

Weald Junior School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Unique reference number | 102200 |
| Local authority | Harrow |
| Inspection number | 376680 |
| Inspection dates | 14–15 March 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Beverley Perin |

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

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|--|---|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 7–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 328 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Finnbarr McCarthy |
| Headteacher | Michael Curtin |
| Date of previous school inspection | 8–9 September 2008 |
| School address | Robin Hood Drive Harrow Weald Harrow HA3 7DH |
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Introduction

Inspection team

Beverley Perin

Additional inspector

Liz Kissane

Additional inspector

Michael Austins

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 23 lessons taught by 12 different teachers. Several lessons were observed jointly with senior leaders. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, school leaders, staff, and groups of pupils, and inspectors spoke to some parents and carers in the playground at the start of each day. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at documents, including policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding of pupils, self-evaluation records, the school development plan, and assessment information. The inspectors analysed responses to questionnaires from 83 parents and carers, 253 pupils and three members of staff.

Information about the school

Weald Junior School is a larger than average, three-form-entry school. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language are well-above average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is larger than average. Most of this group have speech, language and communication needs, a specific learning difficulty or behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well-above average, as is pupil mobility. At the time of the previous inspection, the school was a middle school. In 2010, it became a junior school. The school shares a governing body with the neighbouring infant school.

The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school has a range of accreditations, including, since the previous inspection, the Primary Science Quality Mark gold and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Rights Respecting Schools Award.

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

Key findings

- This is a good school, where good teaching enables pupils to achieve well in a caring and effective learning environment. The school's commitment to improving is reflected in the improvements made in key areas since the last inspection. The school's overall effectiveness is not outstanding because some variation remains in the quality of teaching and because pupils' progress, while much improved, is still not as strong as it could be.
- From average starting points in Year 3, pupils achieve well and are attaining above average levels by the end of Year 6, although some inconsistencies remain. For example, pupils' progress in literacy slows sometimes, mainly in Year 3, because pupils do not always know how to combine and separate sounds and link them to letters.
- Teaching is mainly good and sometimes outstanding. Good relationships between staff and pupils promote a purposeful climate for learning. The marking of pupils' work is mostly of high quality and gives pupils useful guidance on how to improve. On the few occasions when teaching is satisfactory, pupils are not always given the opportunity to respond to teachers' feedback.
- Pupils behave well, collaborate in shared activities, and help each other. They are polite and courteous to visitors and bring enthusiasm and excitement to their learning. Pupils and the vast majority of their parents and carers feel that the school is a safe place to learn.
- The headteacher and his team communicate high aspirations for pupils' achievement and are ambitious. Teaching and performance management are led and managed appropriately. Since the last inspection, a combination of more robust monitoring and evaluation and well-targeted curricular initiatives has raised the quality of teaching, accelerated pupils' achievement, and improved rates of attendance. The school has recognised the need to improve teaching further by instigating procedures to disseminate good and better teaching practices across the school. There is a strong emphasis on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development that prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2013, raise pupils' attainment in reading, writing, and mathematics so that it is significantly above the national average by:
 - drawing on and extending good practice so that all teaching is good or better
 - providing explicit opportunities for all pupils to respond to teachers' feedback in marking and to improve their work
 - embedding the systematic and consistent use of phonics (the sounds that letters make) to standardise the teaching of reading and spelling in lower Key Stage 2.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The very large majority of parents and carers feel that their children make good progress and this is confirmed by the school's own analysis of performance, inspectors' observations of learning in lessons, and the pupils' work. Pupils' levels of attainment are rising steadily so that most pupils' attainment now generally exceeds the national average. In reading, by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, their attainment is typically one term ahead of their peers nationally because of the focus the school places on text and language development across all year groups. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language, and those who join the school other than at the usual time make the same good progress as all others. This is because teaching engages and challenges pupils, is matched to their needs and starting points well and resources are well conceived. For example, in an outstanding Year 4 lesson, all pupils were successful in developing their responses and were improving their writing skills because of the imaginative methods used to encourage them to work collaboratively, extend their vocabulary and build more complex sentences using connectives. As a result, all pupils made at least good progress and enjoyed their learning.

The results of 2011 national tests showed that the progress of some groups of pupils, notably middle-ability girls in mathematics and some minority ethnic groups, was less strong than that of their peers. Precisely targeted interventions and a wide range of additional support strategies are rapidly closing these gaps. In mathematics, where progress was satisfactory, pupils of all abilities are now demonstrating the capacity and resilience to practise their problem-solving skills in new contexts. For example, in a good Year 6 lesson, low-ability pupils made good progress because the teaching was clear, supportive and systematic in building their concepts and skills.

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Quality of teaching

Parents and carers, rightly, believe that pupils are taught well and this was borne out by inspection evidence. Teachers, collectively and individually, have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. This is reflected in their planning and in the way that they and other adults give individual support and encourage pupils to deepen their understanding through effective and structured questioning. Teachers and support staff foster good relationships with pupils, whose positive attitudes to learning drive them forward. Stimulating learning environments provide a range of creative and inspiring learning resources that promote strong academic and social outcomes and an appropriate degree of challenge and interest for all pupils. An atmosphere of mutual respect for the different cultural backgrounds of the pupils and their many languages characterises the environment and pupils' work is celebrated around the school. The school's good promotion of respect for others is developed through the planned curriculum and has led to the school's UNICEF award. Teaching enables pupils to develop a good understanding of local citizenship and global culture as well as adding much to pupils' overall spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.

