



**Office for Standards
in Education**

Inspection report
Mandeville Primary School

Hackney Education Authority

Dates of inspection: 1 and 2 November 2004

This inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996 and was deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act

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Basic information about the school

Name of school:	Mandeville Primary School
Type of school:	Primary with nursery
Status:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Headteacher:	Mrs B Horton
Address of school:	Oswald Street Hackney London E5 0BT
Telephone:	020 8986 5249
Name and address of appropriate authority:	The governing body, address as above
Chair of governors:	Mr P Passam
Local education authority area:	Hackney
Unique reference number:	100261
Name of reporting inspector:	Mrs L McGill HMI
Dates of inspection:	1 and 2 November 2004

Introduction

1. Mandeville Primary School is situated in Hackney, an inner-city area of east London. It serves an ethnically diverse and economically disadvantaged area; the main groups represented in the school's roll of 294 pupils are of African, Caribbean and Asian origin. A significant proportion of the pupils speak English as an additional language. Just over half of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, well above the national average. Many pupils leave and join the school at times throughout the academic year. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is high, at about 30 per cent. Three pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. In recent years, there has been a significant turnover of teachers and difficulties in recruiting permanent members of staff; several classes have had many changes of teacher. Attainment on entry to the school is below average.

2. The school was inspected in May 2002. The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the school and the school was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.

3. The governors drew up an action plan to address the key issues from the inspection of May 2002. The school was visited by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) on six occasions to monitor the progress being made.

4. In November 2004, one HMI and an Additional Inspector inspected the school, assessing the standard of education provided and the progress the school has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and key issues in the inspection report of May 2002.

Main findings

5. In accordance with section 14 of the School Inspections Act 1996, I am of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures, since it is now providing an acceptable standard of education for its pupils. The main findings of the inspection are:

- Mandeville is a rapidly improving school. Since the appointment of the headteacher a year ago, its progress has been swift;
- standards of attainment are rising, although they remain below what is expected for the pupils' ages. The school's good efforts to establish consistency in approaches to planning and teaching, and improvements in the pupils' attitudes to learning, have helped to ensure that the pupils make sound progress in lessons and build appropriately on what they have learned before. Nevertheless, there are still important gaps in the pupils' knowledge and understanding;
- the school's results in the national tests and tasks in 2004 were below those achieved nationally at both key stages. However, there were significant improvements. In reading and writing, about two thirds of the pupils achieved the nationally expected Level 2, and almost three quarters did so in mathematics. The results in reading were broadly similar to the previous year, but in writing and mathematics the proportion of pupils who achieved the

higher Level 3 increased. At Key Stage 2, good improvements were made in mathematics and science and results in English were in line with the previous year. Half of the pupils achieved the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics and just under two thirds did so in science. The proportion of pupils attaining higher levels increased;

- in all of the lessons, the pupils made at least satisfactory progress; their progress was good in five lessons. This is largely attributable to improvements in teaching, and to the pupils' better attitudes and behaviour;
- the school promotes the pupils' social, moral and cultural development well. Provision for their spiritual development is broadly satisfactory, but more could be done to enhance the spiritual element in assemblies and the wider curriculum;
- the pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are usually good and sometimes very good. This is a significant improvement. In lessons, nearly all of the pupils are attentive, responsive and keen to learn. They are gaining in confidence to answer questions and to pose questions of their own, and to work independently, but good work habits are not firmly established and the pupils lose concentration quickly in response to a slower pace in lessons or other minor weaknesses in teaching;
- the pupils generally behave well in lessons, in the playground and on the stairwells. In 15 of the lessons, the pupils' behaviour was at least good, including five lessons in which their behaviour was very good. The teachers and assistants are consistent in their expectations of how the pupils will behave, and how they will be managed. The work of the learning mentor has also been instrumental in bringing about change for the better in the pupils' behaviour and their ability to manage their feelings;
- attendance is below both the national and local averages, but is rising. The work of the home-school liaison officer has helped to improve the attendance of pupils where it was particularly low, and to improve punctuality to school;
- the quality of teaching has improved a good deal and was satisfactory or better in all of the lessons, including nine lessons where it was good or very good. The proportion of good teaching is encouraging. The teaching in the nursery and in most classes at Key Stage 2 was generally strong. The headteacher and senior staff make regular checks on the quality of teaching and provide consistent feedback; high standards are expected. The school has clear and unequivocal policies and procedures for inducting new staff, which mean that teachers employed in the short term know exactly what is expected of them;
- the teaching assistants provide effective support in class for lower-attaining pupils and for those who have special educational needs. This helps the pupils make suitable progress in lessons;
- the school's curriculum appropriately emphasises English and mathematics, and additional lessons in these subjects help to boost the pupils' basic skills and address gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Parents are informed

