

Colvestone Primary School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 100221 |
| Local Authority | Hackney |
| Inspection number | 354816 |
| Inspection dates | 11–12 January 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | John Carnaghan |

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 of pupils on the school roll | 203 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Elodie Monchaux |
| Headteacher | Caroline King |
| Date of previous school inspection | 1 July 2008 |
| School address | Colvestone Crescent London E8 2LG |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 15 lessons featuring eight teachers and held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff, and parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at its assessments, policies and records as well as 66 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The quality and consistency of teaching to determine whether it is promoting good progress.
- The effect that changes to the school's leadership and management have had on pupils' progress.
- Whether recent changes made to the Early Years Foundation Stage have led to significant improvements.

Information about the school

Colvestone Primary School is slightly below average size. It has more boys than girls and three quarters of its pupils are from minority ethnic groups. Apart from White British, the largest groups are Black or Black British pupils of Caribbean and African heritage. The school has approximately double the national average of pupils whose first language is not English and a much-higher-than-average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. It holds Activemark and Healthy Schools awards. There have been numerous changes in leadership and staff in recent years; the present headteacher took up her post in September 2010.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Colvestone School provides a good education. The school is improving largely due to the effectiveness of the new headteacher. Working closely with staff, many of them newly appointed, she quickly identified teaching, behaviour and the building as priorities for improvement. Her rigorous approach has promoted consistently good teaching and this has led to improved progress. The behaviour of almost all pupils is good; this is a very harmonious school and this actively promotes good progress. There have been numerous improvements in accommodation but the school acknowledges that there is more to be done.

Pupils' personal development is a strength. Pupils show good awareness of what it takes to grow up into healthy adults. The curriculum has been enlivened by both the innovative linking of subjects and additional opportunities to learning from experiences, so that pupils are enthused by many of their activities.

Entering Year 1 with attainment that is below average, pupils make good progress and leave Year 6 with attainment that is broadly average. Good use of assessment enables those facing barriers to learning to be identified early and given the support they need. Thus, the achievement of all groups of pupils is good. Attainment in reading and mathematics has outstripped that in writing for a number of years. The school recognises this and is actively developing teaching and the curriculum to provide pupils with more varied opportunities to write. This is beginning to raise attainment overall and in writing.

Children's progress is satisfactory in the Early Years Foundation Stage. It is not good largely because planning and delivery of lessons is constrained by the accommodation. The curriculum meets requirements and teaching is satisfactory. However, planning for independent activities indoors and out is too limited, particularly in the designated Reception class, partly constrained by old and unstimulating internal accommodation and an unsuitable outside area that is not adapted for this age range. Too much learning is teacher led, rather than initiated by children. Teachers' planning for independent activities does not always challenge children to find things out for themselves.

The concerted actions of the headteacher and senior staff since September 2010 are having very positive effects on school development. Effective self-evaluation provides leaders with an accurate picture of the school and informs its well-focused planning. Staff share a strong ambition for the future, working as a cohesive team to meet the school's goals, and this is leading to more consistently good practice. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:

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- developing the inside and outside environment and planning to give children more opportunities for greater independence and to improve their skills .
 - giving more opportunities for children to develop their problem-solving skills by offering higher levels of challenge.
- Promote improvements in writing by building on opportunities that provide varied stimuli and frequent occasions for pupils to write in a variety of ways.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Children's attainment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is below those expected for their age. However, children have developed good learning habits and classroom routines, enabling them to make a good start in Year 1. Consistently good teaching and interesting activities ensure pupils learn well in lessons. Teachers' rigorous emphasis on learning objectives, both in lessons and in marking pupils' work, reinforces what has been gained so that pupils recall earlier learning and build on it effectively. The school is working at providing interesting opportunities for pupils to write; for example, whenever an educational visit is planned, older pupils write the letter that goes home to ask permission. A good Year 3 lesson combined the fascination of planting seeds with the challenge to pupils to write clear instructions to help others do this task. Improvements like these have resulted in attainment in writing rising in recent months.

The school is alert to any variations in attainment of different groups of pupils and intervenes swiftly to support those facing difficulties. This ensures progress is consistent across all groups, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those from minority ethnic groups. Given their low starting points, the average level of attainment reached at the end of Year 6 represents good achievement for all pupils.

Good behaviour makes a strong contribution to the positive atmosphere in lessons and promotes effective learning. Pupils appreciate the 'it's good to go green' behaviour policy with its sanctions and rewards. Warm relationships and courteous behaviour are a feature of the school. Pupils unhesitatingly say there is no racism and report little bullying, commenting that the latter is always firmly dealt with. Attendance is close to the national average.

