

# Nelson Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 102733           |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Newham           |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 363664           |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 24–25 March 2011 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Martin Beale     |

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

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| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                                  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                                |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3–11                                     |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                    |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 867                                      |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                       |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Diana Green                              |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Fiona Cullen                             |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 20 January 2010                          |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Napier Road<br>East Ham<br>London E6 2SE |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 020 8472 0642                            |
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|--------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Age group</b>         | 3–11             |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>  | 24–25 March 2011 |
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. They visited 41 lessons, observing 29 teachers, and held meetings with staff, groups of pupils, and members of the governing body, including the chair. Informal discussions were also held with parents and carers as they arrived with their children at the start of the day. Inspectors observed the schools work, and scrutinised assessment information, pupils books, records of pupils progress and improvement plans. Inspectors analysed 430 parental questionnaires, 144 responses to the pupils survey and 84 responses to the staff questionnaire.

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

Has the new team in the Early Years Foundation Stage improved provision, particularly in the way the needs of individual children are met?

How effectively do teachers use their questioning to engage pupils and provide challenge, particularly for the more-able?

Have management strategies been successful in improving the performance of individual teachers?

How effective are leadership roles at all levels in providing the capacity to drive and sustain improvement?

## Information about the school

Almost all pupils in this larger-than-average primary school are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The majority of pupils are of Asian heritages and most speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average and considerably more pupils than in most schools join or leave other than at the usual times. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well-above average. Pupils with speech and language difficulties in the 14-place resource-based provision are integrated fully into the school and attend main-school lessons. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Nursery and four Reception classes. The headteacher was appointed in an acting position immediately after the last inspection and to the substantive post in January 2011. The school has recently received the Platinum Sing Up award and achieved Healthy Schools status.

When the school was inspected in January 2010, it was judged to require a Notice to Improve.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

### Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

The school has improved in many key areas since its last inspection because of the determined leadership of the new headteacher. She is supported well by an effective and committed team of staff and a supportive but challenging governing body. The leadership role of other staff is becoming much more clearly defined and is increasingly effective in supporting improvements. Year leaders, however, do not always have the time to influence sufficiently the quality of provision in their groups. The pupils progress is accelerating throughout the school and attainment is rising. Thorough monitoring and accurate self-evaluation provide a firm basis from which leaders can plan for the future. These features provide the school with good capacity for sustained improvement.

Teaching is satisfactory, but improving. Some inconsistencies remain. These are being tackled by identifying the features of better learning and how these can be achieved. There is some outstanding practice, particularly in Year 6, which acts as a model to which others can aspire.

The most effective teaching stimulates the pupils thinking, encourages them to become independent and drives their learning forward well because methods and activities are adapted well to meet their needs. In the less effective lessons, teachers do not engage the pupils fully through their questioning or by challenging their thinking.

Under new leadership, the satisfactory provision in the Nursery and Reception classes is improving. Children make satisfactory progress, but assessment is not always used effectively enough as a tool to plan activities focused on individual learning needs.

Pupils make satisfactory progress overall from their starting points, but their rate of progress is accelerating throughout the school. Progress is most rapid in Year 6, but because of the legacy of underachievement, attainment remains well-below average.

The pupils writing has improved considerably because of the focus placed on technical aspects and on giving pupils opportunities to develop their skills in contexts they find engaging, generally linked closely to their themes of study, which bring learning to life for the pupils. However, insufficient use is made by pupils of new technology to support their learning and guided reading sessions vary in the impact they have on achievement. This affects the pupils future life skills.

Progress is slower in mathematics than in English because some staff are insecure in their subject knowledge and pupils do not have enough opportunity to hone their skills by solving problems and undertaking investigations.

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Pupils enjoy school greatly and are very keen to learn. They behave well and the manner in which they conduct themselves at all times adds greatly to the harmonious atmosphere around the school and sense of purpose in lessons. Pupils are very respectful and polite towards each other and adults.

The school is very aware of the situations of pupils and their families, enabling them to direct action to support their specific needs, particularly where they are potentially more vulnerable. Pupils with speech and language difficulties are integrated well into lessons with skilled input from the support staff from the specially resourced unit. Pupils are helped to use an effective range of strategies to overcome their difficulties so that they can make steady progress in mainstream classes. The day-to-day management of the unit is secure and it operates smoothly within the whole-school structures.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise the pupils achievement in mathematics by:
  - extending the teachers subject knowledge and skills in teaching key concepts
  - providing opportunities for the pupils to solve problems, apply their knowledge in other areas and develop skills for life
  - enabling pupils to embed their skills in practical contexts.
- Extend the pupils prospects of economic well-being by:
  - providing structured opportunities for them to apply new and emerging technologies to support their learning
  - making more effective use of reading sessions to embed skills
  - improving the attendance of every pupil.
- Accelerate the childrens progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - providing activities that challenge their thinking, based on accurate assessments of their learning
  - ensuring that all children have equal access to activities both inside and outdoors.