of the topics each class will be studying and are encouraged to help their child at home. The range of extracurricular activities and visits is growing;

- the school's systems for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress have developed well, and are used to pinpoint areas of weakness, identify where particular help is needed and tailor what will be taught to the pupils' needs. There is a clear picture of the levels of attainment of classes and of individual pupils. The pupils have targets to aim for in their work in English and mathematics, although this aspect is not yet firmly established;
- since her arrival at the school, the headteacher has set about making improvements with a fierce, unswerving determination. Her clear vision and strong leadership have engendered loyalty and enthusiasm among the staff group, at all levels. She has clear expectations of how the school will function, and the part that will be played by pupils, staff and parents. Her work has brought about change at a swift pace; when there have been setbacks, for example changes of teaching staff, the impact has been minimised by the systems and procedures that have been introduced. The school's development and management plan is appropriately focused on key priorities and is a useful tool for improvement. The work of senior members of staff has developed well; the deputy headteacher and other members of the team provide good support for others and the headteacher, although their leadership roles remain underdeveloped. Improvement in the roles of middle managers has been restricted by difficulties with recruitment;
- the governing body has improved its work significantly under the guidance of an experienced and determined chairman. The committee structure works effectively and governors are beginning to play a stronger part in challenging and supporting the school;
- since the arrival of the current headteacher and a change of link adviser, support from the local education authority (LEA) has been more carefully targeted and its impact more fully evaluated. This has helped the school move on in a planned, systematic manner and to make great strides forward over the past year.

Key issues

6. In order to improve the pupils' quality of education further, the governors, headteacher, senior managers and staff need to:

- continue to raise standards in English, mathematics and science;
- continue to eradicate minor weaknesses in teaching, and so improve the quality of the pupils' learning;
- bring about further improvements in attendance;
- address the pupils' spiritual development more systematically in assemblies and in lessons.

Inspection findings

Standards achieved by the pupils

7. Mandeville is a rapidly improving school. Since the appointment of the headteacher a year ago, its progress has been swift.

8. The standards achieved by the pupils are rising, although, overall, they remain below what is expected for the pupils' ages. The school's good efforts to establish consistency in approaches to planning and teaching, and the significant improvements in the pupils' attitudes to learning, have helped to ensure that the pupils make sound progress in lessons and build appropriately on what they have learned before. Nevertheless, there are still important gaps in the pupils' knowledge and understanding, particularly in Key Stage 2; a legacy of weaknesses in leadership and teaching in the past.

9. The school's results in the national tests and tasks taken by the pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in 2004 were below those achieved nationally. However, the results improved significantly on those of the previous year in many aspects. At Key Stage 1, about two thirds of the pupils achieved the nationally expected Level 2 in reading and writing, and three quarters did so in mathematics. Although the results in reading were the same as in 2003, improvements were made in the proportion of pupils who achieved Level 2 in writing and mathematics. There was also an increase in the number of pupils who achieved the higher Level 3 in writing, which is particularly encouraging.

10. In the tests at Key Stage 2, good improvements were made in mathematics and science, and the results in English were close to those of the previous year. Half of the pupils achieved the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics, and just under three quarters did so in science. There was an increase in the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels in all three subjects.

11. The school has set realistic targets for performance in the national tests next year, based on predictions of what the pupils should achieve if they make the expected progress from their current levels of attainment. Challenging targets have also been set, which will improve the school's results considerably if they are achieved. There is a strong will within the school to strive for these more challenging targets.