The school helps pupils make good choices about staying healthy and they talk knowledgeably of the importance of exercise and the significance of a balanced diet, knowing which foods are good for you and those where excess consumption should be avoided. The strengths of the school's commitment are recognised in its Healthy Schools and Activemark awards. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' understanding of how to stay safe so pupils demonstrate a good awareness of how to avoid risks in everyday life, such as on the busy local roads or on the internet.

Pupils have good relationships with fellow pupils in other schools through participation in sporting competitions and contribute well to their own community by their enthusiastic participation in the school council. Pupils are proud of their school and raise money for improvements and for charities. They develop a satisfactory level of skills to equip them for their future education and show levels of maturity and independence that provide a good preparation for the future.

The sharing of cultural heritages by all groups of pupils makes a strong contribution to pupils' cultural understanding. The respect shown for all religions and the joint celebration

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of festivals helps pupils develop good spiritual understanding. Pupils' very positive relationships and mature behaviour are a fine testament to good moral and social development.

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 | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 3 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

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

How effective is the provision?

The school's strong concentration on improving teaching is paying off. Most lessons share common qualities. They are very thoroughly planned and staff pay particular attention to providing the correct level of support and challenge to each pupil. Teachers emphasise learning objectives so expectations are clear to pupils. These objectives are skilfully used when work is being marked to evaluate how well pupils have grasped the important issues, with praise and advice being given in equal measure. In this way, pupils know their immediate goals for improvement but most do not have longer-term targets.

Behaviour management is also consistent; teachers are calm and alert, quietly correcting pupils if needed and using the school policy to admonish or praise pupils as required. Their emphasis on developing pupils' social skills is effective. In a good personal, social and health education lesson, the teacher tirelessly emphasised the benefits of not just being a fluent speaker but the importance of actively listening to one another. As a result, the subsequent discussion was both orderly and constructive. Most lessons run at a brisk pace and teachers sum up learning very well. Teaching assistants are very effectively

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deployed and make a significant contribution to helping those pupils who experience difficulties.

Teachers make interesting links between subjects to engage pupils' enthusiasm, such as when a good Year 6 lesson combined geography and English by using video clips of a volcanic eruption to encourage the creative use of vocabulary when pupils wrote a description of the events. The curriculum is in a transitional period. New leadership has encouraged more visits and other imaginative stimuli to engage pupils in learning. In this way, the curriculum is closely adapted to their needs and tastes. The focus on topics like London and space has provided interesting contexts to promote pupils' skills, especially writing. Numerous visitors, including a nationally renowned writer in residence, fire pupils' enthusiasm. The interesting range of after-school activities includes many sporting and artistic activities, such as the choir, and is justly popular.

Pupils report that they feel safe at school because relationships are so positive and there is always a friendly face to turn to. The strengthened behaviour policy enjoys widespread support and is credited by many pupils with improving the school's ethos. Exclusions have been dramatically reduced through more constructive engagement with parents and carers, and this has helped individual pupils to overcome significant barriers. The expertise of outside agencies is used judiciously. The school has had success in emphasising the importance of attending every day but attendance remains average because there are a few persistent absentees. Good relationships with families are being developed to address this.

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 | 2 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 2 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The new leadership and management team, inspired and ably led by the headteacher, has moved quickly to address weaknesses. The headteacher has galvanised and empowered the staff, communicating high expectations, and this has led to rapid improvements. Comprehensive monitoring and effective use of assessment information provide a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and have helped leaders prioritise accurately and produce effective improvement plans. Rigorous monitoring of teaching and books, and effective follow-up, have ensured that most lessons are good. A focus on putting pupils first and ensuring that they all get the support they need means there is good equality of opportunity for all and no discrimination.

The headteacher shows a perceptive understanding of the issues for improvement facing the school, including those that have not been fully addressed yet, such as in the Early Years Foundation Stage. She knows what needs to be done to eliminate weaknesses.

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The governing body understands the strengths and weaknesses of the school through regular monitoring and analysis of assessment information. It uses this information to support and evaluate the school's plans and to challenge when required. It fulfils all its statutory responsibilities and maintains a good focus on ensuring pupils' safety. The whole school demonstrates a systematic approach to ensuring that pupils are safe, adopting recommended good practice. It conducts regular reviews of its policies and practices, and all staff have relevant training, although this information is not freely available. Awareness of safeguarding issues is integrated into the curriculum so pupils have a clear understanding of this area.

