

New City Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102734
Local Authority	Newham
Inspection number	355250
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2011
Reporting inspector	John Horwood

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	576
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Sceats
Headteacher	Jackie Withnall
Date of previous school inspection	11 September 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 23 lessons and taught by 22 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of staff, members of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation including pupils' work, minutes of the governing body's meetings, the school development plan, progress monitoring records and school policies. The responses to 229 questionnaires from parents and carers were scrutinised.

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

- Whether the relatively high number of pupils who leave or join the school in the upper year groups has a significant effect on overall attainment and progress in Key Stage 2.
- The effectiveness of systems to support pupils when they first join the school, especially with their language acquisition.
- The quality of support provided for pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Information about the school

New City Primary School is larger than the average primary school. A very large majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and the numbers who speak English as an additional language are much higher than in most schools. The largest minority ethnic groups are pupils of Bangladeshi, Pakistani and African heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than in most schools and at present the local authority is piloting a system of providing free meals for all pupils. The school has an average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and their needs cover a broad spectrum. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school partway through their primary school education is above average. Within the Early Years Foundations Stage there are currently a single Nursery class and three Reception classes. The school has been awarded Healthy School status and the Basic Skills quality mark.

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

New City Primary School provides an outstanding education. Within an extremely secure and caring environment, the key focus on providing the best education for every pupil is fundamental to the school's success. Relationships are outstanding throughout the school. Pupils say that they enjoy school and feel very safe, and their parents and carers agree. The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are very aware that a very few pupils do misbehave, but they understand the reasons why and are confident that adults will always deal quickly with any issues that may arise. One pupil said, 'This is a fantastic school. You will never get another one like it.' Pupils are fully committed to eating healthy food and taking plenty of exercise. Although very good procedures encourage above average attendance, a number of families still take extended holidays or days off during term time.

Outstanding leadership has motivated and enabled all staff to improve the opportunities for pupils. In addition to helping pupils make outstanding progress as a result of imaginative and stimulating teaching, staff devote a lot of additional time to providing activities beyond the school day. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported by teaching assistants within class and through small group activities. They also make outstanding progress, narrowing the gap between their attainment and that of their peers. Pupils who join the school in upper year groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, also make outstanding progress, often from a lower starting point. The school is not prepared to 'stand still' and although the curriculum was judged to be outstanding at the last inspection, it is currently being modified so it is even more closely tailored to pupils' needs. Leaders have identified that both mathematics and information and communication technology are not yet fully supporting other subjects in promoting pupils' enjoyment and understanding. The school's strong self-evaluation processes give an accurate picture of its strengths and weaknesses. Since the last inspection teaching and progress have moved from being good to outstanding, while previous outstanding outcomes have been maintained. The use of assessment data to ensure teachers set appropriately challenging work for all groups of pupils is also outstanding. The school's capacity for further sustained improvement is outstanding.

The school promotes community cohesion outstandingly well, and this contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development being outstanding. Pupils are very involved with the local community and support many local activities. The Early Years Foundation Stage continues to give children a good start to their school life, but the use of the outdoor area is not always planned to link to and extend the high quality learning carried out in the classroom.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the use of mathematics and of information and communication technology across the curriculum.
- Work with parents and carers to improve pupils' attendance by reducing the amount of family holidays taken during term time.
- Improve the planned use of the outdoor area in the Early Years Foundation Stage to support the classroom learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

All groups of pupils make outstanding progress from well below average starting points. Attainment levels at the end of Year 6 are average overall, but pupils who have been at the school since Year 1 are reaching above average levels. Many pupils join the school speaking English as an additional language, and although this limits their progress initially the support within the classroom and through the learning mentor and other specialists ensures that they soon catch up. This also applies to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Enjoyment is evident throughout the school. In an outstanding Year 2 mathematics lesson pupils were fascinated and excited about identifying shapes on the whiteboard and really enjoyed the practical measurement activity. In several outstanding Year 6 lessons the pupils enjoyed their learning because they were set challenging but interesting tasks with a good range of activities and discussion opportunities. In the few less successful lessons, pupils were at a less developed stage of understanding English and progress was slower with teachers having to spend longer explaining things. The improved outcomes for pupils are reflected by the school being awarded the Basic Skills mark.

Pupils have a very wide range of responsibilities within the school, including being members of the very effective school council. They are also very proud of other roles such as being house captains and play leaders. They are very involved in proposing school improvements and the school council attends some staff meetings. Pupils' great understanding of healthy eating is reflected by the school attaining Healthy School status. They enjoy the healthy choices available to them at lunchtime and identified that rewards are given for healthy packed lunches. Pupils presented a long list of sport activities available to them and said lots of pupils joined in. They have regular activities to support the local community, including taking harvest boxes to the elderly, carol singing in the local hospital and participating in the Junior Road Safety Officer Scheme.

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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	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
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

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 provides a package of high quality provision. Both teaching and the use of assessment data within the classroom are outstanding, and although the curriculum is already good it is being revised to make it even better. Teachers have extremely good subject knowledge across a wide range of subjects and often teach together to share the best practices across the school. Teachers and support staff work as effective teams to provide excellent support and guidance to pupils. Marking of work is regular and comments on how to improve are made. However, these comments do not always focus sufficiently on what pupils need to do to get to the next step in their learning. Work is always well matched to pupils' abilities and lessons are made enjoyable through exciting activities. The extra-curricular opportunities are excellent and pupils enthusiastically related stories about their residential trip and the other activities. The school is justifiably proud of the cycling provision, which encourages adults and pupils both in the school and the wider community to participate; it has enough bicycles for complete classes to use during the day as well as for external activities.

