

Aylward First and Middle School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102225
Local Authority	Harrow
Inspection number	335863
Inspection dates	25–26 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Alison Thompson

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–12
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	483
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shaun Jenkins
Headteacher	Moira Arnold
Date of previous school inspection	7 December 2006
School address	Pangbourne Drive Stanmore Middlesex HA7 4RE
Telephone number	020 8958 9202
Fax number	020 8958 5728
Email address	office@aylward.harrow.sch.uk

Age group	3–12
Inspection dates	25–26 January 2010
Inspection number	335863

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors spent two thirds of their time looking at learning, observed 18 teachers, visited 27 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and analysed 271 questionnaires from parents, 99 from pupils and 33 from staff. The team also looked at the data the school had collected about the pupils' progress and at the school's records of its monitoring of the quality of teaching.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- current attainment and progress, particularly writing in Years 1 and 2
- how effectively teachers use assessment information to help pupils improve their work and involve them in assessing their own learning
- the effectiveness of leaders' monitoring and evaluation at all levels to identify and address any underachievement and accelerate progress.

Information about the school

Aylward First and Middle school is larger than average and has two classes in each year group. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much higher than average, as is the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, and a high proportion of the pupils do not speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is much higher than average, but the proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is average. The school has Early Years Foundation Stage provision in a Nursery and in two Reception classes. The number of pupils entering and leaving during the school year is much higher than average. The school has won many awards, including the International Award 2008 for outstanding development of global awareness and the Healthy Schools Award 2008.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Aylward is an outstanding school where pupils achieve well. The school has a wonderful ethos, underpinned by the exceptional care, guidance and support provided by the dedicated headteacher and her staff. This means that the development of pupils is outstanding in many areas, including their understanding of a healthy lifestyle and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The vast majority of parents and carers are very positive about all aspects of the school. The following comments sum up the views of many: 'I am proud to be a parent of Aylward and my child loves going to school' and 'It is a good indication of how good a school is when my son is always keen to tell me all the things he has done each day.'

This is a school where every child really does matter. There is a consistent commitment on behalf of all staff to support pupils and their families, including those in challenging circumstances. A significant number of pupils enter school throughout the year, many of whom do not have English as their first language, but they are made to feel most welcome and make quick progress in their learning. The outstanding curriculum successfully stimulates pupils' interest, cooperative learning and high levels of respect. As a result, pupils are very well behaved and the environment is happy, calm and orderly at all times.

From the Nursery to Year 7 pupils of all abilities achieve well, because of the good teaching and detailed guidance to help them improve their work. By the time pupils leave in Year 7, they attain standards in English, mathematics and science that are in line with those found nationally. In view of their often low starting points, this demonstrates that individuals make at least good overall progress. Pupils thoroughly enjoy helping others, for instance when they act as class friends to help new children settle in well. They feel extremely safe in school and feel that the school values their views. They are most proud of their involvement in the eco project with a school in India, which has greatly increased their understanding of the environment.

As a result of leaders' evaluations, staff know the pupils extremely well and track their progress carefully. This ensures the early identification of any underachievement. As a result of very good individual and small group support, pupils soon make up lost ground, such as with writing in Years 1 and 2. Attendance has improved well, but it is still no higher than average. Much absence is due to extended holidays abroad. Pupils are most positive about the school and describe it as a 'fantastic school and the staff here teach in a very fun way and give you opportunities that could be a chance of a lifetime'. They welcome the chance to work independently and be involved in helping to assess their own learning but, where teaching is less strong, they are not always given enough opportunities to do so. There is much outstanding practice in the school but although

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

teaching is improving very well, there are a few missed opportunities for very skilled teachers to share their skills with others and so lift the overall quality of teaching to outstanding. Learning and progress are not consistently outstanding. As a result, progress is not as fast as it could be and attainment is not as high as it could be.

The headteacher and her very strong leadership team are passionately focused on providing the best educational opportunities for each child. Very accurate self-evaluation has led to many improvements in the outcomes for pupils since the previous inspection and this indicates that the school has an excellent capacity to improve even further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the quality of teaching and learning so that it is outstanding overall by:
 - providing enough opportunities for pupils to work independently and be involved in helping to assess their own learning
 - sharing more widely the outstanding practice found within the school.
- Raise attendance to be above that found nationally by convincing all parents of the detrimental effect of extended absences.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

The quality of learning and progress in lessons is good. This is true for all groups of all pupils, throughout the whole school. Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons and their exemplary behaviour makes a significant contribution to their learning. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those at the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language, also make good progress because of the well-targeted support they receive. By the time pupils leave in Year 7, attainment is in line with that found nationally and they are well prepared for the next stage in their learning. This is helped by their excellent information and communication technology (ICT) skills and the mature way that they cooperate with each other. This was seen to very good effect in a Year 7 science lesson where pupils eagerly debated and worked with each other to find out how they could reclaim pure water from a mixture of a coloured, sandy liquid.

Pupils feel extremely safe and secure in school. They understand very well what it means to have a healthy lifestyle and the benefits of taking on responsibilities. For example, they take very seriously their responsibilities as 'mentors' through duties such as organising games for younger children and helping out in the dining hall. The school council plays a prominent part in school life and has a large say in what happens in school, such as the choice of playground equipment. Pupils enjoy the many opportunities to take part in sporting activities and clubs and this contributes to their excellent understanding of being healthy. They interact very well with each other because of the school's strong focus on respect. When asked how his school could be better, one pupil said, 'I like it just the way it is now.'

