

Hounslow Town Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102491
Local Authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	308026
Inspection dates	28–29 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Alan Jarvis

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	474
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs R Day
Headteacher	Mr C Hill
Date of previous school inspection	15 September 2003
School address	Pears Road Hounslow TW3 1SR
Telephone number	020 8570 1747
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

There is significant mobility in this large primary school. Free school meals eligibility is above average. About four fifths of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. About one quarter are at the earliest stages of speaking English. This number has increased as have the numbers from refugee or asylum seeker families. The largest groups are of White British and Indian backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is much higher than typically found. Nineteen pupils with moderate learning difficulties, taught in the mainstream classes, have been placed in the school by the local authority. The school has gained the Healthy Schools, Artsmark, Investors in People and the UNICEF, 'Rights Respecting' awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Hounslow Town is a satisfactory school. After a period in which standards declined because of staffing difficulties, the school is now in good heart and improving. Most pupils now achieve satisfactorily across the school. Their personal development and well-being are good. Most parents say their children are secure, happy and thriving. In the last two years, the school has undergone significant changes of senior leaders and teaching staff. It has also faced the considerable challenge of providing for the increasing numbers of pupils who join with much lower starting points than usual. During this time, standards fell appreciably for the older pupils particularly in writing and mathematics, some teaching was inadequate and many pupils underachieved.

The school is more settled now. Although more needs to be done, improvements are evident in provision and pupils' progress. Few pupils underachieve and almost all now make satisfactory progress. This is a direct result of the effective actions taken to improve provision, spearheaded mostly by senior and middle managers. Standards in the current Year 6 are well below average, particularly in writing and mathematics, but are noticeably better than last year. The vast majority of Year 6 pupils are making good progress because of the consistently good teaching and focused support they receive. These are targeting gaps in pupils' skills and understanding and helping them to make up lost ground in their learning. Much better support is now in place for pupils who join the school with no English and those with varying degrees of special educational need including those placed by the local authority with moderate learning difficulties. This is ensuring many more meet the targets set out in their individual plans. Although more needs to be done, standards in writing and mathematics are improving because teachers and their assistants are focusing on those aspects of the subjects pupils find most difficult. An effective reading programme and a good focus on investigations in science are sustaining higher standards in these areas. The appointment of well-supported new teachers has ensured that teaching is satisfactory. Whilst there is a core of good teaching, the school is aware that in some classes the work set is too easy for some and too difficult for others, which slows progress. A strong focus on basic skills has helped standards rise. However, the school is aware that some other subjects are less strongly developed. In these, opportunities are lost to consolidate literacy, numeracy and computer skills, and to help pupils display their independence and creativity.

Pupils are cared for well. They are happy in school and this is helping them to learn. Although there are a number of pupils whose behaviour can be challenging, this is managed well and behaviour is good. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and say, 'We learn to swim and are into healthy eating in a big way - the food we eat stop us being hyper!' Pupils new to the school and their families settle in extremely well because of the first class support they receive in school and from external agencies. Attendance is average. This has improved because the school stresses to parents how attending regularly helps to raise achievement and standards. Pupils support their local community well.

