

# Childs Hill School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101265
<b>Local Authority</b>	Barnet
<b>Inspection number</b>	307633
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sandra Teacher

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	354
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Stuart Lester
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Jayne Franklin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 March 2004
<b>School address</b>	Dersingham Road Cricklewood London NW2 1SL
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8452 4531
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8830 5902

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Childs Hill School is situated in the London Borough of Barnet and is a culturally diverse community. The make up of the school has changed considerably over the last few years; it has increased in size and there are greater numbers of pupils who are new to learning and new to England. Significant numbers of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is higher than average and the school has a 'Language Resource Provision' that serves 12 pupils with speech, language and communication needs. Attainment on admission is very low and mobility is significant. The school provides a number of extended services including a recently opened Children's Centre and holds awards including the Gold Arts Mark and London School's Environment Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Childs Hill provides a good standard of education for its pupils. The needs of the pupils are central to all that the school does. The leadership and management of the school are good and are pivotal to the school's improvement. At all levels, the staff have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and an accurate assessment of what it needs to do to improve further. The role of the new subject leaders is being developed so that they understand how to support the teaching and the learning to raise standards in their areas. The school has tackled the issues from the last inspection effectively and, as a result, the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is much improved.

Most of the children begin school with well below average skills particularly in their language and social development and they make good progress in the Foundation Stage. Pupils continue to make good progress and achieve well as they move through the school so that they reach average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, although relatively few pupils reach the higher levels of learning in Numeracy and writing. The capacity to improve further is good with governors making a strong contribution.

As the school is trialling a new assessment system, pupils are not yet fully clear about using their learning targets to help improve their work. Attendance, although satisfactory, for a small number of families is an ongoing issue but the school is doing what it should to encourage these families to attend regularly.

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils really enjoy learning. As one pupil said about the changes they have seen in the last four years, 'We include everybody and treat them how we would like to be treated.' Parents are pleased with what the school offers. The care, guidance and support for individual pupils are very good, and the majority of pupils are fully involved in their own learning. The advice, support and activities provided through the Extended Services programme make a real difference to the pupils and their families. Family learning encourages the full participation of parents. The school prides itself on being central to the community it serves and on its strong links with the new Children's Centre.

The curriculum is good and is enriched by a wide range of activities. The integration and inclusion of the pupils from the Pathways resource base into the heart of the school transforms their lives. As another pupil said, 'this helps us to work with all sorts of people'. There is good support for the increasing numbers of pupils who are new to learning English and new to the school, so that their spoken language develops quickly. Teaching and learning are good, with valuable support given by a range of experienced adults, including learning mentors, to pupils who experience learning and behavioural difficulties. Carefully planned lessons interest and motivate the pupils. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught well giving pupils a strong foundation for the next stage of their education.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage. They enter the Nursery with standards which are very low for those expected for their age and work towards developing good attitudes to learning and social and emotional skills. By the time they leave the Reception classes, standards are still below average but they have made good progress. The strong focus on developing English speaking and listening skills helps all children, especially those who do not