The teaching promotes good learning and personal development. Work to improve the science curriculum since the last inspection has led the school to be among the first to receive the Primary Science Quality Mark gold. For example, in a good Year 6 science lesson, pupils sang about the workings of the body and actively learned about forces through trial and error, using the recall of prior understanding, visual stimulus and solid items in the classroom to build a hypothesis which led them to suggest well-articulated definitions of different natural forces. In a number of lessons, the use of 'talk partners' and 'table' discussions encourages pupils to extend their speaking skills and listen to each other attentively so that they develop ideas collaboratively.

Teaching assistants support all groups of pupils effectively, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, clarifying instructions and asking probing questions. All pupils, including those in the early stages of English language acquisition, are encouraged to work things out for themselves, acquire confidence and improve the standard of their work. For example, in a good Year 5 mathematics lesson, low-ability pupils made good progress because the teacher used clear visual illustrations to enable them to develop problem-solving skills when calculating percentages.

Although teaching is good overall, there are aspects that are in need of improvement. Teaching is only satisfactory when planning does not ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to respond to teachers' feedback in marking and to improve their work. Teachers, particularly in lower Key Stage 2, do not always use systematic processes to enable pupils to gain confidence in applying skills independently when matching sounds to different groups of letters. Sometimes,

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therefore, pupils' spelling and reading are more erratic and their progress slows.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' good attitudes to their work and keenness to learn are important factors in their good achievement. The large majority of pupils concentrate fully and help each other learn well. They make choices independently and respect and care for each other, responding well to praise and to their teachers' high expectations of their behaviour. Warm relationships with adults support pupils' good spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development by giving them the confidence to self-correct and take risks in their learning. A few parents and carers suggested that learning is sometimes disrupted by the behaviour of a small minority of pupils. Inspectors found behaviour to be consistently good and records showed that this reflects pupils' behaviour over time.

Pupils say that they enjoy school, feel safe and that behaviour is good. The very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaires believe that their children are kept safe at school. Pupils say that bullying is restricted to a few instances of name-calling and that there is very little racist intent. Parents and carers hold similar views. On the rare occasions when incidents occur, pupils say that the school deals with them effectively. Inspectors found that pupils acquire a good understanding of threats to their personal safety, for example, when they are on the internet. The school is consolidating its work in this area through activities in pursuit of a national award for anti-bullying practice. Pupils' enjoyment of school and sense of security are reflected in their increased rates of attendance since the last inspection.

Leadership and management

The governing body, headteacher and senior leaders are ambitious for the school and share a vision for its continuing improvement. Since the previous inspection, they have accelerated pupils' overall progress, improved the quality of teaching, increased rates of attendance, and successfully implemented a range of measures to strengthen pupils' mathematical skills. The rigorous use of assessment data enables teachers to identify any pupils who require extra support and to implement effective interventions. These successes, including the strategies that are improving pupils' writing, demonstrate that the school has the capacity for improvement.

The school's leaders have extended accountability for pupils' progress and the quality of teaching through a wider distribution of leadership responsibilities and whole-school training on specific initiatives, such as the introduction of 'mental maths' and 'talk for learning'. The development needs of individual teachers are identified accurately and addressed with bespoke support and training. The impact of new strategies is monitored through a range of activities, including performance management. However, some variation in the quality of teaching remains and school leaders have recognised the need to ensure that good and better teaching practices

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are disseminated across the school to help move teaching on to the next level and to ensure that all pupils fulfil their potential.

The previous gaps in achievement between different groups of pupils have narrowed significantly because the governing body and senior leaders promote equality and tackle potential discrimination successfully. The governing body and leaders ensure that arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils meet statutory requirements and the federation supports effective transition arrangements.

The curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of all pupils. It provides imaginative and creative opportunities for learning and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. Through opportunities in music and art and work on children's rights and responsibilities, pupils formulate their own moral standpoints and they enjoy preparing assemblies to present their ideas to their peers. This contributes well to the harmonious and welcoming ethos of the school.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

Overall effectiveness of schools

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 46 | 46 | 8 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 8 | 47 | 40 | 5 |
| Secondary schools | 14 | 38 | 40 | 8 |
| Special schools | 28 | 48 | 20 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 15 | 50 | 29 | 5 |
| All schools | 11 | 46 | 38 | 6 |

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

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

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

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

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Attendance: | the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance. |
| Behaviour: | how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |
| Learning: | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners. |
| Overall effectiveness: | inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. |
| Progress: | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |
| Safety: | how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning. |

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



16 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Weald Junior School, Harrow Weald, HA3 7DH

I would like to thank you for your help when we visited your school recently and for sharing your views with us. Yours is a good school and the following reasons show why it is successful.

- You are taught well and this helps you to make good progress. You are now doing well in your reading and numeracy, although sometimes you are not quite so confident about your spelling.
- Your behaviour is good; you are trying hard and you work together well in your lessons. You told us you feel safe in school. Some of you did say you had some concerns about name calling in the playground, but we found that the school is aware of this and is dealing with it.
- The school is led well by your headteacher and his team. They check how well you are getting on and have done many things to help you do better.
- The school is better now than it was when inspectors visited last time.

We have asked the staff to do the following things to help you achieve even better.

- Make sure that you all do as well as possible in all your lessons.
- Give you more opportunities to follow up on the teachers' comments in your books.
- Make sure that you all understand how to sound out words that you struggle to read and that you all know how to go about spelling difficult words without asking for help. This will be especially helpful for those of you in Years 3 and 4.

You can help by continuing to work hard and doing your best to keep improving your attendance. We wish you all the best for the future and thank you again.

Yours sincerely

Beverley Perin
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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