



Merryhills Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101999
LEA Enfield LEA
Inspection number 276633
Inspection dates 5 October 2005 to 6 October 2005
Reporting inspector Graham Lee AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Bincote Road
School category	Community		Enfield
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Middlesex EN2 7RE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02083631403
Number on roll	432	Fax number	02083672297
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Daren Metcalfe
Date of previous inspection	10 July 2000	Headteacher	Mr D Edmonds

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 5 October 2005 - 6 October 2005	Inspection number 276633
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Merryhills Primary is a large school situated in the North London borough of Enfield. Although the majority of pupils are of white, British heritage around one in five speak English as an additional language. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds with significant groups of Turkish, Greek and Indian origin. Relatively few pupils are entitled to free school meals. Around 13% of pupils have special educational needs, which is below average. The school has a breakfast club and externally managed after hours care. Merryhills is recognised as an Investor in People and has gained Sport England Activemark status.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation that Merryhills is a sound school with many strong features. The headteacher is an effective leader who ensures that the school provides a caring, nurturing and happy atmosphere where every pupil is valued and encouraged to do their best. Pupils are proud of their school, enjoy learning and behave well. The school has an excellent partnership with parents. It provides satisfactory value for money. Children make a good start to their education in the Reception class through the creative and stimulating environment provided. As they move through the school pupils make satisfactory progress and reach standards that are above average overall by the time they leave. Pupils arrive with weak skills in communication and they continue to make slower progress in writing than in reading. This is particularly true of more able boys. The school provides pupils with a rich and varied curriculum. An outstanding feature of the work is the very wide range of sporting and other activities provided outside the school day. Opportunities for pupils to write independently in a variety of subjects are under-developed. In some lessons, more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently. The headteacher is very well supported by a new and enthusiastic management team and governing body. The school has been through a period of staff changes which have slowed progress. Improvement in writing has been an issue since the last inspection but school leaders are very clear about what needs to be done. Inspectors are confident that the school has the ability to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

Improve standards in writing by providing more opportunities for pupils to explore ideas and writing styles in different subjects. Ensure that teaching consistently challenges brighter pupils, particularly boys.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement overall is satisfactory. Children make good progress on starting school and by the end of the reception year the vast majority reach the expected goals for their age. Their attainment in communication, language and literacy is below that expected, notably in early writing skills. For several years, standards at the end of Year 2 have risen steadily and pupils have been especially successful in reading and mathematics where standards are above average. Despite some improvement in the most recent tests, writing remains below average. This pattern continues in Years 3 to 6. The most recent test results for eleven year olds indicate that standards are above average in English and science and average in mathematics by the time they leave the school. Pupils are more successful in reading than writing. Boys are less successful than girls when tackling complex work in reading and writing. Progress in reading is good, but satisfactory in writing and mathematics. The school sets challenging targets and are largely successful in meeting them. Pupils have a secure grasp of basic

techniques but, limited opportunities to apply their writing skills in other subjects. There is little difference in the performance of those from minority ethnic groups, although those with an Indian heritage are the most successful. Those who are at an early stage of learning English make sound progress and attain similar levels to their classmates. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from regular support and make satisfactory progress. More able girls make good progress although the boys should do better.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They respond enthusiastically to the many and varied opportunities provided. There are high levels of attendance at extra curricular activities. Pupils enjoy representing their school and take pride in their own and others' achievements. In a football competition, they were sporting and welcoming towards visiting teams. They show much respect for other traditions and enjoy finding out about religious and cultural celebrations such as the Jewish New Year. Pupils clearly understand the purpose of rules and help to create a positive atmosphere through their good behaviour and attitudes. They enjoy taking responsibility and are proud of the school council's contribution in making the playground a stimulating environment. Enthusiasm for school starts in the Foundation Stage where one girl said to her friend, 'I didn't know that school could be such fun.' These young children thrive in the stimulating environment provided. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory. Pupils are orderly as they move around the school although some become unsettled during assemblies. Playground behaviour is good and pupils say that bullying is rare and that the staff deal with any incidents effectively. They cooperate well and enjoy discussion and sharing ideas. Pupils know how to keep healthy through exercise and healthy eating. They have a good awareness of others' needs and are keen supporters of an orphanage in Mozambique, local and national charities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and several good lessons were seen. Teaching and assessment in the Foundation Stage are good and the children are enthusiastic learners. They thrive in a positive atmosphere and benefit from wide ranging practical opportunities. Throughout the school, teachers' planning and preparation are thorough and make effective links between subjects. Staff manage behaviour consistently and pupils mostly concentrate well. However, in some lessons the pace is slow which results in some pupils, usually boys, losing focus. Most teachers use assessment well and guide pupils on how to improve through accurate target setting. Teaching mostly meets the needs of pupils of different abilities. Basic skills are mostly taught well and pupils say they enjoy homework and opportunities to research. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good support and

