



Aylward First and Middle School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102225
Local Authority Harrow
Inspection number 286313
Inspection dates 7–8 December 2006
Reporting inspector Graham Lee

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

The inspection of the day care was carried out under Children Act 1989: Part XA (as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000) and, where (funded) nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Type of school	Middle deemed primary	School address	Pangbourne Drive
School category	Community		Stanmore
Age range of pupils	3–12		HA7 4RE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8958 9202
Number on roll (school)	473	Fax number	020 8958 5728
Number on roll (day care)	24	Chair	Mrs D Mukherjee
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Headteacher	Mrs M Arnold
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2003		
Date of previous day care inspection	17 January 2005		

Age group 3–12	Inspection dates 7–8 December 2006	Inspection number 286313
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school draws its pupils from a fairly wide area and many of its families have significant social and economic need. Two out of three pupils are of minority ethnic heritage and nearly half speak English as an additional language. Whilst the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is broadly average there are an increasing number with autistic spectrum disorder. The proportion of pupils moving in and out of the school at other than the usual times is much higher than average. The governors manage and run a registered after school club called PAALS (Pupils at Aylward Late School) and all the children who attend the club are pupils from the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school which has improved considerably since its last inspection. At the heart of its work is its outstanding commitment to including and supporting children from a diverse range of backgrounds, many who arrive with little or no English. The school works exceptionally well in partnership with parents and outside agencies to ensure that all pupils do as well as they can. This ensures that the care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. Pupils feel safe and secure, generally behave well and thrive in the welcoming environment. A very clear focus on improving teaching and learning has ensured that pupils achieve well, irrespective of their background or ability. The school enjoys the overwhelming support of the vast majority of parents. One, expressing the views of many, commented, 'The school embraces all cultures and showcases the talents of the pupils on a regular basis'.

The driving force behind the school's continuing improvement is the very strong leadership of the headteacher. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher, a new and enthusiastic leadership team and committed governing body. They know the school well through accurate self evaluation and have successfully addressed the issues arising from the last inspection. They are very well placed to ensure that the school continues to improve.

Pupils achieve well from generally low starting points. Children make good progress in the stimulating environment provided in the Foundation Stage. Pupils continue to make good progress as they move through the school and are now reaching standards that are above average by the age of eleven. Good teaching and pupils' positive attitudes to learning contribute to this good progress. Occasionally, however, teachers talk for too long and do not give pupils enough opportunities to express their ideas in lessons. This slows their progress, particularly for those that need to consolidate their English. In general, however, pupils who are learning English and those with learning difficulties and disabilities are given very good support and achieve well. In particular, the school's expertise in meeting the needs of pupils with autistic spectrum disorder is widely recognised by parents.

The curriculum is good and provides pupils with a wide range of enrichment activities which contribute to their evident enjoyment of school. In Year 7 it is enhanced by specialist teaching and adapted successfully to meet the demands of the Key Stage 3 curriculum. Attendance is improving as a result of effective measures taken by the school. It remains a little below average, however, principally because a number of parents continue to take their children on extended holidays in term time. Pupils make a very strong contribution to the school community through the 'buddying' system and the school council. They participate enthusiastically in sporting activities and have a clear understanding of the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Their positive attitudes and good basic skills ensure that they are well prepared for secondary school and the world beyond.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers give pupils enough opportunities to participate in lessons to consolidate their learning and develop their language skills.
- Work with parents to improve attendance and minimise the disruption to pupils' education caused by extended absences.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. When they arrive many children are at the early stages of learning English and consequently their skills in communication and literacy are particularly low. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and many reach the levels expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Standards in the literacy aspects of the curriculum remain below average. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in consolidating their understanding of English and by the age of seven reach standards in mathematics, reading and writing that are broadly average. Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 2 and they are now reaching standards in English, mathematics and science that are above average by the age of eleven. Significant numbers arrive at the school during Key Stage 2 with varying levels of need. These pupils make good progress but do not generally reach the same standards as those who have been in the school throughout Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 7 make good progress and are well prepared to continue with the Key Stage 3 curriculum when they reach secondary school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including the social, moral, spiritual and cultural dimensions, are good. Most pupils behave well. The few who present challenging behaviour from time to time are helped to manage their problems successfully without recourse to exclusion. Pupils say that bullying is very rare in school. They greatly enjoy school and all that it has to offer. They have warm relationships with adults and with one another. One pupil commented, 'It is a very friendly school. We can ask teachers any question we like'. Most pupils attend regularly and on time although the extended holidays of a number of families means that overall figures are a little below average. Pupils clearly understand the importance of safe and healthy living. As well as their awareness of the need for an active lifestyle they have made an important contribution to making school lunches healthier. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities through the school council, for example, and are proud of the improvements they have helped to make in the school. At a wider level pupils are involved in organising fund raising activities for charities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection and is now good. This has had a positive impact on pupils' achievements. Very good relationships and high expectations promote pupils' good attitudes to learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and engage learners well through good questions and interesting activities. They use interactive technology effectively to enhance pupils' learning in all areas. In some lessons, teachers dominate discussions too much and pupils have insufficient opportunities to contribute. As a result, the pace slows and some pupils lose interest. Teaching assistants contribute very effectively to pupils' learning, especially those pupils with learning difficulties and at an early stage of learning English. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and most give them good feedback which helps them to improve their work. Increasingly, pupils are involved in assessing their own and each other's work. For example, in an exciting Year 5 English lesson, groups of pupils had created imaginative scenarios for advertisements. Other pupils offered constructive feedback demonstrating a clear understanding of the important features of this genre.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum enables pupils to achieve well and enjoy their education. It provides effectively for the development of basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Support for pupils at the early stages of learning English is much improved and enables these pupils to achieve well. The school is developing effective links between different subjects to make learning more meaningful for all pupils but this is still at a fairly early stage of development. Effective use of specialist staff in physical education, music and ICT is contributing to significant improvements in these areas. The curriculum places a strong and effective emphasis on pupils' personal development and citizenship. It is enhanced significantly by a wide range of clubs, educational visits and visitors to the school. The school is also keen to broaden pupils' horizons and are developing international links with some schools in India.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils are exceptionally well cared for and supported, which has a very positive impact on their personal development. The school is very successful in including and welcoming children and families from a wide range of backgrounds. This was evident when parents and children from the Polish community proudly presented an assembly about their homeland, which was greatly enjoyed by staff and pupils. Vulnerable pupils are particularly well supported through the inclusion leader and learning mentors. Many

