

# Alexandra Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102468
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hounslow
<b>Inspection number</b>	376726
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 October 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Chris Grove

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	356
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Priti Mehta
<b>Headteacher</b>	Heather Sullivan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11–12 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	Denbigh Road Hounslow TW3 4DU
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 20 lessons taught by 13 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, with members of the governing body and with staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at analyses of pupils' attainment and progress, the school's development planning and documents relating to monitoring, safeguarding and the curriculum. Inspectors analysed inspection questionnaires returned by 190 parents and carers, as well as those completed by 23 members of staff and 168 pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How high is current attainment, and how good is the current progress, of the different pupil groups.
- The extent to which teaching provides good levels of challenge for the different pupil groups, and the extent to which the use of assessment supports their learning and progress.
- How well the school's self-evaluation arrangements ensure the quality of the curriculum and of teaching and learning.
- How well the school promotes the strands of community cohesion, especially at the national and international levels.

## Information about the school

Alexandra Junior is larger than the average primary school. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, of which the largest groups are of Asian or Asian British – Indian or Pakistani heritage. For the very large majority of pupils, English is an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities, principally behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, is above average. Over the last 18 months, the school has experienced a much higher than usual turnover of members of the teaching staff, including senior and middle leaders. Among the wide range of national accreditations which the school has gained are the ICT Mark, and the International Schools (Intermediate) and the Leading Parent Partnership awards.

There is a breakfast club which is not managed by the governing body, and which was not included in this inspection.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. It also has good and some outstanding features. The very positive ethos ensures that pupils enjoy school, as almost all parents and carers who took part in the survey agreed. One family characterised this well in recording their daughter's satisfaction that 'the teachers appreciate good work, and they give chances to everyone, and that is why she is very happy about the school'. The warm atmosphere is sustained by the high morale of the teaching and support staff. All those members of staff who returned a questionnaire agreed that they are proud of the school, and that their contributions are valued. One summarised this well in writing, 'The children have an amazing chance to work in a safe and secure environment.'

The school's inclusive ethos leads to good care and support for pupils, with the result that their personal development is good. Nearly all the pupils who participated in the survey think that the adults care about them. As a consequence, they feel entirely safe, are very attentive in lessons and behave well. Positive action by the leadership has sustained attendance, which remains high. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is currently broadly average, though it has been higher in previous years, and their progress is satisfactory.

Although some teaching is good, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. This is because the tasks that teachers set are not consistently well matched to pupils' previous attainment so as to ensure that there is well-judged challenge for all groups. Furthermore, the pace of learning does not always fully maintain pupils' motivation, although their behaviour remains good. Teachers make satisfactory use of assessment. Work is regularly marked and good work is praised, but the marking of pupils' writing and of their mathematical tasks does not consistently offer advice about how pupils could improve their work. In addition, the school's target-setting arrangements do not direct pupils sufficiently to the next steps in their learning. The curriculum is satisfactory and has good features.

The headteacher has developed and sustained a confident vision for the improvement of the school. This is reflected in the responses to the staff survey where all respondents strongly agreed that they know what the school is trying to achieve. Arrangements to safeguard pupils are exemplary because of the systematic and thorough approach that has been adopted.

Very ambitious targets are set for pupils' attainment and progress, though not all

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were met in 2011. The issue for improvement set at the previous inspection has been effectively addressed. Teachers now regularly provide opportunities for pupils to review their learning at the end of lessons. Information from the school's tracking of individual pupils is used effectively to plan additional provision for those whose attainment is lower than expected. However, the school is less effective in monitoring and judging the extent of progress of groups of pupils over longer periods of time. As a result, this aspect of the school's self-evaluation has not provided leaders with a sufficiently accurate appraisal of the longer-term impact of teaching. Many senior and middle leaders are new to their roles, reflecting the considerable extent of change in staffing in recent times. The headteacher has succeeded in managing the transition to a substantially new team who are eager to improve the school. The school thus has a satisfactory capacity to sustain further improvement.

Up to 40% of the 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?**

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in order to accelerate pupils' progress, especially in writing, by:
  - making sure that a stimulating pace to learning is set in all lessons
  - improving the match of tasks to the different groups of pupils, so as to provide better levels of challenge.
  