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Pupils are engaged because lessons move forward at a good pace, with a wide range of interesting activities and effective use of interactive whiteboards. Learning support assistants provide proactive support so that pupils have full access to the curriculum. Teachers often use good questioning techniques to challenge pupils and there are high expectations of pupils in lessons. In most lessons, teachers share clearly with the pupils what it is they should be learning. This allows them to be involved in assessing their own learning. However, in a few lessons this is not as apparent and, as a result, progress slows. Good assessment is evident in nearly all lessons in helping pupils to improve their work, and teachers' marking is clear and helpful in indicating the next steps pupils need to take in their learning.

Improvements in English have been largely due to the outstanding creative curriculum. An example of this was in a Year 6 lesson where creative writing was brought to life through producing a case study of an animal in its habitat. Pupils at Aylward have an extensive range of enrichment activities. They talked to the inspectors enthusiastically about enjoying opera when the school recently hosted a performance of 'Tosca'. The

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

many after school clubs on offer are very well attended, including an Indian dance club where the pupils also learn about many other aspects of Indian culture. Transition arrangements to the local secondary schools are excellent. Staff are rigorous and persistent in ensuring the highest levels of welfare and care for all pupils, especially the most vulnerable and those new to the school. Very good partnerships with local authority services and a cluster of nearby schools also ensure that the needs of all children are met. Pupils indicated that they felt that adults cared about them and were interested in their views. There are many examples of significant successes in the way in which the school helps pupils overcome their difficulties and barriers to learning so that pupils achieve well. This is exemplified well by the many successes of children who enter the school speaking little or no English.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Outstanding leadership and management play a major part in this outstanding school. The headteacher has built up a strong senior leadership team, with clearly defined roles and common values. Middle leadership is equally strong and there is a keen sense of pride and self-reflection among all staff. Following lesson observations, feedback is given to pupils on how they can improve their learning. This has been instrumental in improving attitudes to learning. A strong emphasis on assessment to improve learning has been effective in helping raise attainment, particularly in English. However, best practice here is not shared well enough at present. The school's self-evaluation is searching and accurate and, increasingly, subject leaders hold all staff accountable for the progress of the pupils in their areas. Any areas of relative weakness are immediately tackled and remedied. The school promotes outstanding safeguarding procedures as part of the very high quality of care.

Community cohesion is very strong and a real strength of the school. There is a wide range of very effective programmes for supporting and reaching out into community. The school is able to demonstrate that the pupils have an excellent understanding of faith, ethnicity and culture, and different social aspects of the local, United Kingdom and international communities. There is a very effective partnership with the cluster of local schools and a photographic club has been set up for pupils and families. This is just one of the ways in which the school engages extremely well with parents and carers and involves them in their children's learning. The appointment of parent ambassadors has

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

provided a welcome channel between home and school for parents and carers. Governors are extremely knowledgeable about the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They are involved fully in evaluating the work of the school and holding it to account. Every child is helped to make the best of what the school has to offer, ensuring that equality of opportunity is outstanding. Discrimination is not tolerated at any level.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with skills, attitude and knowledge well below what is expected, particularly in communication and language. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes but attainment is below that expected by the time that they enter Year 1. Excellent welfare arrangements and relationships with parents and carers, along with positive relationships, ensure children feel safe and secure and settle quickly. The environment is very stimulating and ensures that children have a variety of engaging and creative activities which sustain their interest. This helps to develop self-esteem and provide pleasure in learning new skills, such as counting baby animals hiding in unusual places using the interactive whiteboard. Effective learning occurs particularly well with activities that take place indoors. Outdoor activities do not always have a clear enough focus and are not always linked together well enough.

Nevertheless, there is a good balance between activities that children choose for themselves and those that are led by adults. Children follow well-practised routines, such as sitting down quietly when eating their fruit 'You might choke if you walk', one child told an inspector. Staff are led well by the new leader who is making swift

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

improvements to the assessment procedures. While there are many examples of good practice in gathering and recording information about the progress of the children, procedures are still bedding in and it is too early to gauge the impact of these.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

About half of parents and carers returned the questionnaire. Almost all felt that their children were kept safe and enjoyed school. This high level of enjoyment was clearly seen by the inspectors. A few parents and carers thought that the school did not take account of their suggestions and concerns, and help them support their children's learning. The inspectors did not agree with those views and felt that the school did those things well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Aylward First and Middle School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 271 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 483 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	138	51	122	45	5	2	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	143	53	122	45	5	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	107	39	144	53	12	4	4	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	107	39	137	52	16	6	6	2
The teaching is good at this school	114	42	139	51	10	4	3	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	102	38	146	54	14	5	4	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	90	33	163	60	13	5	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	73	27	158	58	16	6	1	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	79	29	158	58	19	7	4	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	98	36	138	51	21	8	3	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	72	27	152	56	30	11	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	105	39	136	56	11	4	5	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	130	48	118	44	11	4	5	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



27 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Aylward First and Middle School, Stanmore HA7 4RE

Thank you for the lovely welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you and we are very grateful for the excellent contribution you made to the inspection. You believe that your school is outstanding, one that really looks after you and helps you to learn well, and we agree with you.

Here are some of the things that we particularly liked. You behave exceptionally well and you are most polite. You love coming to school and you are very keen to learn. You look after each other well, in roles such as 'class friends' and 'mentors'. Your school has excellent leaders. Your teachers make your lessons interesting and they listen carefully to your ideas. The adults in school make sure that you are very safe and well cared for.

- We have asked your teachers to give you more opportunities to learn by finding out things for yourselves.
- We would also like them to help you to check for yourselves how well you are learning.
- We have asked the headteacher and other leaders in the school to improve attendance.

You can help by asking your teachers to make it clear to you how you can tell if you are doing a good job in each of your activities in class. You can also help by making sure that you come to school as often as you can.

We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Alison Thomson

Lead Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.