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

**3**

When learning is most effective, particularly in Year 6, pupils work with interest and a determination to do well. Most concentrate well in lessons and persevere with tasks, even when they find them hard. They collaborate very effectively when working in groups or discussing their ideas with each other. They are confident learners because their contributions are, clearly, valued by their teachers and respected by others. On a few occasions, learning can be less productive and the pupils lose interest when teachers talk too much and do not encourage the pupils to take an active role in their learning.

There are no patterns to any variation in the achievement of different groups of pupils. Year 6 test results have been too low in the past, but did represent satisfactory progress

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from the pupils low starting points. Attainment is now rising strongly, securely and rapidly, with a significant proportion of pupils in many classes working at the levels expected nationally. The action taken to improve the achievement of girls in mathematics, such as through single-gender classes in Year 6, is having an impact and their attainment is rising.

Pupils with speech and language difficulties, as well as others with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress. Carefully focused support enables them to participate fully in lessons, but they do not always receive the same attention from their teachers as from the educational assistants. The language development of pupils is given appropriate attention and, once their English language skills become more secure, their progress accelerates and many become amongst the schools highest-attaining pupils.

Pupils are proud of their school and their contribution to its development. Most attend regularly. They are keen to help newcomers to settle in quickly and to raise funds for charity. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds mix happily. They value greatly the diversity around them and enjoy learning about other customs. Links with schools in Lincolnshire and Kenya help them to see the world from a different perspective. Most pupils say they feel safe in school. They understand the risks of internet use and the importance of road safety. They feel confident that any matter they take to an adult will be dealt with swiftly. The Healthy Schools award is an indication of the schools success in helping pupils to stay fit and healthy. The youngest children can explain that they need to eat fruit and older pupils have a good understanding of the factors which affect aspects of their health, including taking regular exercise.

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

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>   | 4        |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress  | 3        |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress                      | 3        |
| <b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Pupils' behaviour</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>   | 3        |
| <b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>  | <b>2</b> |

<sup>1</sup> 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 most effective teaching engages pupils through skilled and focused questions and provides opportunities for them to share ideas in discussion with others. The pupils positive response to their teachers contributes to the calm atmosphere in classrooms. Many pupils were seen to make use of the learning walls and other displays to stimulate their thinking and help them to improve their work. Pupils are becoming more aware of the steps to take to meet their personal targets, particularly in writing. This is a result of the improving quality of teachers marking and the opportunities provided for pupils to respond to the comments. However, not all teachers plan carefully to meet the needs of all pupils or are able to assess progress by the end of a lesson because they do not always identify clear objectives for learning.

The themes that link learning between subjects give pupils a voice in what they study. Visits to places of interest stimulate their thinking. Various adaptations are made and additional programmes provided to meet specific language and learning needs, in addition to extending pupils who are gifted and talented. The curriculum provides a strong focus on developing basic skills, although reading opportunities vary in quality and are not always planned with a clear purpose or to meet individual needs. The Platinum Sing Up award reflects the strong contribution of the choir to school life. Sporting activities made possible by specialist coaches from the nearby secondary school are a highlight of the pupils week.

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The school provides a supportive environment for the pupils, for example, through a welcome pack that includes photographs and visual timetables. Thoughtful transition arrangements enable pupils to settle in quickly, especially those joining mid-year, and to move smoothly through the school and into the next stage of their learning. Potentially vulnerable pupils are supported well, including through the expertise of external agencies. The school has a successful range of initiatives to deal with absence, but has been less successful in creating an ethos that promotes better attendance.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The quality of teaching</b>   | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The use of assessment to support learning  | 3        |
| <b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b> | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>   | <b>2</b> |

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has assembled a strong team of leaders, focused sharply on the drive to raise achievement, improve teaching and support the development of all pupils. Staff morale is high and many say how they feel part of a dedicated team. Their high ambitions are shown by the challenging targets for pupils and the rigorous evaluation of data to spot and take action over any emerging underachievement. There has not yet been enough time for this to have led to sustained improvements in the performance of all pupils and some inconsistencies in teaching remain. Promoting equality of opportunity is central to the schools work and the harmonious atmosphere is testament to the success of staff in tackling discrimination. The schools work is, increasingly, having a positive impact in remedying earlier variations in pupils achievements.

The governing body has become more challenging in terms of questioning and holding the school to account, especially in relation to teaching and the pupils achievement. It ensures that safeguarding arrangements are robust, implemented rigorously by staff and the impact is evaluated carefully. Procedures include careful checks on staff and a regular scrutiny of the site.