- Make more consistent use of assessment information across the school so that pupils develop a better understanding of the next steps in their learning in writing and mathematics by:
  - ensuring that marking more regularly gives pupils clearer feedback about how to improve their work
  - developing target-setting arrangements to enable teachers to indicate more precisely to pupils the improvements necessary to reach higher levels of attainment.
  
- Ensure that fuller use is made of the school's tracking information in order to monitor more accurately the extent of progress made by the different groups of pupils.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**3**

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. When pupils enter the school, their attainment varies from year to year, but is generally broadly average. Overall attainment by the end of Year 6 has been above average, but recent results were close to the national average. The school's records show that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and all other groups make the same satisfactory progress.

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In a well-planned lesson, all groups of pupils in a Year 3 class made good progress in writing a ‘rap’ poem. The teacher built well on her strong rapport with the class by adopting a motivating pace to learning and setting high expectations while offering frequent encouragement, which led to pupils’ good enjoyment of their learning and confidence in tackling the task. The clear explanations provided before pupils started work ensured their good understanding, and the tasks set offered appropriate levels of challenge for pupils of different abilities, and because of the good support of the teaching assistant, those with particular needs. However, not all teaching is so secure. For example, in a satisfactory lesson, the teacher showed good subject knowledge, but the extended introduction slowed the pace to learning, and the task was not well enough adjusted for different groups of pupils, who were therefore slower to begin work, which restricted their progress.

Pupils feel entirely safe because incidents of bullying are rare and because they trust adults to address any minor difficulties. In the surveys, almost all parents and carers, and every member of staff, judged that the school keeps their children safe, and most pupils agree. Pupils are well behaved around the school, in assembly and in the playground. They behave maturely in lessons, are attentive to teachers, and cooperate well when there are opportunities to take active roles. Pupils’ overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, though opportunities for reflection are sometimes limited. Most pupils practise healthy lifestyles. As well as enjoying two hours a week of physical education and games, there is extensive participation in the broad range of after-school physical activities. More than half the pupils take up the option of the well-balanced school lunches. Regular encouragement means that those who bring lunch boxes mostly understand the importance of choosing healthy options.

Pupils make good contributions through the school council. Examples of the council’s impact include its input into the development of the friendship and the outside learning areas. Some pupils in Years 5 and 6 become Young Leaders, who support younger pupils’ play at lunchtimes. Pupils also regularly contribute to the fortnightly newsletters to parents. Pupils’ good skills in information and communication technology (ICT) and their broadly average attainment and skills in literacy and numeracy indicate that they are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

<b>Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3

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

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<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching is characterised by the good relationships between adults and pupils, and frequently by teachers' good management and classroom organisation. These features lead to a positive atmosphere for learning. In those lessons where teachers set an engaging pace, learning is typically good because pupils are well motivated. Teaching assistants regularly provide good support for learning, especially for pupils for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, planning for English and mathematics lessons does not consistently include a close match of tasks to the learning needs of the different groups of pupils, and this restricts the extent of challenge. A good aspect of teachers' use of assessment is the exploration of pupils' understanding through effective questioning. When teachers mark pupils' writing and mathematics tasks, they acknowledge the extent to which learning intentions have been met, and often praise pupils, but do not regularly give advice about how work could be improved, or about the next steps in learning. Although teachers set targets for pupils in writing and mathematics, the impact is limited because the targets do not sufficiently direct them towards higher levels of attainment.

The curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced, and has been successfully designed to include interesting themes and topics of relevance to pupils. Although the curriculum is designed to provide for the progressive learning of skills in English and mathematics, results in writing in 2011 show that not all groups of pupils have recently benefited. Work in ICT is successfully integrated into other aspects of the curriculum, resulting in pupils' good skills in this subject, as the award of the ICT Mark attests. A further strength is the Friday 'AJS University' session in which pupils across the school choose from a broad span of focuses, ranging from courses in photography and cookery to a fair trade shop. Enrichment includes a wide range of extra-curricular clubs offering a variety of sporting, musical and other cultural activities, in which pupils participate well.

