

Weald Infant and Nursery School

Robin Hood Drive, Harrow Weald, Harrow, HA3 7DH

Inspection dates

12– 13 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' attainments in national tests in reading, writing and mathematics are below average. Their skills in spoken language, writing and mathematics are not developed well enough.
- Teaching is not consistently good. Lesson plans are based on what pupils are to do rather than what they are to learn. Tasks do not capture fully the interest of boys or challenge the more able pupils.
- Time is not used well to maximise pupils' learning. Teachers make few checks in lessons to adapt work when it is too easy or too hard. When work is marked, pupils do not respond to their teachers' comments or correct their mistakes.
- In the Reception classes, outdoor activities do not offer sufficient stimulus to children to use their own ideas to solve problems.
- The headteacher, in partnership with governors, parents and staff, has identified key priorities to raise pupils' attainment, but they have yet to be included in a new school development plan.
- Not all subject leaders have undergone training for their role or been held to account for pupils' achievements.
- Too many pupils do not attend school every day.

The school has the following strengths

- Children make a good start in the Nursery. Captivating activities mean they make good progress.
- The headteacher has taken a robust approach to deal with weak teaching. Work in pupils' books shows improvement in their knowledge and understanding, especially in mathematics.
- Specialist expertise is successfully helping pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties to become ready to learn.
- Governors have been successful in establishing sustainable leadership and management. They are not afraid to take testing decisions to improve the school's effectiveness. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are thorough.
- Since January, pupils are enjoying trips out and a wider range of creative activities in art, physical education and information and communication technology. These broaden their horizons.
- Pupils feel safe.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 26 parts of lessons, including staff working with pupils in small groups. Inspectors were often accompanied by the headteacher.
- Samples of pupils' previous work in English and mathematics were reviewed.
- Some pupils in Years 1 and 2 read to an inspector, and discussed their views of the school. Their behaviour was observed in lessons and at various times around the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and staff with responsibility for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, the Early Years Foundation Stage, English, and mathematics. Inspectors also met with representatives of the governing body and local authority.
- The responses of 24 parents who completed Parent View, and the results of the school's own recent survey of parents' views, were taken into account.
- Documents reviewed included the school's improvement plan, the summary of the school's checks on how well it is doing, reports about the school's effectiveness, minutes of governing body meetings, especially those relating to finance, and arrangements for appraisal, safeguarding, and records of pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Kath Beck, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Lily Evans	Additional Inspector
Clare Gillies	Additional Inspector
Avtar Sherri	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- This school is larger than most for pupils of this age. An above average number of pupils who speak English as an additional language join the school at other than the usual times. The number of pupils coming to the school has risen since the previous inspection.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there is a Nursery, where children attend either in the morning or in the afternoon, and three Reception classes.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. This is the additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those with a parent in the armed forces. Currently, the school has very few looked after children or children with a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average, although some have complex learning and behavioural needs.
- At the time of the previous inspection, leadership and management were said to require significant improvement. The school was asked to establish effective and sustainable leadership and management, robust safeguarding procedures, and high quality management and deployment of financial resources to ensure maximum impact on pupils' learning and well-being. It was also asked to improve the effectiveness of the governing body so that the school was held to account for its performance.
- For 17 months after the previous inspection the school was led by an executive headteacher and an acting headteacher. This support ended in August 2012.
- The current headteacher was appointed to her permanent post in January 2013. Staff turnover is high. At the time of the most recent inspection two members of staff were on temporary contracts. Some staff are leading areas of the school on an interim basis. Five new staff, including a new deputy headteacher and Early Years Foundation Stage leader, are due to start in September 2013. There have been changes to the membership of the governing body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by making sure that all staff:
 - plan lessons that are based on what pupils are to learn, rather than what they are to do, and capture fully boys' interest in their learning
 - raise their expectations of what pupils know and can do, and provide more demanding work, for the more-able pupils
 - make the most of the time available, and take lessons at a good pace so that pupils do not spend too long sitting on the carpet
 - use checks on pupils' progress in lessons to adapt work when it is too easy or too hard
 - allow pupils time to respond to comments made by teachers in marking and understand fully the steps needed to improve their work
 - in the Reception classes, plan outdoor activities that challenge children to use their own ideas to solve problems.
- Raise pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics by:

- extending, in all year groups, pupils’ language development so that the pupils can communicate clearly and explain their ideas confidently
 - making sure that pupils who have learned to write using full stops, capital letters, commas and speech marks use them consistently in their work
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use their own ideas when writing, and avoid copying from books
 - giving pupils a wider range of mathematical activities where they can use their good grasp of numbers to solve problems that are linked to their daily life.
 - Work even more closely with parents to raise the levels of attendance.
 - Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - devising a new school development plan with clearly measurable targets linked to raising pupils’ achievements
 - developing the skills of staff with subject and aspect leadership responsibilities so they are held to account for pupils’ achievements and contribute fully to the school’s development.
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Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children make a good start in the Nursery. Their skills in communication, language and literacy are much lower than expected for their age. Progress from Reception to Year 2 requires improvement. Pupils' attainments in national assessments in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics have declined over the past three years and are below average.
- The school is adapting to the rapidly rising number of pupils who start in Years 1 and 2 speaking very little English or with particularly complex learning needs. The increased proportion of pupils with lower starting points partly explains why attainment is falling. However, the quality of teaching is not helping pupils to make consistently good progress from their varied starting points, especially boys and the more able.
- In English, progress is held back because many pupils do not have sufficient skills to communicate effectively. Bilingual staff and volunteers ensure pupils new to speaking English can learn in their own language. That said, throughout the school, adults do not always play well alongside pupils, or provide enough creative opportunities for them to extend their vocabulary, so that they can also use it in their writing.
- Pupils make better progress in reading as they often read to an adult, and use their knowledge of the sounds that letters make well to tackle unfamiliar words.
- In mathematics, work in pupils' books shows improvement. Pupils have a good grasp of the calculation of numbers, but they do not always apply these well to problem-solving or everyday life situations.
- In Reception, children learn well when they are working with adults individually or in a group. Few demanding activities are set out for them to undertake on their own in the outside area. This limits opportunities for them to make decisions about how to approach a task, solve problems and explain what they have learned.
- Children make good progress in the Nursery. The outside area is used very effectively to promote the speedy acquisition of physical, personal, social and emotional skills, and their understanding of the world around them.
- To ensure that all pupils have an equal chance to succeed, the school provides good levels of support to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who make similar progress to their classmates. The gap between the attainment of pupils eligible for additional funding and that of their classmates has closed over the past two years. They do better than other pupils of their age and in similar circumstances nationally. Staff put into practice the guidance from specialists, especially that for pupils with behavioural and emotional needs, so that they become ready to learn.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- While there is some good teaching, there is too much that requires improvement. This hinders the opportunity for pupils to progress at a faster rate. In these lessons:
 - teachers' planning describes what pupils are to do, rather than what they are to achieve. In the Reception classes, teachers do not plan well enough for pupils' learning outside the classroom
 - expectations of what pupils know and can do are not consistently high enough and the work set is not always sufficiently demanding, especially for the more-able pupils, or matched to the interests of boys
 - time is not used well to maximise pupils' learning. Lessons do not start promptly after breaks, and pupils take too much time to eat their snack. This, together with lengthy explanations by their teacher, means they spend too much time sitting on the carpet, limiting opportunities to apply their new knowledge and skills