speak English at home. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to provide a stimulating environment, which encourages children to explore the world around them and develops their independence. The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all children with topics which interest and stimulate – such as Fairytales and Seaside trips. There is a good balance between activities led by adults and those the children choose for themselves as part of spontaneous play and learning, although not all play activities for the older children have a clear learning outcome. The outdoor areas have been developed to support children's learning and are used well. The recently appointed Foundation Stage Leader has a clear idea of how to help teachers assess children and move them on to their next stage of learning.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Develop the role and impact of new subject leaders.
- Help more pupils to reach the higher levels in writing and mathematics to raise standards.
- Ensure consistency when working with pupils on their targets so that they are clear about how to improve.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good. From a low starting point overall, all pupils make good progress and reach generally average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Children make a good start in the nursery and Reception classes and they build on this to reach average standards by Year 2 in reading, mathematics and science. Pupils, including those who join at different times, continue to make good progress as they move through the school so that by the end of Year 6 they reach average standards in reading and science. Although mathematics standards are just in line with the national average, they are lower than in reading and science as relatively few pupils reach the higher levels of learning in mathematics and writing.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are proud of their school and see it as a happy place. They show enjoyment in their lessons, work well alone and in groups, and enthusiastically join in discussions. Attendance is satisfactory and is improving. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, especially in learning about the diversity of cultures, traditions and beliefs in a modern society. Pupils show respect for each other and have a good understanding of other faiths and cultures. Pupils are active participants in the life of the school and older pupils undertake important roles such as counsellors and peer mediators. They develop a clear sense of responsibility through the work of the school council and are proud of the recent improvements made to the playground. Pupils make good contribution to the school community by organising fund raising activities for a variety of charities and appeals. They have a good understanding of the importance of being safe and healthy and are keen to adopt healthy lifestyles. As one pupil stated, 'I noticed that after the healthy dinners started, pupils behave better.' Their satisfactory basic literacy, numeracy and ICT skills and the good progress they make, mean they are prepared for the next stage in their education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers' planning is clear and detailed and shows the intended learning for different groups of pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants work together well to ensure that pupils who need extra help receive this and, as a result, all groups of pupils achieve well. There are opportunities for the development of English speaking and listening skills, but teachers could help some pupils to become even more articulate. Pupils enjoy using the new technology, such as watching the blue tits on the webcam. They use ICT to support areas of the curriculum such as science where they produced professional looking booklets on birds, for example. Teachers give pupils much encouragement, in lessons and through marking, which motivates pupils by making them more confident and willing to try hard. However, marking does not always give enough guidance to pupils on how to improve their work, particularly in their writing, and the next steps they need to take. The presentation of work is inconsistent and does not always indicate that pupils take a pride in their work.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and balanced and is planned to meet the needs of all pupils. At present, subjects are presented in blocks of work; however, the current review of the curriculum creates further links between subjects with more of a focus on the interests and abilities of the pupils. The creative curriculum is well received by pupils who produce attractive displays and demonstrate skills in art and design. Music and drama are also considered to be important and pupils take part in performances in school, while the choir performs in music festivals. This allows individual pupils to fulfill their potential. The curriculum is enhanced by the excellent teaching of French and enriched by visits and visitors to the school. There are many clubs and before and after school activities which pupils can take part in ranging from homework club to a range of sports. Themed events such as Book Week and Science Day help to develop self-esteem and self-confidence and special occasions like International Week encourage parents to become involved in their children's learning and welcome the diverse local community into the school.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The school cares for its pupils well and they receive very good guidance and support from their teachers, other staff and, where necessary, other agencies. Child protection arrangements are fully in place and there are good systems for ensuring pupils' health and safety. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and their strengths encouraged. There is good tracking of pupils' academic progress and regular assessments ensure that teachers know what is needed when planning. In lessons, teachers discuss with pupils what they are expected to learn and this gives them ownership of what they do and achieve. However, pupils do not always know how to improve their work and so the school is trialing a new target system to improve this.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Senior leaders work well together as a team and share the headteacher's vision to raise standards and further improve the school's provision. Experienced as well as new members of staff have opportunities to develop their leadership skills through the well-considered delegation of tasks. The leadership team has given subject leaders more responsibilities, which are helping to develop their role further and increase the school's capacity for improvement. Staff are very appreciative of the genuine care shown to them by leaders and managers which is reflected in the way staff and pupils respect each others' skills and talents. The school evaluates its work well and ensures that priorities are accurately identified and staff are innovative in trialling new methods such as the new curricular targets. Governors are highly committed to helping the school develop and improve. They know the school well, are supportive of all the school's work and act effectively as critical friends. Parents feel part of the school as shown by the very high numbers who responded positively to the questionnaire. As one parent wrote, 'Childs Hill School is like a large jigsaw as each piece is very individual but when put together all works very well.'

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	3

### 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?	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

09 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Childs Hill School, London, NW2 1SL

Thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave us and for helping us when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed our visit and would like to tell you what we found.

Childs Hill School is a good school and these are its strengths.

- You feel happy, safe and enjoy coming to school.
- You behave well in lessons and around the school; when there are occasional fallings out or upsets, you are confident that an adult will deal with the matter quickly - as one pupil told me, 'Some pupils have problems with anger but they don't do it any more, because teachers provide them with what they need.'
- You benefit from good teaching and experience an exciting curriculum.
- You like the clubs that are organised for you, especially football, and all the visits.
- Your academic and personal achievements are good.
- You do a good job in raising money for charity which shows you care about those who are less fortunate than you.
- The headteacher, and all the other adults, make sure you learn well.

We have asked the school to make sure you know what you have to do to move up to the next level in your work and to give you more ideas about how to improve your work when teachers mark your books. We have also asked the school to give you even more opportunities to practise your writing and numeracy skills so that you can all achieve as well as possible.

You can help by coming to school regularly and continuing to work hard.

With best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Sandra Teacher

Lead Inspector