

Heathfield Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102891
Local Authority	Richmond upon Thames
Inspection number	335985
Inspection dates	6–7 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Janet Sinclair

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	393
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms J Dom
Headteacher	Becky Underwood
Date of previous school inspection	27 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons and several part-lessons, observing 16 teachers, and several teaching assistants. The inspectors also held meetings with governors, senior staff and groups of pupils. They scrutinised samples of pupils' work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including policies, the school development plan and records of pupils' progress. They considered the 49 responses from questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

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

- The attainment and rates of progress for all groups of pupils, but particularly for girls with lower attainment, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and different ethnic groups.
- The extent of pupils' involvement in their own learning.
- The rigour of leaders at all levels in embedding new initiatives and the resulting impact on raising standards.
- The current level of attendance and the school's strategies to secure improvement.

Information about the school

Heathfield is much larger than the average-sized infant school. About a quarter of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, some of whom are at an early stage of learning English. There is a nursery catering for 104 children. Children can join the nursery any time in the academic year in which they reach four years-of-age. They attend for up to three terms, after which they move to the Reception Year. Over two thirds of the children move into the Reception classes within the school. Children attend the nursery either in the morning or the afternoon. There are four classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage. An above-average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These are mainly moderate learning and behaviour difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than is usual. The school has a speech and language unit catering for up to 10 pupils attached to it. Currently, six pupils attend the unit. The school has Healthy Schools status. The school is currently without a substantive deputy headteacher, the Early Years Foundation Stage Leader is on sabbatical and there is a member of staff on maternity leave.

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

Heathfield is a good school. It is led by a caring and reflective headteacher who has created an effective climate for learning that permeates the school. The staff work very well as a team, relationships are good and this, coupled with a very nurturing and supportive ethos, ensures that the pupils learn and develop well. Parents and carers are very supportive and are clearly welcomed into the school; this was clear from the Nursery children's Christmas performance, which most attended and thoroughly enjoyed.

The children start in the Nursery with skills levels and abilities that are mainly well below those expected for their age. Due to excellent care, positive relationships and a stimulating learning environment, both in the Nursery and Reception classes, they make good progress across all areas of learning. By the time they start in Year 1, many are working at the expected level, although very few exceed them. Good progress continues in Key Stage 1 so that, by the end of Year 2, standards are mainly above average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, there are fluctuations in attainment year on year as the composition of the year groups changes. The pupils' effective learning is due to good teaching and careful tracking, which ensures that any pupils falling behind are identified quickly and given support to help them catch up. The teachers organise and manage lessons well and make good use of resources to enliven the lessons. However, the expectations of the pupils are not always high enough as occasionally the teachers do not match work well enough to the pupils' abilities, particularly for group tasks. The pupils enjoy the lessons, especially the opportunities to discuss their ideas with their 'talk partners' in order to reach decisions and develop their ideas. In mathematics lessons, the pupils have few opportunities to apply the skills they learn to real-life situations. The teachers assess the pupils' progress regularly and involve them fully in judging how well they are doing in lessons, through the use of a 'traffic light' system. The pupils spoken to were clear that showing a red traffic light meant they would get extra help from the teacher.

A well-planned curriculum and good enrichment through, for example, a science week focusing on 'changing materials', ensure that the pupils enjoy all that is on offer. This is evident in the lovely displays around the school and the pupils' responses to their work. The pupils enjoy the many clubs that are on offer thoroughly, particularly the choir, football and the gardening club. Most pupils attend school regularly. The school is working hard and with increasing success to improve the attendance of a small group of pupils who are persistently absent.

Pupils experiencing difficulties, those at an early stage of learning English and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities get considerable support enabling them to make good progress. The headteacher, staff and governing body are fully committed to raising attainment and accelerating progress further. Self-evaluation is accurate and the

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school monitors the progress and success of initiatives carefully. The school has maintained its good provision since the last inspection, in spite of disruption at senior staff level. On the evidence of the progress made so far, the school's capacity to improve further is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise all teaching in Key Stage 1 to the level of the best by raising the expectations of what pupils can achieve through a better match of work to their capabilities.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to apply the skills they learn in mathematics to real-life situations.
- Improve the attendance of the small number of persistent absentees through engaging further with their parents and carers.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Irrespective of ability, gender and ethnicity, all pupils achieve well, because the school monitors their progress carefully and addresses any issues that arise quickly. The pupils make good progress in their writing and reading skills as a result of the positive actions taken to promote speaking and listening skills and knowledge of sounds and letters. This was seen clearly in a Year 1 lesson when the pupils made good use of their knowledge of sounds to write simple sentences about the story of Anansi. The pupils enjoy opportunities to experiment and come to conclusions, such as in a science lesson when they were exploring how ice melts. They discussed their ideas with the teacher and this helped them to a greater understanding of what causes change. Occasionally, their progress is hampered when they spend time colouring in pictures of objects, as was seen in a literacy lesson, or when group work for mathematics or history is not sufficiently challenging to develop their subject-specific skills. The pupils enjoy their work and have good attitudes to learning. They enjoy working as 'talk partners' particularly, for example when trying to find words with the 'ou' sound in them and they showed delight when they came up with words such as 'ouch' and 'cloud'. Pupils at an early stage of learning English make good progress because their specific needs are identified and addressed well through small group work by an advisory teacher. ♦

The pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, showing consideration for others and respect for their environment. They say they feel safe in school and sure of adult support should they need it. They are pleased with their contribution to the school community, particularly as members of the school council who look after younger pupils and helped to secure the safe surface for the playground. The pupils have a good understanding of the need for a healthy lifestyle, particularly the importance of fruit, vegetables and exercise. They know also that too many sweets are not good for their teeth. Most pupils attend school regularly and the school has taken robust action to improve attendance, particularly the number of persistent absentees. The school is aware that there is a need to engage further with such pupils' parents and carers.