- adults do not intervene sufficiently to extend children’s language development to help children communicate effectively and express their ideas confidently, especially in the Reception classes
- checks on how well pupils are doing in lessons are not used effectively to offer additional challenges where work is too easy, or extra help if it is too hard.
- Teaching in English and mathematics is inconsistent. Opportunities to enable pupils to write their own ideas are missed when they just copy from books. Teachers do not insist that pupils use their knowledge of punctuation correctly in their work. In some mathematics lessons, pupils do not understand fully the mathematical vocabulary their teacher is using. They are not clear about what they have to do, and why they need to do it. This confuses them and slows their learning.
- Most work is marked, but it does not always help pupils to learn at a faster rate. This is because they do not have time to respond to their teachers’ comments and to correct their mistakes. Pupils continue to make the same mistakes even after they have been pointed out.
- Where teaching is good, especially in the Nursery:
 - lesson plans are based on what pupils have learned before and what they are to achieve
 - tasks and activities are designed well to meet their age and abilities and develop their curiosity about the world
 - teachers use effective questioning to test pupils’ understanding
 - adults involve pupils in paired discussions and group work that help them to share their ideas and clarify their thoughts
 - bilingual staff give pupils confidence in learning
 - staff use teaching assistants well throughout lessons to support those who need extra help.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Attendance is low and has been for the past three years. Whilst attendance is lowered by outbreaks of childhood illnesses, too many pupils do not attend regularly. Recent, robust action is gradually increasing the proportion of pupils who come to school every day, and is reducing the amount of persistent absence. There is scope for strengthening the partnership with parents to raise attendance further.
- In lessons that require improvement, where activities do not get underway fast enough, pupils, especially boys, lose interest. They do not listen carefully and talk when their teacher is explaining what they need to do. This hinders their progress and that of others in the class while teachers deal with the interruption.
- Where teaching is good, especially in the Nursery, children are often captivated and maintain their concentration for long periods of time. Older pupils take pride in presenting their work neatly, particularly when they are writing down calculations in mathematics so they can work accurately.
- Parents, staff and governors believe that behaviour is mostly good. Pupils are responding well to the newly introduced methods for promoting good behaviour. They carry out their roles as playground buddies sensibly. The wide range of new resources available for them to play with during break and lunchtime means pupils from all backgrounds play harmoniously. There is no discrimination.
- Specialist support for some pupils helps them to deal with their feelings of anger and frustration. No pupils have been stopped from coming to school because of poor behaviour.
- Pupils know about bullying. Those spoken to said that they feel safe, are happy at school and can always ask a grown up if they are worried.
- The school’s practice in caring for, and protecting, pupils with particular welfare, health and safety needs, benefits from strong partnerships established with other professionals.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Governors responded extremely well to the demands set by the local authority and the issues in the previous inspection. That said, recruitment difficulties mean it took time to establish effective sustainable leadership and management with high ambitions for the school's future success. This aspect of the school is not yet good because many of the leadership and management procedures are new. They have not been in place long enough to stem the decline in pupils' attainments in national assessments. There are encouraging signs in pupils' books that show improvement, especially in mathematics.
 - Some staff are holding temporary leadership and management responsibilities until new members of staff join the school. While they have led developments in the Early Years Foundation Stage, English and mathematics, not all have undergone training for their role or been held fully responsible for pupils' achievements.
 - To offer continuity, the headteacher has followed the school development plan drawn up prior to her appointment. Through her checks on how well the school is doing, in consultation with staff, governors, parents and pupils, she has correctly identified clear priorities for improvement. These have yet to be set out in a new school development plan that is focused strongly on raising attainment.
 - The quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress is monitored rigorously and targets are set for improvement. The appraisal process and teachers' salaries are also now linked to pupils' progress. Individual staff are held to account when pupils underachieve, and decisive action has been taken against weak teaching.
 - Improvements to the range of subjects on offer have broadened pupils' learning opportunities, especially in physical education, information and communication technology and art. These, together with trips out to places of interest and opportunities to work in small groups, contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
 - In the Nursery, children have many rich experiences in exploring the world around them. Activities in the Reception outside areas are not planned well enough to promote children's learning, especially in developing spoken language and problem solving.
 - The partnership with parents is becoming stronger. 'Open classroom', workshop sessions, and parent, pupil and teacher consultations are helping parents to understand more about their children's education and how to help their children at home.
 - The appointment of bilingual staff and recruitment of parents and volunteers as 'ambassadors' to act as translators for families new to speaking English are helping the school to adapt to the rapid rise in the number of pupils speaking English as another language.
 - The needs of pupils who are in receipt of additional funding are identified carefully. The money is spent on support that meets their individual needs. This is having a positive impact as they do better than their peers nationally.
 - The local authority has full confidence in the leadership of the school and no longer provides a high level of support.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have undertaken extensive training in effective governance, financial management, safeguarding and data to hold the school fully to account for its performance. They are very clear about their roles and responsibilities, and are not afraid to take challenging decisions to improve the school's overall effectiveness. They are fully aware that their appointment of the new headteacher, and other senior leaders who are due to take up their roles shortly, is central to improving pupils' achievements.
 - Finances are monitored and managed prudently. Part of a large surplus of funds has rightly been spent on providing high quality outside learning areas for the Nursery and Reception classes, improvements to the playground, and a new computer suite. These are being checked for their impact on pupils' learning and behaviour. Additional funding is also checked to ensure
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that it is spent on the pupils concerned and is helping them to make better progress.

- Governors have set targets for the new headteacher. They have been fully involved in the new procedures for appraisal and reviewing the pay of all other staff. Some make visits to classrooms and have a good understanding of the quality of teaching. Safeguarding procedures are robust. Their system for reviewing the effectiveness of these procedures is used as an exemplar to other governors by the local authority.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	102215
Local authority	Harrow
Inspection number	422293

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	392
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Rattary-Clarke
Headteacher	Folake Agbaniyaka
Date of previous school inspection	6– 7 July 2011
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