Many activities have helped to promote community cohesion well, based on a clear understanding of the context within which the school operates. The schools international links are developing successfully. The school is committed strongly to partnership working by bringing in expertise not otherwise available to extend the opportunities provided for the pupils and to support their welfare. There is also a drive to forge an ever stronger partnership with pupils homes, by reaching out to all groups represented in the school. A considerable number of parents and carers are involved in school through supporting the development of reading. The school engages closely with families, particularly when they are new to the country, for example by providing English language courses and a scheme to help parents and carers into employment.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Many children enter the school with limited English. This inhibits their progress across all areas of learning so that not all reach goals expected for their age by the end of the Reception Year. This is also partly because there is not always a consistent approach from staff to developing the childrens speaking skills, providing opportunities for them to think or extend their learning through problem-solving. As in the rest of the school, guided reading sessions vary in their effectiveness. The children enjoy learning and the activities provided and can make choices over the activities they undertake. They share resources and behave well. The indoor areas are stimulating, but learning does not always flow freely to the outdoors, where sometimes activities lack a clear purpose.

The children develop trusting relationships with the adults around them and show their understanding of the importance of hygiene by washing their hands before eating. The careful attention to safeguarding and the childrens welfare helps them to feel safe and confident. Assessment is improving, but the information is not always linked well enough to planning to have a full impact on the childrens learning.

The staff team works closely with parents and carers, with the recent opportunity for them to stay and play with their children being much valued by all. Careful monitoring and more secure evaluation of data have identified clear priorities for improvement. The new team has begun to make effective changes to the learning environment both indoors and out, although they recognise that there is still some way to go for it to support better progress.

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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>                   | <b>3</b> |
| 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

A much larger proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire than in most primary schools. The level of satisfaction is above average in response to all but one of the questions. In particular, parents and carers feel that the school helps their children to adopt safe and healthy lifestyles. Inspection evidence endorses this view. A few parents and carers believe that the school does not manage behaviour well. During this inspection, inspectors found that behaviour was good. Inspectors also investigated concerns about how well the school is led and managed, concluding that this is good and improving. Inspectors judge that the school is increasingly seeking to take account of the views of parents and carers and this is the view of the large majority of parents and carers.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Nelson 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 430 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 867 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |   | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | % | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 239            | 56 | 176   | 41 | 8        | 2 | 5                 | 1 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 220            | 51 | 190   | 44 | 15       | 3 | 3                 | 1 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress  | 204            | 47 | 191   | 44 | 26       | 6 | 5                 | 1 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 161            | 37 | 224   | 52 | 34       | 8 | 6                 | 1 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 187            | 43 | 220   | 51 | 13       | 3 | 2                 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning  | 173            | 40 | 216   | 50 | 29       | 7 | 4                 | 1 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 165            | 38 | 235   | 55 | 18       | 4 | 3                 | 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) | 134            | 31 | 225   | 52 | 29       | 7 | 3                 | 1 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs  | 119            | 28 | 253   | 59 | 32       | 7 | 4                 | 1 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 139            | 32 | 234   | 54 | 20       | 5 | 15                | 3 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 111            | 26 | 234   | 54 | 34       | 8 | 11                | 3 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 139            | 32 | 231   | 54 | 23       | 5 | 8                 | 2 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school   | 190            | 44 | 209   | 49 | 19       | 4 | 8                 | 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 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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul> |
| 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.**



28 April 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Nelson Primary School, London E6 2SE**

Thank you all very much for your help when we visited your school recently. We have told your teachers how very polite and welcoming you were towards us all. We agree with your positive view of the school and have found that Nelson Primary is improving under the leadership of the new headteacher and is now satisfactory. Clearly, you enjoy school and the activities provided. Your teachers take good care of you, do the utmost to keep you safe and help you to settle into school quickly. Your behaviour in lessons is good. We were impressed by the way you try hard to stay safe, fit and healthy. You take all of your responsibilities seriously and are thoughtful in the way you help newcomers settle into school. Clearly, you enjoy the work in your topics and your choir is a credit to the school.

The youngest children get off to a sound start in the Nursery and Reception classes. The rest of you make satisfactory progress during your time in school. This is because you have interesting things to learn. Those of you new to learning English make increased progress once you have developed the skills needed. Those of you who find learning more difficult make satisfactory progress also because of the support you receive from the unit.

The three things in particular we have asked the teachers and other adults to do in order to make the school better are to:

improve the way you learn in mathematics

make guided reading sessions more effective and provide more opportunities for you to use computers in lessons

help children in the Nursery and Reception classes to make faster progress.

All of you can play your part in helping the school to get even better by continuing to work hard and improving your attendance further. Well done for showing such pride in your school and in your achievements!

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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