participate fully in lessons. Those at an early stage of learning English receive focused support and make quick gains in learning. In some lessons the work is not challenging enough for the more able pupils, especially boys.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good with some very strong features. There are outstanding opportunities for pupils to take part in sporting and musical activities which contribute much to their self confidence and life skills. The curriculum is enriched effectively through residential trips, opportunities to learn French and a strong emphasis on healthy lifestyles and keeping safe. Staff encourage pupils' creative skills and this is reflected in good quality art work and musical expertise. Detailed learning plans, good support and effective management ensure that pupils with learning difficulties participate fully in the school's activities. Those at an early stage of learning English are given work which is matched to their needs and they benefit from good support. The school has improved its use of computers to enhance learning in several subjects. Pupils are not always given sufficient opportunity to use their writing skills in different subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Governors and parents are justly proud of this strong aspect of the school's work. Staff provide very good care and support. They carefully monitor pupils' personal development. The recently improved system for checking on progress has led to more focused help for pupils with learning difficulties and for those at an early stage of English. The school is a healthy and safe place. Attractive grounds, clean buildings and the celebration of pupils' academic and social achievements in displays enhance learning. One boy said, 'I'm really proud because my name is on the Courtesy Tree.' The school liaises well with outside agencies on all matters affecting pupils' well being. Robust health and safety procedures and thorough risk assessments are in place. Staff have a good understanding of the very good systems for child protection. The school's policies and practices to ensure freedom from racial harassment and discrimination illustrate that staff value and care for everyone.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school evaluates leadership and management to be good but inspectors judge it to be satisfactory overall with some very strong elements. The headteacher is an effective leader who has established a very caring and inclusive atmosphere in the school. He is well supported by a new and enthusiastic deputy head and strong leadership team. Governors are very well informed and offer a very good balance of support and challenge to school leaders. The school has an excellent relationship with its parents and consults them widely on a range of issues. The management of the

school is very good and the school runs very well on a day to day basis. Leaders know the school well and take appropriate action to bring about improvement. Last year, for example, in response to a dip in standards in writing, they implemented a detailed action plan for improvement. Although this has brought about some improvement this year it has yet to be fully effective. This was partly because systems for checking teaching and learning were not rigorous enough because of high staff turnover. Similarly, the school has established good procedures for tracking pupils' progress over the years. This information is now being used to support individuals and groups at risk of under-achieving. The impact of this work has yet to be fully felt. The school has been through a period of some turbulence involving a number of changes to the leadership team. Although writing has been an issue since the last inspection the new and innovative deployment of the leadership team means that the school is now well placed to improve the school still further.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to thank you all for making us so welcome when we came to the school earlier this week. We really enjoyed our time at Merryhills and you all helped the inspection by being so friendly and helpful. I thought you might like to know some of the things we found out.

You are very proud of your school and enjoy all that it has to offer. Everybody feels safe and happy in school and staff look after you very well. You work hard in your lessons and behave well in class, in the playground and around the school. You make a good start to your learning in the Reception class and enjoy all the interesting activities there. You get better as you move through the school and by the time you leave most of you are doing well. Some of you find writing a bit more difficult than reading, particularly the boys! At Merryhills you are very lucky to have such a lot of activities to do in the school day as well as outside it. You are very enthusiastic about your sport and the school does very well in competitions. You also have the chance to learn French, play musical instruments and produce good art work. The school has been led very well by Mr Edmonds for many years. He has made sure that the school is a happy place and that all of you have the chance to do your best. The staff give him lots of help support and try to make the school an even better place.

There are a few things that your school needs to do to help improve your learning. They need to improve your writing by giving you chances to write more in other subjects. In some lessons the work is a bit too easy for some of you. The school has been asked to make sure that there is some hard work for all of you in all lessons. We know that your headteacher and staff will work hard to make these improvements to your school to make it an even better place. You can help them by continuing to work hard and by always doing your best.