

Hampden Gurney CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101123
Local Authority	Westminster
Inspection number	323406
Inspection dates	8 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Olson Davis

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

Type of School	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Brian Hilton
Headteacher	Mrs Evelyn Chua
Date of previous school inspection	07 June 2006
School address	13 Nutford Place London W1H 5HA
Telephone number	020 7641 4195
Fax number	020 7641 5468

Age group	3-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the strengths in pupils' personal development and well-being
- the factors leading to the school's high standards in national assessments, particularly the quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum
- the impact that the leaders and governors are having on provision and achievement
- the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Evidence was gathered from:

- observations of lessons, break, lunchtime and assembly
- discussions with staff, vice chair of the governing body and pupils
- the school's documentation, particularly records of pupils' progress and samples of pupils' work
- parents' questionnaires.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own judgements, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These are included in the report where appropriate.

Description of the school

This average-sized school serves a culturally and socially diverse community. Approximately six out of ten pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and this is well above that found in most schools. A small number are at an early stage of learning English. The largest ethnic groups are of European backgrounds, Black Caribbean, Chinese and mixed backgrounds. The school has gained a substantial number of national awards including the Challenge Award from the National Association for Able Children in Education for its work with able, gifted and talented pupils and the Activemark for its good physical activity provision. There is Early Years Foundation provision for pupils in the Nursery and Reception classes.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Hampden Gurney CofE Primary is an outstanding school in which pupils consistently achieve exceptionally high standards and make excellent progress. Central to the school's continuing success is outstanding leadership and management that promote high achievement. The inspirational headteacher provides a clear vision and very determined leadership with a strong focus on raising standards and promoting high standards of care. School leaders provide excellent direction to the work of the school, ensuring that all adults work closely as a team to do their best for the pupils. As a result, pupils from all backgrounds and abilities feel valued, want to learn and achieve outstandingly well. The vast majority of parents rightly hold this over-subscribed school in high regard. One parent, reflecting the views of many, wrote, 'Excellent teaching and leadership in the context of a strong Christian ethos - a safe, challenging, stimulating and happy environment for children. We feel lucky to be here.'

A key strength underpinning pupils' outstanding achievement is the excellent care, guidance and support the school provides for its pupils. As a result, pupils feel safe and they are very clear about how to improve their work. The strong ethos of care contributes greatly to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils show a clear spiritual awareness, both in the way that they profess their faith in assembly and in their eager appreciation for all that the school offers. They follow the example of the adults in school, treat each other with respect and show concern for the feelings of others. Relationships are excellent and pupils value the very caring way that older pupils look after the younger ones. As one pupil succinctly put it, 'Our school is a together community.' Pupils' great enjoyment of school is reflected in high attendance and excellent behaviour. Pupils are keen to take on responsibility, for example as prefects, peer mentors and playtime buddies. The school council represents the views of pupils very effectively and members have had a very positive impact on improving the quality of playtimes and securing extra drinking fountains for pupils. Pupils develop a very good understanding of how to stay safe and how to live healthy lives through the health education programme and physical education lessons.

Children make rapid progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of excellent provision. They continue to achieve very well and attain high standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. During Years 3 to 6, pupils make outstanding progress. As a result, standards are exceptionally high, with large proportions of pupils exceeding the levels expected of 11-year-olds in the national tests. This represents outstanding achievement overall, given the broadly average starting points of pupils when they enter the Nursery. School leaders ensure there are many initiatives to raise performance and to help those who may fall behind. For example, the recent strong focus on writing has enabled the school to close the gap between reading and writing at the end of Year 2. However, standards in writing at Year 6, although well above average, are not as high as in reading, mathematics and science. The schools' strategic planning accurately identifies that there is more to do to raise standards in writing to the same high level of these other subjects, for example by developing pupils' skills in creative writing.

Pupils' outstanding achievement is the result of high-quality teaching and learning. Teachers make excellent use of regular and careful assessments to match the interesting work to the right level for each group of learners and to provide challenging targets. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic learners, so they make rapid progress in lessons and are very well aware of how they can improve. Pupils benefit greatly from teachers' skilled use of technology to support their learning. For example, pupils were able to analyse a speech given by President Obama in their work on persuasive language because they had ready access to a video playback on the teacher's interactive whiteboard. Despite many staff changes over the past two years, the high quality of teaching has been maintained. This is because school leaders have established highly effective systems to support the induction of teachers new to the profession and to the school.