All aspects of health and safety are addressed extremely well. The support for all pupils who need additional help is excellent, and there are good examples of this support extending beyond the school day to include their families. The use of external support agencies is extremely good and often the school takes the lead role in organising meetings

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of such agencies to discuss pupils' needs. Procedures to promote ongoing excellent behaviour are very effective.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and her ambition is shared throughout the school. All systems are fully embedded; staff feel well supported and work extremely well as a happy and effective team at driving improvement. The impact on teaching and learning is evident in the improved quality and progress made by pupils. The effectiveness of the governing body is good. While some members of the governing body are relatively new and still developing their skills, they are all enthusiastic and provide good support and challenge. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

Leaders and managers focus on every pupil and the very comprehensive data they gather on progress enables them to identify exactly where support is needed. They then monitor the effectiveness of this support. This ensures that every pupil has an equal opportunity to succeed, and is reflected in the absence of significant differences in attainment between any groups of pupils. Activities are open to all pupils and there is no discrimination. Safeguarding procedures are outstanding. Site security is very effective, and thorough child protection procedures are updated annually. All staff have regular training and good access to procedures. Parents and carers are well informed about safeguarding, as seen in a recent presentation about e-safety. Records clearly show that when external agencies are involved the collaborative work is of exceptionally high quality.

Community cohesion is outstanding in this multicultural school and it operates as a harmonious community. Leaders know the area very well and have built up close relationships with families and local groups. The school community visits the local area regularly and is involved in local initiatives. Members of the local community, including those from different faiths, come into school to support learning. The school works with other local schools to develop community cohesion and has developed links with schools further afield, both nationally and internationally, to broaden pupils' experiences.

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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	2
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 Early Years Foundation Stage in either the Nursery or Reception due to the limited spaces available for nursery provision. In both cases their attainment on entry is well below the level expected nationally for their age. Some children do attend other pre-school settings.. Children make good progress across all the areas of learning, but standards remain well below average at the end of the Reception year.

Good links with parents and carers and other pre-school providers help children settle quickly into school and become familiar with routines. Some children have significant behaviour issues and many have limited knowledge of English. Good systems support these children without disruption to normal provision. Teaching and support are good throughout the setting. There is a good balance of adult-led activities and those the children choose themselves, although planning does not always ensure that the use of the outdoor area is linked to and extends the learning carried out in the classroom. Children have a good range of activities to choose from and they have a good understanding of keeping safe and of hygiene because of effective adult guidance. Children are well cared for and adults have good relationships with them. Safeguarding procedures are all in place and all welfare requirements are met. Parents and carers are all very happy and satisfied with the support provided for their children and the communication between them and the school. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported in all aspects of their learning.

Leaders make good use of assessment information, which is recorded well in children's records, to ensure that work matches children's abilities and needs. Teaching and learning are monitored well and this ensures good teaching throughout. The coordinator works closely with another school to ensure that progress and attainment data are accurate.

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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

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who completed inspection questionnaires are highly satisfied with the school. There were many supportive comments, typified by 'I think New City is at the heart of the community. Its standards never falter' and 'A great community atmosphere within the school. My child enjoys going to school and often researches further into topics as he is obviously enthused by teaching within the school. Great to witness such enthusiasm from the children.' A very few parents and carers expressed individual concerns that were followed up as part of the inspection process, but they followed no particular pattern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at New City 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 team received 229 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 576 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	158	69	71	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	144	63	82	36	1	0	2	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	136	59	87	38	4	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	101	44	115	50	8	3	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	135	59	88	38	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	125	55	95	41	7	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	111	48	114	50	3	1	0	0
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)	98	43	95	41	9	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	92	40	123	54	5	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	106	46	103	45	6	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	87	38	111	48	9	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	122	53	97	42	4	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	143	62	81	35	2	1	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.



Dear Pupils

Inspection of New City Primary School, Plaistow, E13 9PY

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to your school. We really enjoyed visiting you in your school and seeing you learning and playing so well together. Your school is giving you an outstanding education.

There are many things we admire about your school. Here are a few of them:

- Everyone in the school gets on so well together and behaviour is excellent.
- You told us that you feel safe and are well looked after.
- The teachers make sure you enjoy your lessons so that you all make outstanding progress.
- Those of you who completed the questionnaires told me that Mrs Withnall and the staff do a good job.
- You enjoy some really good trips like the residential visit to Fairplay House Activity Centre you so excitedly told me about.
- You get some really good opportunities to learn about and communicate with pupils from different backgrounds.

These are the things we have asked the school to do to make it even better:

- give you more opportunities to use mathematics and also information and communication technology in other subjects
- work with the parents and carers of those of you who are taken on family holidays during term time, to avoid doing so
- improve the planned use of the outdoor area in the Early Years Foundation Stage to support the classroom learning.

You can help by carrying on working hard.

Yours sincerely

John Horwood

Lead inspector

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