12. There has been steady improvement in standards in English lessons, although they are still below what is typically found in primary classrooms. The pupils enter the school with, overall, low levels of skills in speaking and listening, but, in response to careful teaching, they steadily gain in confidence and increase their vocabulary through the nursery and reception classes. In other classes, the teachers consistently encourage the pupils to answer questions fully, and to explain their thinking. They also make sure that the pupils learn and use technical vocabulary appropriately. This has had the effect of improving the pupils' oral skills; many show much greater confidence and skill when speaking aloud. Their listening skills have also improved; the pupils are generally attentive to their teacher and to each other when they work in pairs or small groups. The pupils are increasingly confident to use their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make to help them with their reading, but many lack the more demanding skills of inference and deduction, finding it hard to read beyond the literal. The pupils write for a suitable range of purposes and audiences, and written work is improving in a number of subjects, in terms of content and presentation.

However, there are still significant weaknesses in the pupils' spelling, the use of more complex imagery and imagination and in their punctuation. A policy for the teaching of handwriting has been adopted recently, but practice sessions in handwriting books have as yet had slight impact on the pupils' handwriting overall.

13. There have been more noticeable improvements in mathematics, as seen in the results of the recent national tests. The pupils gain a good grounding in basic knowledge of number, shapes and measures in the nursery and reception classes; many have made good progress towards the goals expected by the end of the reception year. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the pupils build well on what they have learned before. They know an increasing range of strategies to solve simple and more complex problems and can explain what they are doing. In Year 2, the pupils recognised repeating patterns in numbers and used this understanding to predict answers. They showed pleasure in their achievement. In Year 5, the pupils were working on the relationship between fractions and division. They used their knowledge of multiplication tables to help them arrive at answers; some had a speedy recall of multiplication facts but others were slow, or counted up on their fingers. When working on the properties of two-dimensional shapes, the pupils showed a reasonable knowledge of technical terms. An analysis of the results of non-statutory tests taken by the pupils in Key Stage 2 has revealed significant gaps in the pupils' knowledge; some aspect of mathematics have clearly not been taught in the past. The school is taking steps to address this as quickly as possible, and specific aspects are taught for short periods of time throughout the week. The pupils have responded with enthusiasm to this initiative.

14. In all of the lessons, the pupils made at least satisfactory progress towards the objectives for their learning. They made good progress in five lessons. Where good progress was made, the pupils were making up some of the ground they had lost in previous years. The pupils' progress is more consistent; this is largely attributable to improvements in the teaching and in the pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The nursery class has consistently offered its pupils a good start to their education at Mandeville and the youngest pupils make good progress during their first year. This is now built on more effectively in the other years of the school. Those pupils who have special educational needs are given good support in lessons, and they make progress in line with their prior attainment.

The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. The school promotes the pupils' social, moral and cultural development well. Provision for their spiritual development is broadly satisfactory, but more could be done to enhance the spiritual element in assemblies and the wider curriculum. The school has a strong moral code which has contributed greatly to the improvements in the pupils' behaviour and attitudes. The pupils know right from wrong and generally comply with the school's expectations. They are polite and friendly, and keen to talk about their work and their school. Assemblies make a good contribution to the pupils' awareness of moral and social issues, and encourage the pupils to appreciate the achievements of others. Interesting and thoughtful displays in classrooms and in public areas highlight recent work on Black History Month, and reflect the rich cultural diversity of the school's population. Visits to places of interest and visitors to the school also enhance the pupils' understanding of the multicultural society in which they live. The pupils learn about different faiths and beliefs through good quality work in religious education lessons. Nevertheless, a spiritual element is missing from assemblies, which make scant reference to God or a broadly Christian ethos, and opportunities for reflection are brief.

16. The pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are usually good and sometimes very good. This is a significant improvement. In lessons, the pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and nearly all of the pupils are attentive, responsive and keen to learn. They have gained in confidence to answer questions posed by the teacher, and to ask questions of their own when they do not fully understand, or need further information. They usually concentrate well and work steadily, especially when the teaching is good, but good work habits are not firmly established and the pupils lose their motivation quickly when the pace of lessons slows or in response to other minor weaknesses in teaching. The pupils take more pride in their work and respond well to praise and encouragement from their teachers and the teaching assistants.