Progress since the last inspection has been uneven but is satisfactory overall. Senior and middle leaders have considerably strengthened their effectiveness in the past eighteen months. The main success has been in rooting out underachievement. Unlike last year, Year 6 pupils are likely to exceed the challenging targets set for them. Together with the rising standards in other year groups, better teaching and the improvements in the Foundation Stage, this reflects a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children have a good start to school in the Foundation Stage. Standards on entry are significantly below those expected for young children. Good leadership of the Foundation Stage has ensured children benefit from good teaching and an effective curriculum. Helpful assessment procedures help teachers plan effectively for the needs of each child. The inside and outside areas provide a stimulating learning environment and displays are delightful. Warm relationships enable most children to gain confidence quickly. Children make good progress in their speaking and listening skills and in their personal and social development, because of the high priority given to these areas. A good balance between adult-led activities and those that allow children to choose activities for themselves, successfully develops their independence and self-esteem. Although standards in the different areas of learning at the end of Reception are just below national expectations, children are much better prepared to start Year 1 than they were in previous years.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Increase the proportion of good teaching that ensures all groups of pupils make good progress.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their basic skills, independence and creativity across the curriculum.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards in Year 2 are well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Many pupils who start in Year 1 make good progress and attain average standards by the end of Year 2. However, the large numbers who join part way through the key stage often speaking little or no English lower the overall standards. Standards in Year 6 whilst higher than last year are well below average, particularly in writing and mathematics. The improvement in writing is due to the good attention given to improving pupils' technical vocabulary, sentence structure and their understanding of genre. In mathematics, a good focus on number calculations and close individual support for pupils has brought similar benefits. A good reading programme and the high priority given to investigative work in science are helping sustain and move standards closer to the national average. Achievement is satisfactory for most pupils although some do better than others. Their starting points in school vary considerably. For example, whilst only half of the current Year 6 was in school in Year 2, those that were have made good progress and are on track to reach the national standard for their age. Pupils new to the school who have been educated abroad but who speak English on arrival, such as those from Poland, often make good progress. However, those who join with no formal education generally make satisfactory progress, but take much longer to pick up speed. Most pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities now make satisfactory progress because the support given better meets their needs, as it is based upon a wider range of evidence than before. This includes those placed by the local authority with moderate social, emotional, behavioural, physical or speech needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school, show respect for each other and work in harmony. Exclusions are low as a result. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Through class discussions and well-planned assemblies, pupils put into practice their good awareness of right and wrong, fairness, truth and honesty. They readily applaud the achievements of others. An active school council provides a strong forum for pupils to express their views, take responsibility and help the school develop. They have experience of administering a modest budget on behalf of their peers through the purchase of playground equipment. Pupils look after each other and befriend new arrivals. There is a strong awareness of the richness and diversity of the different cultures within the school. When asked which religious festivals the school celebrated the robust answer was, 'All of 'em.' Their improving basic skills and good financial awareness satisfactorily prepare them for their future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils typically say, 'We like our lessons because the teachers are enthusiastic and make our lessons fun but sometimes our work is too easy.' Teachers plan very well together and have high expectations for behaviour, which results in positive attitudes and relationships within their classes. Pupils with behavioural difficulties are supported well which means they participate well in lessons. In the good lessons, teachers closely match the work to the pupils' individual needs, which sets a good pace for learning. However, this is not consistent across lessons, particularly in Key Stage 2. Teaching assistants have a positive impact on pupil progress because they know exactly where to focus their support. The WOW NOW marking strategy is mostly regular, positive and effective. However, there are inconsistencies that mean that not all pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Popular clubs such as 'Hip Hop Dance', gymnastics and drama enhance the curriculum well. The curriculum has a strong emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills. Intervention activities in English and mathematics are proving beneficial. However, opportunities are missed to develop these skills in other subjects, so limiting pupils' progress. In addition, other subjects are insufficiently used to add zest and develop creativity and independence. Information and communication technology (ICT) is starting to be used to support learning in other subjects. Good provision for personal, social and health education has a positive impact on pupils' personal development. Visits linked to curriculum topics, and residential visits to the Isle of Wight for Years 5 and 6 also contribute to this. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties are included in all that the school offers.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Effective health and safety arrangements ensure that pupils remain safe at all times. Child protection procedures are robust and secure. Splendid work is done with the considerable

number of pupils and their families who join throughout the year. The school goes out of its way to make everyone feel very welcome. It works well with outside agencies to provide families with all the information they need to help them settle into the local community. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported by the help they receive from a range of external agencies, including those who need help with their speech or behaviour. Pupils are proud that, 'Anyone new gets a welcome certificate in assembly and we say welcome to them in their own language.' Academic support is also good. Teachers track pupils' progress well and most make increasingly good use of the information to make lessons challenging. Pupils have targets to aim for in English and mathematics and say, 'We are keen to reach them.'

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management have a satisfactory impact on pupils' progress. The headteacher has satisfactorily led the school through a difficult period, assisted well by the challenge and support of the local authority. The school has accurately diagnosed the most pressing priorities, which are to raise standards especially in writing and mathematics and provide more good teaching so that standards continue to rise. The work of many senior and middle managers are a strength of the school. They are at the heart of drive for improvement. For example, they have introduced an improved assessment and tracking systems that pinpoint which pupils are on track or who need further intervention to reach their expected levels. However, some new to their posts need further support to fully develop their roles. Governors, especially the chair, provide appropriate levels of support and challenge to the school. However, few visit to see how well it is developing at first hand. This limits their capacity to hold the school fully to account.

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

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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

11 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hounslow Town Primary School, Hounslow, TW3 1SR

Thank you for making the inspectors feel very welcome when we visited your school recently. I would like to thank 'Gold class' and the school council for all the interesting thoughts they shared with us. Our report says that Hounslow Town Primary is a satisfactory and improving school. This is what the team liked the most.

- You are very kind to all the new boys and girls who join the school and make them feel very welcome. Well done!
- You behave well and unkind behaviour is extremely rare.
- You are really keen on keeping healthy and, in particular, eating the right kinds of food.
- Children in the Foundation Stage make a good start to school.
- Most of you are now on track to make satisfactory progress and hit your targets.
- Senior staff are helping the school improve by focusing their efforts on those areas that have not been as good as they should have been in the past.

Your headteacher, teachers and governors are working hard to make your school better. I have asked them to look at these three things to improve the school further.

- Ensure standards are higher in writing and mathematics.
- Help teachers set more work that enables more of you make good progress.
- Modify the curriculum so that you have more opportunities to be creative, work on your own and develop your basic skills in all subjects.

Thank you once again.

Yours sincerely

Alan Jarvis

Lead Inspector