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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	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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
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?

The teachers use a range of resources to support learning. They make particularly good use of the whiteboards to enhance learning, for example when illustrating a story. The support staff are deployed effectively to work with small groups. This enables good support for the daily sessions about linking sounds and letters. The support staff give good support also in whole-class sessions to ensure that all pupils take part and also make notes of their responses. The teachers make good use of praise and this, coupled with warm, supportive relationships, means that the pupils are keen and motivated to learn. Occasionally, the teachers' good use of 'talk partners' helps the pupils to think through their answers in a supportive way. Although the teachers assess the pupils' learning carefully, occasionally they do not use this information to ensure that work is well matched to the pupils' capabilities and this slows progress. The teachers ensure that the pupils develop their understanding through clear explanations and opportunities to consolidate their learning. However, they do not give them enough opportunities to use their mathematical skills to solve problems related to everyday mathematical situations.

The school tracks the pupils' progress carefully and ensures that those who are not achieving well enough get additional support. A good curriculum with effective cross-curricular links, particularly in the use of literacy, ensures enjoyment and good progress in developing skills and knowledge. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support subjects. For example, the pupils used ICT well to research their work on

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Florence Nightingale and take photographs of her 'visit', with the teacher taking the role. The school gives good support to the pupils and their families who need it most. This support is enhanced by the effective links that exist with outside agencies. The speech and language unit supports its pupils effectively through a well-managed provision that is clearly targeted at their specific needs. ♦

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has a clear sense of direction and is strongly motivated to provide the best education for the pupils. She is well supported in this endeavour by the interim deputy headteacher and senior staff. Accurate self-evaluation means that the school has a clear idea of its strengths and weaknesses and takes effective actions that are set out in the school improvement plan. The teaching is monitored carefully by the headteacher and senior staff, and clear targets are set for improvement. Regular analysis of data by the senior staff and individual class teachers ensures that those not making enough progress are identified so that the school can take appropriate action to ensure they catch up. The analysis is also used to group pupils by ability in literacy and numeracy. This, together with the work done to improve attendance, demonstrates the school's good commitment to providing equality of opportunity.

There are good links with parents and carers and others. Parents' and carers' views are sought regularly and they are kept well informed. Effective partnerships, such as 'Sport for Life', and sponsorships are used well to develop an interest in sport, healthy eating and music. The school makes a strong contribution to its local community through a range of effective links. It functions also very effectively as a cohesive community. However, it recognises the need to develop links with communities further afield. Systems for safeguarding pupils are robust and all policies and procedures are securely in place. The governing body is supportive and challenges the school well. It works effectively through committees to ensure that all statutory requirements are met, particularly in ensuring that pupils are safe. It evaluates the success of the school's priorities through involvement in monitoring the implementation of the school improvement plan and has been fully involved in ensuring that the pupils have good quality school meals. ♦

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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	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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage due to provision that is well matched to their needs. The environment is lively and stimulating and provides effective learning opportunities both indoors and out. The children enjoy themselves thoroughly and develop well across the areas of learning. They show a willingness to keep themselves safe through their good behaviour. They learn to share and cooperate with each other and this ensures that they develop their personal skills very well. It reflects also the very good level of attention that the staff give to their well-being. The staff make very good use of ongoing observations of the children's learning to plan well-focused tasks that are carefully matched to their learning needs. Occasionally, there is not enough emphasis on the children's independence in choosing their tasks. The staff ensure that all interactions are focused well on developing the children's language skills; for example, when teaching about weighing, the staff emphasise language such as 'heavier' and 'lighter'. Also, the staff bring excitement and wonder into the children's learning; for example, they ensure that the children receive a letter from Father Christmas and he leaves his muddy footprints all over the floor! The very good teamwork amongst the staff ensures a high level of consistency across the provision.

Leadership and management are good. The leaders have ensured that the staff work together well as a team to provide continuity in the children's learning within a stimulating and nurturing environment. There are good relationships with parents and carers who are fully involved in their children's learning through the sharing of their children's successes at home.

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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 parental questionnaire was quite low and so reflects the views of only a minority of parents and carers. However, the questionnaires show that most parents and carers who responded are happy with the school and what it provides. They consider that their children enjoy all that the school has to offer and are safe and well looked after, and the inspection evidence support this. The main concern expressed was about the way that the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. The inspectors found no evidence of unacceptable behaviour during the inspection and the school has a consistent approach to behaviour management. ♦

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Heathfield 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 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 393 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	82	9	18	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	38	78	11	22	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	45	24	49	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	53	20	41	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	61	18	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	55	20	41	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	51	23	47	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)	17	35	26	53	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	45	26	53	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	39	19	39	5	10	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	41	24	49	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	23	47	21	43	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	63	18	37	0	0	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.



8 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Heathfield Infant School, Twickenham TW2 8EN

This letter is to tell you how much we enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for helping us with the inspection. We were pleased to learn that you enjoy school, especially being school councillors and helping others.

We judged that your school is a good school, where all the staff work hard to help you to learn and achieve well and they take good care of you. Here are some other things we liked particularly about your school.

- You make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- You are well behaved, friendly and keen to learn.
- You enjoy writing and working together on tasks.
- You feel safe in school and know you will be well looked after.

These are the things we have asked your school to do to make it even better. We would like the school to:

- help you to make better progress by making sure work is always matched well to your needs
- give you more opportunities to use the skills you learn in mathematics in tackling real-life problems
- make sure that all of you come to school regularly so that you do not fall behind in your work.

You can help by making sure you get to school on time and do not stay at home unless you are unwell. We enjoyed talking to you and wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Janet Sinclair

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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