

Malorees Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101554
Local Authority	Brent
Inspection number	286108
Inspection date	15 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Jane Wotherspoon HMI

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr D Cooper
Headteacher	Mrs P Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	20 January 2003
School address	Christchurch Avenue London NW6 7PB
Telephone number	020 8459 5452
Fax number	020 8451 7491

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Malorees is an average sized school with a stable population. It serves an area of huge cultural, ethnic and religious diversity with pockets of affluence and deprivation. Twelve pupils are from asylum seeking families. A high proportion of pupils, three quarters, are from ethnic minority groups although no group dominates. A quarter of its pupils are from White British heritage. The predominance of boys is more marked in some year groups. Forty five per cent of the pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities which is higher than in most schools. A quarter of pupils are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language and 32 different languages are spoken at the school.

The school has achieved several awards: 'Artsmark Gold', 'Basic Skills Mark', 'Active Sports', and is working towards the 'Healthy Schools Award'.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Malorees Junior School is right to judge itself to be a good school. However, staff and governors are a little too modest about some of its outstanding features. The vast majority of parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire were entirely positive about the school's work and its success in 'nurturing the whole child'. The high number of parental responses is an indication of the strength of the partnership in their child's learning. Excellent relationships between staff and pupils underpin the strong ethos of care which values each child and teaches them to respect one another's cultural differences and to appreciate each other's achievements. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they simply love being at Malorees. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Pupils say that bullying is almost unheard of, but they are safe in the knowledge that adults would respond quickly if they had any concerns.

The headteacher provides an outstanding lead and clear vision for a school where basic skills are important but do not compromise the balance of the curriculum. She and her deputy are passionate about the part that an extended curriculum plays in the development of well-rounded individuals ready to face the challenge of the next stage of their education. Pupils have opportunities to be involved in an outstanding range of stimulating and exciting activities that go way beyond the subjects of the national curriculum. Music, in particular, makes an exceptional contribution to the life of the school and to pupils' personal development. Together with provision for 'the arts' and for physical and sporting activities, visits to interesting places contribute significantly to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Pupils achieve well to reach above average standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. These subjects are taught effectively. For many years, the school has sustained results that compare favourably with national and local figures. The school's focus on improving writing include specific projects aimed at raising the achievement of pupils who speak English as an additional language and boys from minority ethnic groups. These have met with a good level of success because staff have embraced the principles whole-heartedly and consistently. A slight dip in the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels in mathematics and science last year had not been predicted and took the school by surprise. These pupils should have done better. Senior staff have responded quickly by putting in place more robust systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress during the year. There is scope, too, for subject leaders to make even greater use of available performance data to identify where there is room for further improvement and to help teachers set specific targets for individuals.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop further the analysis of performance data to pinpoint more precisely where pupils, especially potentially higher attaining pupils, could do better.
- Share good practice in marking pupils' work and in setting individual targets for class work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are good and pupils achieve well from an average starting point in Year 3. Last year's dip in results meant that, although the school exceeded its statutory targets, fewer pupils than expected attained higher levels in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence and the school's data show that current standards are above average and pupils are making good progress. They are on course to meet the school's targets for 2007 and 2008. Pupils make consistently good

progress in English, where there has been a focus for improvement. Reading is stronger than writing and so writing remains a focus for improvement. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress towards the targets in their individual learning plans.

Standards in music are outstanding. Pupils make tremendous progress in learning to read music and achieve a high level of competence for their age. All pupils learn to play the recorder and two thirds learn another instrument from the army of peripatetic teachers. They gain much success in examinations. Good standards of art work around the school add greatly to the physical environment and serve to celebrate pupils' achievement as well as to set expectations.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' attitudes to learning and to school life are excellent. Attendance is good and their enjoyment of school is outstanding. Pupils are eager to take advantage of the many clubs and activities that help them to develop their talents and interests. 'Buzz time' at the start of the day is a favourite. Pupils acknowledge that it helps them to exercise and get ready for learning. School council members, elected by their peers, take their role very seriously. They have become more active recently with their attendance at a governing body meeting and their involvement in encouraging others to be aware of environmental issues. They are confident that the school asks for their views and involves them in making decisions about, for example, play equipment.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary because pupils know it is expected. This leads to a calm orderly place for learning. Pupils are polite, friendly and good ambassadors for the school. They know it has a good reputation and they are proud of it. Some pupils in Year 6 expressed the desire for Malorees to become a secondary school so that they wouldn't have to leave! Excellent relationships and firm friendships between pupils are evident in the harmonious playtimes where pupils of all ethnic groups mix socially. Older pupils know that any upsets are quickly dealt with by staff if they cannot resolve them on their own.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Relationships are a significant strength. Teachers' well judged use of praise and humour strike a good balance with their high expectations of pupils' behaviour to create a pleasant atmosphere for learning. Pupils are valued and made to feel that they can contribute and so they feel confident to share their feelings willingly. Their views are accepted by staff and other pupils alike.