parents recognise that those with learning difficulties and disabilities are very well catered for. One commented, 'The school is exceptional in their dealings with children with special needs. Everything is in place to help my son achieve to the best of his ability'. The great majority of parents feel welcome and are pleased with the information they receive about the school and their children's work. Assessment information is being used increasingly effectively to monitor pupils' performance and to set challenging targets to ensure they all do as well as they can.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good and have secured significant improvements in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. This in turn has resulted in pupils' achieving well. Teaching has improved because of good staff development, rigorous monitoring and support and the effective use of data to set challenging targets for improvement. The headteacher is a highly respected and effective leader who has created a nurturing and caring learning environment where the quality of care, guidance and support are outstanding and children are given every opportunity to achieve as well as they can. The newly reconstructed leadership team are focused effectively on improving teaching and learning and raising achievement still further. A lot of good strategies have been put in place but it is too early to assess the impact of this work. Governors are knowledgeable and committed and offer school leaders support as well as holding them to account for the performance of the school.

Effectiveness of registered day care

Grade: 2

The quality and effectiveness of after school care provided by PAALS (Pupils at Aylward Late School) is good. It meets all national standards and the management team have secured good improvements since the last inspection. Procedures and routines are well established and effective. Children, parents and carers are fully aware of the high expectations of the staff so that the children are cared for in a safe and caring environment.

There are many strengths, the most significant being the warm and welcoming atmosphere fostered by the staff. Children are very well behaved and relationships are very good. Children care for each other, form strong friendships and play happily together. Resources are well organised and accessible to the children, although some books are insufficiently stimulating and challenging. The children are aware of healthy eating and snack times provide good opportunities for them to learn about healthy eating choices. However, there are missed opportunities to enable the children to show initiative or take responsibility for organising snack time or other activities.

Parents and carers are very pleased and this is reflected in the high level of satisfaction expressed through surveys of their views. Information for parents and carers is accessible and well organised. The management team know the legal requirements

relating to recording complaints. The policy document does not fully reflect this or contain the current contact details of the regulator.

The management team have addressed all three recommendations left at the last inspection. Fire regulations are clearly displayed and understood by the staff and children. Overall risk assessments are undertaken rigorously and systematically to ensure that the children learn and play in safe and secure environment. There are now clear written procedures that are made known to parents and carers related to medical treatment with good arrangements to ensure parents are informed in case of emergency or accidents. Parents and carers now fully apply a robust and secure system of registration and collection of children. Fire drills are well established although these arrangements do not fully take into consideration the ongoing risk assessment of the accessibility of all possible fire exits.

Recommendations or actions to improve the registered day care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take into account the following recommendations:

- ensure that all fire exits are accessible and known to the children and staff
- provide the children with more stimulating books that are better matched to the needs and abilities of all the children
- update the complaints policy to ensure that it fully reflects the updated regulatory requirements of the management, and to include the current contact details of the regulator.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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 quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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?	2
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.

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	2
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	1
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

The effectiveness of the registered day care

The quality and standards of the registered day care	2
How effective is the day care in helping children to be healthy?	2
How effective is the day care in protecting children and helping them to stay safe?	2
How effective is the day care in helping children to achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
How effective is the day care in helping children to make a positive contribution?	2
How effectively is the day care organised?	2
Does the day care meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides?	Yes
Has the day care improved since the last inspection?	Yes
Does the day care require enforcement action?	No
Does the day care require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

You may remember that a team of inspectors visited your school last week. I am writing to thank you all for being so friendly and welcoming. We really enjoyed our time at Aylward and you all helped by being so keen to talk to us. I thought you would like to know what we found out.

First of all you and your parents are right to be proud because it is a good school. Everybody looks after you extremely well and makes sure that you feel safe and secure and stay healthy. We were impressed by the good behaviour of most of you and the way you try to do your best in lessons. Well done! You come from a lot of different backgrounds and all get on very well together. I really enjoyed the assembly where you found out a lot of information about your friends who come from Poland. You are very lucky to have such a lot of extra things to do which you really seem to enjoy. You all told us that you like school very much and most of you attend regularly and on time. We have asked the school to work with your parents to make sure that you do not have long absences from school as this has an effect on how well you do. You can help with this.

You do well at school because the teaching is good. You told us that you like your teachers and that they always listen to you. By the time you go on to secondary school you are very well prepared thanks to the staff at Aylward. We agree with many of your parents who think that some of you who find things a bit more difficult are given lots of extra help. In some lessons some of you do not have enough opportunities to talk about your ideas. We have asked the teachers to make sure that you have those chances to help with your learning. It is especially important for those of you who are learning English.

The school is very well led by your headteacher with a lot of help from all the staff. They have done a lot of things to improve the school and are working hard to make it even better in the future.

Yours truly

Graham LeeLead Inspector