

Mead Road Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101603
Local Authority	Bromley
Inspection number	323486
Inspection date	5 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Alison Thomson

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	82
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Stephen Day
Headteacher	Miss Sue Waters
Date of previous school inspection	2 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Mead Road Chislehurst BR7 6AD
Telephone number	020 8467 1730
Fax number	020 8467 7584

Age group	4–7
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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 current progress of pupils, especially of those in Reception and Year 1 in creative subjects
- the impact of support staff on pupils' achievement
- the effectiveness of academic guidance in raising standards and the progress of all pupils
- the effectiveness of subject leaders and governors in bringing about improvement.

Evidence was gathered from national published assessment data; the school's self-evaluation, assessment records, policies and minutes; observation of the school at work, including lessons; discussions with the Chair of Governors, members of staff and pupils; and the questionnaires returned by parents. 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 assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Mead Road is a smaller than average infant school. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision in a Reception class. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than average. There is a lower than average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those whose first language is not English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very small. These include a group with speech, language and communication difficulties. The school has achieved many awards, including the Artsmark Gold for its high-quality provision in the arts, and the Activemark accreditation for the promotion of physical activity.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Mead Road Infant School is an outstanding school of which parents and pupils are extremely proud. Its outstanding provision results in both the pupils' academic achievement and their personal development being excellent. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school, and typical of their views are comments such as 'It is really a second home, and all the teachers and helpers there are a second family to our children', and 'It is a fantastic school - I just wish that the children could stay there for longer'.

Children get off to an excellent start in Reception because provision here is outstanding. All the adults devote their attention successfully to meeting children's individual needs so that all, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve exceptionally well, often making excellent progress from their various starting points. Excellent progress continues in Years 1 and 2, so that at the end of Year 2 standards are consistently well above average in all subjects. The gap between standards in writing and reading is rapidly narrowing due to the school's strong focus on writing and the ingenious interplay between subjects. Similarly, increased opportunities in Reception and in Year 1 for the children to be creative, such as imaginative drawing, have resulted in the raising of standards in this area, so that they are above those found nationally.

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Pupils are enthusiastic learners because they find lessons exciting and interesting. One pupil said that they thought their teachers were the 'best thing in the school' and that school was 'a fun place to be'. Teachers have high expectations and make lessons challenging. Pupils appreciate this, and one said that what she liked best about school was mathematics because it was challenging. Teachers use questions and discussions very effectively to extend pupils' understanding and to make them think for themselves. They love it when their teachers use puppets that make mistakes and they have to correct them. This active involvement of pupils in their own learning has played a large part in raising standards. Pupils are guided extremely well, so that they know how well they are achieving and what they have to do to improve their work. Pupils are proud of being involved in their own learning, and welcome the opportunities to help assess their own work. This, along with their excellent achievement in the basic skills, prepares them very well for their future.

The outstanding curriculum makes very good links between subjects. For example, in a science lesson about the conditions needed for growing seeds, pupils were encouraged to record their observations by drawing and by writing. Pupils were very enthusiastic about the way the curriculum is enriched by visits. One Reception child said how much she enjoyed singing to elderly people in the community. During the inspection, inspectors were impressed by a French after-school club where Reception children were learning about 'Le chien et le chat'.

Pupils are very confident, polite and courteous, responding well to the school's Golden Rules, based on respect for others. One pupil said, 'we try our best to welcome people'. Safeguarding meets government requirements well. Pupils feel very safe and secure in the school environment. They understand very well what it means to have a healthy lifestyle, fully justifying the Healthy School Award and the Activemark accreditation. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is excellent. Their cultural development is good, as they understand well about the cultures of the various children who attend the school. However, at present pupils do not have enough opportunities to learn about other cultures that reflect the ethnic diversity in the United Kingdom.

Central to the success of the school is its senior leadership team. The headteacher is inspirational and, along with her very able deputy, has driven up standards year-on-year. The needs of each individual pupil are exceptionally well known, and rigorous analysis of data ensures that any relative underachievement is identified and addressed at an early stage. The school encourages its teachers to take on the role of subject leaders. The staff are developing well into these roles and there is already good evidence of impact on pupils' achievement. All staff work extremely well as a team. Teaching assistants are deployed well according to their expertise, such that the needs of all pupils are very well known. This has had a considerable impact on the pupils' outstanding achievement. The school plays a very strong role in the local community and has developed international links, resulting in pupils having a growing awareness of some other cultures. Governors are knowledgeable about the school, are very supportive, and challenge the school appropriately. The capacity of the school, based on its many recent improvements, is excellent.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children enter Reception with a wide range of knowledge and skills that are overall similar to those expected for their age. They settle quickly and are keen to learn, due to the simulating environment and the high-quality care and support. Their induction is enhanced well through the Rising 5s club, which enables them to start learning as soon as they enter the school. Parents are most appreciative of the excellent provision, as exemplified by the comment, 'This has been the perfect start for our child into the education system.' Children make excellent progress from their starting points, and by the time they enter Year 1 nearly all are consistently working beyond their expected early learning goals.

The children are supervised and supported extremely well by two teaching assistants, who work closely with the class teacher in a 'well-oiled' team. They help the children to develop their spoken language and to explain their feelings and emotions. As a result, by the time the children enter Year 1 they are both confident and articulate in their relationships with others. In lessons there is a good balance between play in which children are able to investigate a range of resources, and structured learning opportunities led by the adults. Children are confident in the use of the interactive whiteboard and were seen thoroughly enjoying using a game to practise the use of the letter 'C'. The outdoor area is much improved and is imaginatively used to interlink physical activity with creative play. Welfare procedures are securely in place and result in children who feel happy and safe as they learn. One child explained very carefully to the inspector how you should use scissors correctly. Children have a very good understanding about healthy lifestyles and can explain, for example, the importance of drinking 'lots of water'. They also like their fruit! Leadership is excellent, with the children's progress meticulously recorded. This is used particularly well to plan the next steps in their learning and has resulted in considerable improvements in achievement in the children's creative development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures, reflecting the ethnic diversity that exists nationally.

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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 are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are 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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which 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

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 interests 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?	2
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	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

13 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mead Road Infant School, Chislehurst, BR7 6AD

I would like to thank you for making us feel very welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing all the interesting work that you do. You have a lovely school, in a beautiful setting. We agree with your teachers that your school is an outstanding one.

Here are some of the things we liked best about your school.

- You really enjoy coming to school.
- You work very enthusiastically in lessons and find them exciting.
- You are very polite and considerate and look after each other well.
- You know how to be healthy by exercising and by eating the right food.
- You enjoy the opportunities that the school offers, such as interesting visits and clubs.
- Your teachers guide you very well to help you to improve your work.
- Adults in school make sure you are safe and very well cared for.
- Your headteacher and deputy headteacher are excellent leaders and are always trying to make the school even better.

There is one thing that we have asked the school to do to improve:

- provide more opportunities for you to learn about the cultures of the different groups of people that live in Britain today.

You can help by being curious to learn about other people who live in our country.

I would like to wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Alison Thomson

Lead Inspector