The commitment to the inclusive ethos leads to the well-organised care arrangements. Good procedures include smooth induction into Year 3, and carefully managed transition to secondary education. Well-directed help is given to pupils who

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may be vulnerable, for example through additional support before morning school. Pupils who arrive during the year, and who do not speak English, are also sensitively supported. The promotion of attendance is particularly effective.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The impact of leaders’ ambition and drive is satisfactory. The headteacher sets a clear direction for improvement, which is shown in detailed improvement planning. The new school leaders, including those with responsibility for English and mathematics, communicate good support for the drive for improvement. Self-evaluation arrangements, including the regular monitoring of teaching, are well established and have a beneficial effect. Although the progress of individual pupils is carefully tracked, the implications for judging school performance, including pupils’ overall progress and the impact of teaching over time, have received less attention. Governors are committed to the school, and work closely with the leadership, so that they have a clear understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses. They ensure compliance with statutory requirements, and provide satisfactory challenge for the improvement. The school has gained national accreditation in recognition of its good engagement with parents. Leaders demonstrate commitment to ensuring equal opportunities and to tackling discrimination. However, the promotion of equal opportunities is currently not better than satisfactory in view of the recent lower performance by pupils.

Safeguarding arrangements are very rigorous, and there is close collaboration with outside agencies. Risk assessments for a variety of purposes are thorough, and where necessary involve the parents of individual pupils. The anti-bullying, race equality, e-safety and other policies safeguard pupils extremely well, and are evaluated for impact by governors. The school is judged by the local authority to exemplify excellent practice in safeguarding, and inspection evidence confirms this. Provision for community cohesion has been carefully assessed, and an action plan has been implemented. The school itself is inclusive, and there are good links with the local area. In recognition of its work in developing pupils’ global perspectives, the school has gained the International Schools award. However, the promotion of cohesion at the national level is less well developed. For example, pupils have fewer opportunities to compare their experiences with those of pupils from a contrasting locality of the United Kingdom.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The proportion of returns of completed questionnaires was above average. Almost all parents and carers who replied feel that the school promotes a healthy lifestyle. Most also believe that the quality of teaching is good, and that their children are making enough progress. Inspectors found that, although some teaching is good, overall it is satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress. Most parents and carers feel well informed about their children's progress. Most also judge that the school meets their children's needs. The great majority consider that the school is well led and managed, and that it deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors judge that the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, and that there is little unacceptable behaviour.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Alexandra 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 190 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 356 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	92	48	93	49	4	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	109	57	78	41	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	61	32	107	56	15	8	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	26	120	63	16	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	62	33	117	62	6	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	61	32	112	59	11	6	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	77	41	107	56	4	2	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)	71	37	108	57	2	1	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	54	28	119	63	12	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	81	43	93	49	12	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	45	24	120	63	14	7	4	2
The school is led and managed effectively	73	38	100	53	5	3	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	81	43	93	49	7	4	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



7 October 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Alexandra Junior School, Hounslow TW3 4DU**

We would like to thank all of you for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed seeing you in your classrooms and talking to you at break times and lunchtimes. We especially thank those of you who filled in the pupils' questionnaire. Inspectors judge that you go to a satisfactory school.

These are the main things that we found out about your school.

- Your school is welcoming and sets a positive climate for your learning.
- You enjoy school, and your behaviour in lessons and around the school is good.
- You have good relationships with the adults who take good care of you.
- You feel very safe in school. You have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles.
- You make good contributions to your school, and to the wider community.
- Your attendance is outstanding.
- The teaching and the curriculum in your school are satisfactory.
- A majority of your parents and carers are happy with your experience at school.
- Your attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 is broadly average. Your progress across the school is satisfactory.

We have also asked your school to make some improvements.

- Make sure that teaching is more consistently good, so as to improve your progress, by ensuring that all teachers keep you interested through working more quickly, and that they set you work that is suitably challenging.
- Help you to understand more about what you can do to improve your writing and your mathematics work, by making sure that marking tells you more about the next steps in your learning, and that target setting tells you what you need to do to reach a higher level.
- Ensure that the school makes fuller use of the information about how well all groups of pupils are doing so that it can make accurate judgements about the extent of progress.

You can help too by working hard and taking advantage of the improvements that your school will be making. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Chris Grove  
Lead inspector

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