Parents and carers benefit from the school's openness and enjoy positive relationships with staff, evident at the start and end of each day. One typical parental comment was, 'Colvestone is a friendly supportive environment where my son is happy. He is part of a community at the school which is respectful of individuality and difference.' Regular progress meetings, weekly newsletters and a texting service keep parents and carers well informed about their child's progress and day-to-day events. The school regularly seeks parents' and carers' views through initiatives like questionnaires. Partnerships with local arts providers bring extra value to the school, such as the exciting plans for all Year 5 and 6 pupils to develop and stage an opera at the end of the spring term. Good links with the local cluster of schools help ease pupils' transition to secondary education and offer increased opportunities for competitive sport. A partnership with a local insurance company provides extra assistance with reading.

The school and pupils know their local context very well and the school actively promotes community cohesion both locally and across London. For example, the school choir sings carols in a local square and to older Hackney residents. The school is strongly multicultural and a very cohesive community, but it has had little success promoting community cohesion further beyond the school and linking with groups in contrasting areas. Addressing this already forms part of forward planning.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 2 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 2 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 2 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make a sound start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They enter school with attainment that is lower than expected for their age with a variety of needs, particularly linguistic. In the caring environment, they quickly develop good learning habits, positive relationships with one another and adults, and good behaviour. Teachers plan carefully to cover all areas of learning and assess children's progress thoroughly, gaining a clear view of each child's personal characteristics and progress. This enables issues to be identified and actions taken, so that all children progress at a similar, satisfactory rate. Although by the end of their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's attainment is below what is expected for their age, their achievement is satisfactory.

In September 2010, the school moved the Reception class to the most suitable available space, an old gymnasium. Despite staff's efforts, this is a large and unstimulating environment, not ideally suited to independent activities. It connects directly to the playground, which provides an outdoor area. However, there is nowhere to leave equipment out and few facilities for this age range. The lack of planned purposeful outdoor play for children, particularly in the Reception class, means occasions to extend their skills in communication, calculation and creative areas are limited. Some activities lack challenge so that, while children play happily, there are not enough opportunities to think critically and creatively.

The temporary leadership has identified weaknesses in the accommodation and is maintaining satisfactory provision and good care for children's welfare. The school leaders, in particular the headteacher, are aware of the current limitations and making improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage is now a priority. Adults are suitably trained and work well with parents and carers, who are welcomed into the area.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers hold favourable views of the school and 95% of those who returned the inspection survey were happy with their child's experience at the school. Almost all were satisfied that the school keeps pupils safe and with the information they receive about progress. A small minority were concerned about behaviour and a few were critical of support for children's learning and how the school takes account of parents' and carers' views. Inspection evidence showed that behaviour and support for learning are good and the school takes careful account of parents' and carers' views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Colvestone Primary 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 received 66 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 203 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 47 | 71 | 14 | 21 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 32 | 48 | 32 | 48 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 30 | 45 | 32 | 48 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 29 | 44 | 31 | 47 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 31 | 47 | 29 | 44 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 33 | 50 | 22 | 33 | 9 | 14 | 1 | 2 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 20 | 30 | 39 | 59 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 2 |
| 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) | 18 | 27 | 31 | 47 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 2 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 15 | 23 | 42 | 64 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 2 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 20 | 30 | 31 | 47 | 9 | 14 | 5 | 8 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 17 | 26 | 33 | 50 | 11 | 17 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 24 | 36 | 36 | 55 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 31 | 47 | 32 | 48 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 0 |

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 all 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

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 59 | 35 | 3 | 3 |
| Primary schools | 9 | 44 | 39 | 7 |
| Secondary schools | 13 | 36 | 41 | 11 |
| Sixth forms | 15 | 39 | 43 | 3 |
| Special schools | 35 | 43 | 17 | 5 |
| Pupil referral units | 21 | 42 | 29 | 9 |
| All schools | 13 | 43 | 37 | 8 |

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



13 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Colvestone Primary School, London E8 2LG

The inspection team would like to thank you for the warm welcome that you gave us when we visited your school recently. We were very impressed with your politeness and would like to congratulate you on your good behaviour.

Colvestone is a good school and the way it is improving is very clear. You told the inspectors how you like your lessons. We can see that teaching is good and lessons are enjoyable. The mixture of subjects you do, known as the curriculum, is interesting and definitely helps you to learn. You are well looked after and kept safe, and we were very pleased to see how well everyone, adults and pupils, get along with one another. ♦

The new headteacher really has made a big impression on the school. She and her team of staff have made many improvements and you are making good progress because of this. Like almost all schools, there are some things that need improvement. We have asked the school to concentrate on:

- improving the rooms and outdoor areas in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that children have more opportunities to learn in interesting ways. Children's activities should be planned so that they are more challenging
- giving you every possible opportunity to develop your writing skills, which are still a little below your other skills.

All of you can help the school continue to improve by maintaining your positive attitudes and good behaviour. It was a pleasure meeting you.

Yours sincerely

John Carnaghan

Lead inspector

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