good because of the high levels of care and guidance. Pupils say there is very little bullying and know that there will always be someone who will listen to them. Pupils are knowledgeable about how to stay safe and have an excellent understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles. They enjoy a healthy choice at lunchtime and bring 'birthday fruit' instead of sweets to share with friends. All pupils are proud to be part of Hotham, and take their responsibilities as members of the school council and the eco group very seriously. Members of the school council are proud of the work they have done towards improving school lunches and making decisions about playground development. Pupils' attitudes, deep respect and keen understanding shown in the Remembrance Day service reflect the school's high-level promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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
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	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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?

Much teaching is lively, engaging, focused and purposeful. Teachers know their pupils well, relationships are good and the pace of learning is brisk. They plan activities that maintain pupils' interest and motivation. Teachers are skilled at communicating their passion for learning. For example, in a Year 3 information and communication technology lesson, pupils enjoyed learning how to use a program to create newspaper headlines.

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They were very keen to begin work and were not distracted by the loud noise of the building work next door, and showed high levels of application. Good cross-curricular links with literacy helped them to reach above average levels as they produced their reports on the story of Rama and Sita. However, some teachers are not as skilled as others at picking up pupils' misconceptions and using them effectively to ensure that learning is secure.

The school's new topic approach is well planned across all subject areas and provides pupils with exciting and meaningful learning experiences. Plans for the French bilingual project have been carefully drawn up and pupils are already using French as part of their everyday life. Pupils enjoy the wide variety of clubs and enrichment activities that take place and as a result there is a high take-up of all that is on offer. Teachers know the pupils and their families. This helps support learning. Pupils feel happy and secure because they know that there is a high level of care, guidance and support and that there is always someone there to listen, help or advise. Vulnerable pupils blossom because they are in such a nurturing environment and receive excellent support which is tailored sensitively to their needs. The school works very positively with a wide range of partnerships, such as those which promote the safety and health of all pupils, particularly those facing challenging circumstances. This work is vital in helping individual pupils overcome any barriers to learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is a driving force in bringing about improvement since the last inspection and ensuring that plans are implemented effectively. Attainment is now significantly above average in English by the end of Year 6. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach levels of attainment which are significantly above average in mathematics and writing. Information and communication technology resources have improved so that they now play a vital role in pupils' cross-curricular activities.

Senior leaders share the headteacher's enthusiasm, and staff are motivated to focus on priorities and improve the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, the school has made significant strides towards bringing about more good teaching and narrowing the gap between groups of pupils. For example, the recent work to raise attainment in mathematics for those pupils eligible for free school meals enabled most of those pupils to reach Level 4 while half reached the higher Level 5. The outstanding work done with vulnerable pupils and their families ensures that they benefit from all that the school has to offer. These examples illustrate the school's outstanding commitment to secure equal opportunities and tackle discrimination. All teachers are held to account through pupils'

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progress meetings where the school's accurate tracking system highlights any underperformance. However, the school is not complacent and recognises that progress and attainment in mathematics is not yet good enough throughout the school

The governing body plays an active and effective role in monitoring the work of the school. As a result, it has a comprehensive picture of how well the school is doing and the impact of the governing body's decisions. Procedures for safeguarding are good. Checks on the suitability of adults to work with children are thorough and child protection arrangements are secure and updated regularly. The school's commitment to promote community cohesion is good and consequently the school is a cohesive community where pupils play and work happily, and learn about and respect the beliefs of others. Although much is in place, the school realises that as yet, not enough has been done to help pupils gain first-hand experience of what life is like for others in different parts of the United Kingdom.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress. Many exceed the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. Children settle quickly to the welcoming atmosphere because their personal development is good, relationships are strong and children are well cared for. Staff foster positive attitudes to learning and, as a result, children behave well, are confident and sustain their concentration. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes enjoy the exciting opportunities that exist for exploration and discovery both in and out of doors. They sustain concentration because they are vitally interested in everything they do. For example, in an activity which promoted independence and curiosity, Nursery children eagerly set off round the classroom to identify and name different shapes. Adults interact well with children's play, encouraging them and providing good models for their language.

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Reception children enjoy challenging and well-presented activities, learning to differentiate a square from a rhombus, which is 'a sleepy square'. A wide variety of exciting activities motivate the children outdoors. Despite the school's best efforts while building work takes place, children do not currently have enough outdoor space to extend their physical and outdoor play skills. Children relish opportunities to balance carefully on stepping stones or to practise climbing safely. One child took great care to climb as high as she could and proclaim with great delight: 'I can see the trees I'm so high!' Leaders and managers are effectively focused on helping children to make good progress, promoting their welfare and ensuring that partnerships with parents and carers and safeguarding procedures are good.

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 number of responses to the questionnaire was high and the overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were positive about all aspects of school life. Evidence from the inspection supports parents' and carers' views that children enjoy school, and that care for their health and safety is good. Evidence from the inspection also supports their views that teaching is good and that the school is led and managed effectively. Evidence also shows that the school successfully listens to, and works with and for, parents and carers and that, as a result, pupils benefit from this effective partnership. Inspection evidence does not endorse the views of a small number of parents and carers that children do not make enough progress or that the school fails to keep them informed about their children's progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

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

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

The inspection team received 105 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 330 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	70	67	32	30	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	68	65	34	32	1	1	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	53	50	47	45	3	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	51	49	47	45	4	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	62	59	39	37	1	1	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	54	51	46	44	4	4	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	64	61	37	35	3	3	1	1
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)	49	47	45	43	0	0	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	52	50	46	44	3	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	47	45	51	49	1	1	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	38	56	53	2	2	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	63	60	37	35	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	65	62	37	35	1	1	1	1

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.



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13 November 2010

Dear Pupils ◆

Inspection of Hotham Primary School and Nursery, Putney, SW15 1PN

Thank you for being so friendly when we came to your school. We enjoyed visiting your lessons and talking to you. You really helped us with our work. Your school gives you a good standard of education and there are a lot of things your school does well.

You told us that you enjoy school and that you feel safe. We found that everybody in school looks after you very well, especially those of you who have difficulties from time to time. We were impressed with your understanding and knowledge of how to keep fit and your healthy lifestyles. We could see that you behave very well, get on well with each other and help the school to run smoothly.

Your headteacher and other staff know that there is still work to be done to make the school even better. We have asked the school to do two things.

- It should help you to do even better in mathematics by making sure that you get plenty of opportunity to do your mathematics in a practical way and through different subjects. It should make sure that all teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of mathematics. It should also make sure that if you don't understand your work, teachers alter the tasks so that you do understand and are able to complete your work quickly and successfully.
- It needs to make sure that you do not take holidays during school time and that all of you come to school every day.

We hope that all of you will continue to enjoy coming to school and try your hardest so that you are successful in the future.

Yours sincerely

Barbara Atcheson

Lead inspector

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