17. The pupils generally behave well in lessons, in the playground and on the stairwells. In 15 of the lessons, behaviour was at least good, including five lessons in which their behaviour was very good. There are few occasions when the teachers need to use the sanctions which are part of the system for managing behaviour; referrals to another class or the headteacher are rare, and fixed-term exclusions are seldom necessary. There is a much better climate for learning in the classrooms and the pupils do not interrupt the learning of others. The teachers and teaching assistants are consistent in their expectations of the pupils' behaviour, and how they will be managed. The school's learning mentor has helped to modify the behaviour of some pupils who were particularly challenging, enabling them to manage their feelings and to concentrate on their learning.

18. Rates of attendance are below average in comparison with both national and local levels, but are slowly improving. Those pupils whose attendance falls below certain levels are identified, and their parents receive letters pointing out the need for good attendance. These are followed up with letters of congratulation when attendance improves. The work of the home-school liaison officer has also contributed to improved attendance, and has helped to improve punctuality to school. Very few pupils are late. During the day, movement up and down the stairs is swifter and more orderly than previously and lessons get off to a crisp start.

The quality of education

19. The quality of teaching has improved a great deal and was satisfactory or better in all of the lessons, including nine lessons where it was good or very good. The proportion of good teaching is encouraging. The teaching in the nursery and in most classes at Key Stage 2 was generally strong.

20. In the best lessons, the teachers had a good knowledge of the subject, a secure understanding of what the pupils were to learn, and had devised suitable tasks to promote learning. Relationships were good; the teachers used humour, praise and encouragement effectively to motivate the pupils. The lessons proceeded at a brisk pace, but the teachers made sure that all knew what they were doing and why, and that they built appropriately on what they had learned before. Questions were used well to check understanding and to encourage the pupils to contribute. Expectations of standards of work and behaviour were suitably high.

21. There are minor weaknesses which remain in the teaching, and which mean that the pupils' progress in lessons is not always as good as it could be. The pace of lessons is not consistently brisk enough to keep the pupils' attention, and simple organisational matters are

not always handled effectively. For example, not all of the teachers made sure that the pupils could see, or turned their back on them at times.

22. The headteacher and senior staff make regular checks on the quality of teaching and provide clear and consistent feedback; high standards are expected. The school has clear and unequivocal policies and procedures for inducting new staff, which mean that teachers employed in the short term know exactly what is expected of them. The insistence on high standards has meant that some teachers' stay at the school has been short-lived, but the strategy of demanding nothing but the best for the pupils is beginning to pay off.

23. The teaching assistants provide effective support in class for lower-attaining pupils and for those who have special educational needs. Many have undertaken further training and are confident to work with groups, using nationally promoted strategies. Their work helps the pupils make suitable progress in lessons.

24. The school's curriculum appropriately emphasises English and mathematics. Additional lessons in these subjects have helped to boost the pupils' basic skills, and address gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Scrutiny of samples of work and analyses of test results are increasingly used to pinpoint areas of weakness and adjust the teaching programme accordingly. Parents are given useful information about the topics their child will be studying, and are encouraged to help their child at home. The school offers a growing range of extracurricular sporting and creative activities and takes part in local events, such as planting trees and participating in an opera for schools. These activities appropriately enrich the curriculum. Work is soon to begin on making better cross-curricular links between subjects.

25. The school's systems for assessing the pupils' levels of attainment and tracking their progress have developed well. The information is used to highlight areas of weakness, to identify where particular help is needed and to tailor what will be taught to the pupils' specific needs. The school has a clear picture of levels of attainment of cohorts and individual pupils in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. As well as overall targets for the pupils in Years 2 and 6, all pupils have individual targets for their work in English and mathematics, which have been discussed with them and their parents. This aspect of the school's work is in the early stages, and is not fully embedded as part of everyday teaching and learning.

Leadership and management

26. Since her arrival at the school, the headteacher has set about making improvements with a fierce, unswerving determination. The tasks she has faced have not been easy ones, but she has a clear vision for where the school should go and works tirelessly towards it. Her strong leadership and acceptance of nothing but the best have engendered loyalty and enthusiasm among the staff group, at all levels. The headteacher has clearly communicated her expectations for how the school will function and the part that will be played by staff, pupils and their parents. Her work has enabled the school to move forward at a swift pace. There have been some setbacks - for example, a significant turnover of teaching staff and a high proportion of teachers employed on temporary or supply contracts - but the impact of such changes has been minimised by the clear systems and procedures which have been introduced. The school's interim development and management plan is appropriately focused on key priorities and is a useful tool for improvement. The school's systems for evaluating its

own performance are developing well; for example, observations of teaching and learning carried out by the headteacher and senior staff provide clear judgements and honest and helpful feedback about the quality of the teachers' performance.