Typically, lesson planning is detailed and activities, including the effective use of interactive whiteboards, capture pupils' interest. Teachers are clear what they want pupils to get from the lesson. They make good use of talking partners so that pupils try out their ideas and to promote high level participation in lessons. Just occasionally, teachers focus too much on individuals answering their questions. Good modelling of how to structure their writing and a strong focus on technical vocabulary contribute much to pupils' learning, but especially to those whose first language is not English. The quality of input from teaching assistants is inconsistent though many make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

In all classes, teachers identify targets for groups of pupils and some, notably Year 6, have individual targets that pupils record for themselves after discussion with their teachers. The

use of target sheets in some classes helps pupils to evaluate their own work. This gives them a clear sense of what they are striving for. The marking of pupils' written work is exemplary in some classes but not consistently so and does not always identify what pupils need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Pupils benefit from an outstanding curriculum that encourages them to develop their talents and a love of learning. Peripatetic music teaching is subsidised by the school and pupils have numerous opportunities to perform individually and in groups. This gives them a confidence and self assurance borne from the knowledge that their efforts will be appreciated. Performing in the 50-piece school orchestra gives a strong sense of achievement to those involved and much pleasure to audiences of pupils and parents alike. The arts and physical activities also feature strongly. Artists in residence make a valuable contribution to the art curriculum and sporting teams, which achieve much success locally, helping pupils to learn about healthy lifestyles. An outstanding range of additional activities, much appreciated by pupils and their parents, include excellent use of local facilities, the school's extensive grounds and visits to sites further afield, including residential visits in both Year 5 and Year 6. An improvement since the last inspection is that computers are used effectively across the curriculum. Teachers are beginning to make good links between subjects to maximise the use of time and to help pupils learn that skills are transferable between subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Parents are right to be confident that the dedicated staff provide a high level of care and support for their children. Pupils feel safe and confident that staff look after them and expect them to do well. Statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils are met. Strong links with external agencies and local services contribute effectively to pupils' well being.

The school assesses pupils regularly to identify those who need additional support. The school's extensive programme of intervention for pupils with learning difficulties is highly successful. The special needs coordinator monitors programmes very carefully and regularly checks that pupils are meeting their small-step targets. These are reviewed frequently and pupils are involved in setting new targets. Support for pupils who speak English as an additional language is well targeted and part of a school-wide initiative. The progress of some pupils new to the school who arrived speaking little English is remarkable. They are helped to settle well to school life.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's 'open door' policy and the approachability of staff are much appreciated by parents, whose views are sought regularly. Together, the headteacher and deputy set a very strong steer for the school's positive ethos of care. The senior leadership team is not complacent and constantly seeking ways of extending the provision for pupils. Given the school's success over many years and the swift response to the slight dip in results, it has a good capacity to continue improving.

Systems for evaluating the school's work are well established and include contributions from all members of the school community. The three-year plan for improvement sets out appropriate actions to maintain standards while extending provision and developing the school site. Information from assessment is used effectively to group pupils by ability but there is scope to develop further the analysis of performance data to pinpoint precisely where individuals could make more progress. This is especially true of those potentially higher attaining pupils whose progress is not monitored as closely or frequently as those with learning difficulties. The new system for assessing and tracking pupils' progress in mathematics, put in place at the start of this year, is a positive step towards enabling the school to track pupils during the year. Subject leaders for science are developing ways of assessing pupils and tracking their progress over time in science.

Governors are supportive of the school and suitably involved in its strategic development. An example is the proposal for a new building to develop further provision for the creative arts and information and communication technology (ICT), and to provide the school with a kitchen. Careful financial management makes these proposals realistic. Most governors have curriculum links with school staff although they acknowledge that there is scope to formalise these.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

25 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Malorees Junior School, London, NW6 7PB

I was delighted to meet you when I came to inspect your school. A special 'thank-you' to those of you who came to speak to me. Some of you asked me if I liked your school. Well, I think it is a good school, but I think that some parts are outstanding. I can see why you are so proud to be pupils of Malorees.

Many of your parents completed the questionnaire and told me how highly they think of Malorees. You told me how much you love the school, too. I think the way you all get on with each other at playtime is impressive. You told me that everyone behaves well and bullying is practically unheard of, but you know staff will help you if you have a concern. Staff look after you very well. You do well in lessons and you work hard because your teachers expect you to. Although some of you said you don't want to leave, you have the skills you need to be successful at secondary school. You know what is right and wrong and you have a good understanding of your responsibilities to others. Most importantly, you have such positive attitudes towards learning.

I was amazed at all the different things you do. The staff work very hard to give you a huge range of activities and I am sure you appreciate them. I was impressed by the quality of the music in your school. I could tell from the hush that came over you all and from your genuine applause that you really appreciate your friends' talents. You all have plenty of opportunities for art, drama, and to go on visits to interesting places. It was good to see that you take part in so many sports activities and clubs. Buzz time is fun, isn't it?

I have asked the headteacher and the staff to look very carefully at how well some of you are doing during the year to see if you could do even better. I have asked the staff to share their different systems for setting you individual targets so that you know exactly what you are trying to achieve.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jane Wotherspoon Her Majesty's Inspector