Adults know the pupils very well and tailor the rich and challenging curriculum to meet their specific needs. As a result, pupils work very well independently and with others and have excellent basic skills ready for the next stage of their education and future lives. Pupils who find learning difficult and those learning English benefit greatly from careful tracking of their progress and early, and very effective, additional support, including that of skilled teaching assistants. The school is particularly successful in supporting those pupils identified as able, gifted and talented, as can be seen by the large proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in national assessments, as well as the high proportion who gain scholarships to independent schools. There is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' literacy, numeracy, investigative and information and communication technology skills. Pupils use these skills very well to enhance their

learning in other subjects. There is exemplary enrichment to the curriculum, including Mandarin and Spanish lessons. Visits, visitors, themed weeks and special projects, such as an opera project with the Royal Academy of Music, greatly enrich the curriculum and contribute to pupils' outstanding social and cultural development. Excellent use is made of local, national and global links to promote community cohesion so that school members have a clear view of the school in its local and wider context. Consequently, pupils acquire a clear understanding of other cultures and of what it means to live in multicultural Britain.

The school has made excellent improvement since the last inspection, particularly by producing an imaginative and enriched curriculum while maintaining high standards. Similar major improvements, as well as a continual striving to do better, show its strong capacity to improve. School self-evaluation is excellent and the headteacher takes swift action to remedy dips in performance. In this, she is very ably supported by her deputy headteacher. Subject leaders play their full part in improving standards and provide excellent support to ensure a high level of consistency among staff. Governors have an improved oversight of the school through the high-quality information provided by staff and their own very effective monitoring. In essence, strong teamwork results in the school being, as described by a parent, 'a super place for children to learn'.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Starting points when children enter the Nursery vary from year to year but are broadly in line with those expected of three-year-olds. Excellent teaching and highly skilled support ensure that children achieve very well in all areas of learning, particularly in their personal and social development. Children make very good progress so that their acquisition of early literacy and numeracy is often above what is expected of children at the end of Reception. This is because teachers make excellent use of assessment information to plan activities that stimulate and motivate them. There is imaginative use of indoor and outdoor activities which takes into account the limitations of organizing the outdoor space. Nonetheless, children can make independent choices because there is a careful balance between activities led by adults and those activities that children choose for themselves. The children are enthusiastic learners, full of curiosity, which is stimulated by the rich environment. Children are very well cared for and happy. There is a strong partnership with parents to ensure that children settle quickly into the Nursery. The Year 1 teachers work closely with the Early Years Foundation Stage staff to ensure a smooth transition for children which builds excellently on their achievements.

What the school should do to improve further

There are no substantial weaknesses. However, inspectors agree with the school that in order to improve further it should:

- build on current work to raise standards in writing at the end of Year 6, so that they reach the same high level as those in reading, mathematics and science.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are the children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or 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	1
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

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.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

² IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interest of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B

Letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection.

21 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hampden Gurney CofE Primary School, London, W1H 5HA

Thank you for the friendly way you welcomed us when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking to you and took careful note of what you and your parents had to say about the school.

You go to an outstanding school. Here are a few of the many excellent things about your school.

- The Foundation Stage is outstanding and gives the youngest children an excellent start in your school.
- You make excellent progress in your lessons because the teaching is of high quality and you want to do your best.
- You greatly enjoy school and behave extremely well in lessons and around the school.
- You are very well cared for by the adults in school and this helps you to feel safe.
- You all benefit greatly from the many interesting activities and experiences that the school provides for you, which prepares you well for the next stage of your education.
- The headteacher, senior staff and governors run the school excellently. They are extremely clear about what needs to be done to improve the school.

A few of you do not do as well in writing as in other subjects by the end of Year 6. We have agreed with the staff and governors that they should carry on working to help you get even better. You can help by always doing your best work.

We hope that you will continue to enjoy your school.

Yours faithfully

Olson Davis
Lead Inspector