27. The work of the senior managers has developed well; the deputy headteacher and other members of the senior team provide good support for the headteacher and others, and they have worked hard to help bring about the significant changes in the school's culture and ethos. They share the headteacher's firm belief in the potential of the pupils who attend Mandeville. Nevertheless, there is scope to strengthen the leadership they provide; this aspect of their work is underdeveloped. Improvement in the impact of the work of middle managers has been slight, and has been hindered by the school's difficulties in recruiting permanent members of staff.

28. Under the guidance of an experienced and determined chairman, the governing body has improved its work significantly. The governing body actively seeks information about how the school is progressing and has undertaken training to learn how to interrogate information effectively, and to hold the school to account for its performance. The governing body plays a much stronger part in challenging, as well as supporting, the school. The committee structure works well and supportive links between governors and the teaching staff are growing. There is a strong desire to promote the school and to change its image for the better; for example, some governors are working on developing a web site for the school as part of the strategy to attract good teachers.

29. Since the appointment of the headteacher and a simultaneous change of link adviser, the LEA's support has become much more effective. The type of support which was needed was carefully thought out and well focused as part of a clear strategy. This increased the impact of the LEA's work considerably. The LEA was also more assiduous in evaluating the impact of support. This has helped the school to move forward in a planned, systematic manner and to make great strides forward over the past year.

Implementation of the action plan

30. The inspection report of May 2002 required the school to address four key issues. These related to: raising standards in English, mathematics and science; improving the quality of teaching in order to boost learning and progress; improving systems for assessment and using the information to plan the next steps in learning; and improving the skills and knowledge of senior managers and the governing body. Overall, the school has now tackled these key issues well, although there is still work to do in raising standards and in increasing the amount of good and better teaching in order to boost learning and address the gaps in the pupils' knowledge and skills.

31. In the first year, the school made little progress in dealing with the significant weaknesses in the quality of education and in leadership and management. This led to a deterioration in the pupils' attitudes and behaviour, low morale and a rapid turnover of staff at all levels. The school reached a crisis point during the summer term of 2003. However, the governing body successfully recruited a permanent headteacher for the autumn term 2003, and from that point, the school's fortunes took a turn for the better.

32. In the early days, the headteacher worked almost single-handedly to establish order and ground rules for pupils, staff and parents and to bring stability and direction. She

provided inspired and determined leadership and direction which raised morale and engendered loyalty. Other senior members of staff were appointed, and the quality of leadership and management strengthened and deepened, although there is still scope to further improve the leadership role of the members of the senior management team.

33. Steady progress was made in improving systems for assessment and the school collects a range of information which is used to set targets for individual pupils and to shape the teaching. This, together with the growing strengths in the teaching, has contributed to the slow but steady improvements in the standards achieved by the pupils. Insisting on the highest standards from both permanent and temporary teachers has benefited the pupils greatly.

Appendix – Information about the inspection

The school was inspected by HMI in May 2002. The inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996, which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the school and, in accordance with that Act, the school was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.

The school was visited by HMI in November 2002, in April, June and November 2003, and in February and June 2004 to assess the progress it was making to implement its action plan and address the key issues in the inspection report of May 2002.

In November 2004, an HMI and an Additional Inspector returned to inspect the school for two days. The inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996, and was also deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

Seventeen lessons or parts of lessons, three assemblies and two registration sessions were inspected. The pupils were observed at break and lunchtimes and samples of their work were inspected. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior staff, a group of teaching assistants, the school's learning mentor and the home-school liaison officer. Informal discussions were held with other staff and pupils. A wide range of the school's documentation was scrutinised. Account was also taken of the evidence from previous monitoring inspections.

The inspection assessed the quality of education provided and the progress the school has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and key issues in the inspection report of May 2002 and the action plan prepared by the governing body to address those key issues.