

Robin Hood Infants' School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102981
Local Authority	Sutton
Inspection number	308183
Inspection date	13 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Anthony Green

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	270
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs A Hazelden
Headteacher	Mrs P Cook
Date of previous school inspection	30 June 2003
School address	Robin Hood Lane Sutton SM1 2SF
Telephone number	020 8643 3688
Fax number	020 8661 1200

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

This was a reduced tariff inspection. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, teaching and learning, the curriculum, personal development and well-being, care, guidance and support, leadership and management and the initial affect of the recent federation. Evidence was gathered from discussion with parents, pupils, staff, governors, observation of a range of lessons and parents' questionnaires. The inspector also examined the school's data, records and other documents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average infant school. The socio-economic circumstances are mixed. A quarter of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and a fifth of pupils speak English as an additional language. Of these, about half are at an early stage of English language acquisition. A small proportion of pupils are from refugee and asylum seeker families. When children start school, their skills and abilities are similar to those of other children of their age. For the last two years, pupil mobility, especially in to Year 2, has been high. This term the school amalgamated with the neighbouring Nursery to become the 'Federation of Thomas Wall and Robin Hood schools'.

The school has gained a number of national and local awards including Investors in People, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Healthy Schools Award, Activemark, two School Achievement awards, London Schools Environment Award and the London in Bloom Certificate of Excellence.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Robin Hood Infants' School is justifiably held in extremely high regard by the overwhelming majority of parents. As one perceptively wrote, 'It's a great school with good direction and an enthusiasm for learning. Good traditional values are upheld and my child loves it'. On entering the school one is immediately struck by the very welcoming atmosphere and the friendliness of all adults and pupils. The school is a bright and attractive environment where pupils' work is very well displayed and celebrates their achievements.

The headteacher sets very clear direction for the school. A real strength of her leadership is the way she has established high quality teamwork and commitment at all levels, which ensures everyone plays an integral part in moving the school forward. The school's mission statement is 'Children are our first concern. Our aim is to enable all children in our care to achieve their full potential both academically and socially'. There is no doubt that this is being achieved and it is reflected in very high standards and achievement by the end of Year 2. The headteacher is very well supported by her well informed deputy and senior leadership team. The deputy, especially, has ensured that the recent amalgamation with the Nursery school has been a positive experience for staff, children and parents. In the short time since the start of term, it is already clear that the new links are having a very positive impact on the education of the children.

The governing body of the new federation was reconstituted at the beginning of this school year. However, it is made up of very experienced governors from both schools who have given excellent support in the past. During the transition to federation they have ensured that all has gone smoothly.

This is a very caring school where a very high and successful regard is paid to pupils' personal development and well-being. Outstanding care, guidance and support draw on the close links with parents, other schools and outside agencies. As a result, pupils feel very safe and happy and their behaviour is exemplary. At playtimes, they play well together and are never alone for long. One said of the friendship bench, 'The banana bench is magic because a teacher or another person always comes to help or play when you sit on it'. Attendance is above average.

Outstanding teaching ensures that work is very well matched to the needs of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities and for those who speak English as an additional language. Comprehensive assessment information ensures that work is both challenging and enjoyable. Very well-informed teaching assistants are also integral to teaching in the school. As a result, all groups of pupils achieve outstandingly well and are very well prepared for their transition to the junior school. Interactive white boards add stimulus and interest to lessons, and are used with confidence by teachers and pupils.

The curriculum is enriched by an excellent range of activities, including French, and this contributes to pupils' very high levels of achievement and enjoyment. However, the school recognizes that, although results are still high, a slight dip in boys' writing over the last two years needs to be addressed and the curriculum is being adapted to further meet their interests and needs through, for example, media studies.

Pupils have a first-rate understanding of the need to lead healthy life styles. Play and lunch times are very active parts of the school day with a superb range of games and sporting activities for pupils to participate in. Pupils have no reason to be bored. All classes participate in daily physical education (PE) lessons. A joint initiative with the local high school also supports the high quality teaching of PE. Pupils know the value of eating healthily. They even publish a high

quality newspaper for parents called the 'Healthy Food News', which extols the virtues of exercise and a healthy diet. One pupil said, 'I had a yummy yogurt with my lunch (today) and some pitta bread. The food was really good. It was healthy'.

Decisions made by the school council are not only reflected in the daily life of the school but extend into the wider community. For example, a financial prize from the Lord Mayor's Environmental Award helped to establish a quiet area in school and waste land near to the school has been tidied, planted with flowers and bird boxes erected.

The school is very accurate in its self-evaluation of its performance. There were no major issues from the previous inspection but the school has not been complacent and continues to strive for improvement. The school is extremely well placed to maintain its current very high standards and to build on its great success to date.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children have an excellent start in the Foundation Stage because of the outstanding provision. Liaison with the Nursery school has always been strong but federation is ensuring even closer links between the two schools, leading to greater continuity in planning, teaching and learning. The outstanding deputy headteacher has quickly expanded this, ensuring that children settle in quickly and make very good progress. One parent wrote 'I was very impressed with the liaison between the school and the Nursery. It made the transition much easier and has put my child's mind at rest'. An immediate and very positive result of federation is that the outdoor space has increased as the Nursery and Reception playgrounds have been combined. The outside area is extremely well resourced with large and small apparatus. The exciting and wide range of activities helps pupils to quickly adapt to working and playing together. Classrooms are very calm and purposeful. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that all pupils are actively and purposefully engaged. As a result, children very quickly become independent learners. They make rapid progress and exceed the levels expected for transition to Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend planned opportunities to raise standards in boys' writing.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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?	1
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Robin Hood Infants' School, Sutton, SM1 2SF

Thank you for your very friendly welcome when I visited your school. You told me you attend a very good school and I agree. I even think that you go to an outstanding school. That means it is excellent and does everything it can to help you do well. It was obvious to me how much you enjoy school. I was very impressed by many things. These are just a few of them:

- You learn quickly and you do very well in your work.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you are very friendly towards each other and visitors.
- Teaching in the school is outstanding, which is why you do so well.
- Your teaching assistants give you excellent support.
- You know how to keep safe and how important it is to stay fit and healthy.
- You are given lots of interesting activities in lessons and at break times.
- You work very hard to make your school and the local area bright and attractive.
- Your headteacher, the senior staff and your governors are excellent in the way in which they lead your school.

Even in an outstanding school, there are things that can be improved. I have asked your teachers to give you more help with your writing, especially for boys.

I wish you all the very best for the future and thank you again for making my visit such an enjoyable one.

Anthony Green

Lead inspector