

Southwark Park School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100812
Local Authority	Southwark
Inspection number	376467
Inspection dates	13–14 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Helen Howard

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	426
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sylvia Lang
Headteacher	Carole Pellici
Date of previous school inspection	2–3 March 2009
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The team observed 20 lessons taught by 16 teachers. They met with pupils, members of the governing body and various members of staff. They observed the school's work and looked at its documentation, including its self-evaluation, policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding of children and data about pupils' progress. Inspectors also considered the views of pupils, staff and the 65 parents and carers who returned a questionnaire.

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

- The current picture of attainment and progress across the school, particularly in Key Stage 1.
- The consistency of the quality of teaching in all age groups.
- How successfully leaders and managers accelerate pupils' progress.

Information about the school

Southwark Park is much larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportions of pupils who have a minority ethnic heritage and of pupils who speak English as an additional language are very much higher than the national average. The ethnic diversity of the school has increased since the previous inspection. The proportions of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and of those who are known to be eligible for free school meals are well above those found nationally. A much higher than average percentage of pupils join or leave the school partway through their education, with more than one third of pupils joining or leaving the school after the beginning of Key Stage 2.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage attend either full- or part-time in the Nursery and attend Reception full time in one of two classes. A breakfast club is run by the school every day and the school has Healthy School status.

Following the retirement of her predecessor, the current headteacher, who was previously the deputy headteacher of the school, was appointed in September 2011. The school remains in temporary accommodation while refurbishment of the main site, which has been delayed, continues. Nearly one third of the teaching staff joined the school this year.

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

Southwark Park is a good, harmonious school that is continuing to improve. The new headteacher has maintained the very caring ethos while developing a clear vision for further improvements. She is well supported by enthusiastic and committed senior and middle leaders and managers, who have encouraged a love of learning in the school. One pupil summed it up when saying in an assembly, 'We want to give 100% so we can always do our best.' Pupils, including those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, are well cared for and the school is prepared to go to great lengths to support them. Pupils feel safe because the school gives priority to their welfare. Pupils' behaviour is good. They conduct themselves very well in lessons, around school and at playtimes. As a result, the school is calm and orderly. All of the parents and carers who returned a questionnaire reported that they were happy with the school. While communication with parents and carers is good, the majority of parents and carers do not fully engage in helping with their child's learning.

Children make a strong start to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage. By the time they leave school, pupils make good progress overall and their attainment is broadly average. Progress is strongest in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2. While improving, progress is not consistently accelerating at a fast enough rate in Key Stage 1 where writing skills in particular are less well developed. Rigorous systems for evaluating how well pupils are doing ensure that weaknesses are diagnosed early and that effective programmes of support address pupils' needs.

Teaching is good overall and in the majority of lessons teachers use assessment information well to plan for the needs of all learners. However, in a few lessons, teaching lacks pace and challenge for all pupils. The curriculum offers pupils many opportunities to make links across a range of subjects and provides very good targeted support for individual pupils so that they make good progress. Notably, support staff provide excellent individual and small-group teaching for pupils who may require additional help. The school works very effectively with partners to enhance curriculum provision which includes enterprise opportunities, art and music.

As a result of the school's intensive focus on attendance, levels for most pupils are now broadly average and rising, an improvement since the previous inspection. The school has good systems in place to monitor the effectiveness of its work and self-evaluation is strong. It knows its strengths and areas for further development and plans effectively for improvement. The improvements in attainment at Key Stage 1 and attendance, together with the consolidation of previous good progress,

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demonstrate that capacity to sustain further improvements is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2012, in order to accelerate improvements in attainment and progress in Key Stage 1, increase the proportion of good teaching by:
 - applying the school's successful Key Stage 2 creative approaches in writing, to Years 1 and 2 lessons
 - ensuring that the pace of lessons is consistently good in all lessons
 - ensuring that the level of challenge for pupils is consistently high in all lessons.
- Improve the school's engagement with parents and carers by:
 - developing strategies to encourage parents and carers to attend events that help them to support their child's learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils start school with skills and abilities that are well below those typical of their age and, by the end of Year 6, they have made good progress in all areas. Pupils enjoy learning and all of the parents and carers who returned a questionnaire agreed that their child enjoyed coming to school. Pupils particularly enjoy creative activities and this is evident in the high-quality art displays around the school and in the pupils' enjoyment of topic work. In the majority of lessons, pupils make good progress, although there are differences in the rates of progress between year groups because teaching is not consistently good in all lessons. Progress is weaker in Key Stage 1.

Groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who speak English as an additional language or have minority ethnic heritages, and those who join the school partway through their education, make good and sometimes outstanding progress. This is because teaching is well matched to their needs and they are very well supported by teaching assistants. Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals make better progress than their peers nationally. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and are keen to do their best.

Pupils' reading and speaking and listening skills are well developed. For example, in one outstanding lesson in Key Stage 2 about Odysseus, pupils held a high-quality discussion about the possible reasons for differences between film and text media. Pupils are becoming increasingly confident in their ability to use mathematical skills in a range of contexts as a result of cross-curricular topic work and good teaching. Pupils in Year 6 make good progress in writing skills because the school has introduced creative approaches to writing in Key Stage 2 that link skills across a range of subjects. For example, with support from partners, pupils have created a film about science in which they wrote and performed the scripts. In Key Stage 1,

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the approaches used in Key Stage 2 are not embedded and, as a result, writing skills are less well developed. This is hindering pupils’ progress in other subjects.

While a minority of pupils think behaviour could be better, inspectors found that pupils behave very well, work well together and are polite and respectful to adults. Staff manage behaviour effectively, including the behaviour of a small minority of pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and this is supported by a number of initiatives that the school takes to promote physical and emotional health. For example, the school offers parents and carers the opportunity to cook healthy meals with their child. These strategies have resulted in the award of Healthy School status.

Pupils are proud of their contribution to the school and local community and respond positively to responsibilities that are given to them. For example, all pupils are involved in contributing their views on the new vision for the school and on the building plans. They are reflective about the world around them and are encouraged to celebrate the diverse cultural and religious backgrounds of their community. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and most can manage conflicts in a mature manner. Consequently, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.

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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is at least good and occasionally it is outstanding. Teachers’ good subject

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

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knowledge and very good relationships with pupils ensure that pupils are well motivated. Data are used well to monitor pupils’ progress and match activities to meet the needs of all pupils. Consequently, teaching is securing good progress overall, especially in Key Stage 2. In a few lessons in Key Stage 1, teaching is less effective because the pace of the lessons is too slow and the challenge for pupils is not high enough. Marking is used effectively across the school to provide feedback to pupils about how well they are doing, and the use of assessment information during lessons is strong so that teachers adapt activities to support pupils’ learning. A range of resources is used effectively to support learning and practical approaches help to motivate pupils. For example, an analysis of a story about murder and revenge gave pupils the opportunity to act out the characters’ views on film and helped them to understand the underlying moral content.

The curriculum provides opportunities to develop pupils’ skills by utilising and building on their creative ideas, fostering independence and giving them activities which encourage them to use basic skills in a range of contexts. It is enhanced by a very wide range of trips, including to a zoo, parks, a castle and different churches and religious centres. These give pupils experiences of the wider world that they may not otherwise have. The wide cross-curricular, topic-based approach is motivating for pupils and they enjoy activities led by visitors including for music, art and drama. The majority of pupils attend at least one of the many and varied clubs that are run in school.

The school supports its pupils very well. A range of strategies, including the breakfast club which gives pupils the opportunity to come to school early, has improved attendance and punctuality for the vast majority of pupils. The school is very welcoming, especially when children start school. One parent wrote, ‘My children love school and clearly articulate and appreciate the routines and structures that are in place...the school has a great atmosphere where children and parents feel welcomed and valued.’ The vast majority of parents and carers agree that their child is well prepared for moves between year groups and to secondary school. Carefully targeted support for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable ensures that they are included and can experience the same opportunities as their peers.

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 headteacher has developed a strong vision that is shared with staff and pupils.

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She is well supported by senior leaders and managers and by the governing body, which gives effective strategic direction to the school and monitors the school’s performance. Leaders and managers have planned carefully for future improvements and they know the school’s strengths and weaknesses well. While the school knows that more needs to be done in accelerating improvements in attainment and progress in Key Stage 1, there have been good improvements in progress and attainment overall.

The school promotes equal opportunities well. Pupils feel confident that incidents of discrimination will be tackled decisively. All groups of pupils make good progress and there are no significant differences. Pupils’ skills and talents are celebrated in lessons and in assemblies. All pupils are invited to contribute their ideas and feelings and, as pupils say that they feel confident, the school takes all of their views into account.

The vast majority of parents and carers are positive about the school and a high proportion attend consultation evenings and performances. The school has organised a range of events to inform parents and carers about how to help with their child’s learning and contribute to making decisions about the school. These include workshops, open school events and meetings. However, very few parents or carers take up these opportunities. Effective partnerships, including those with other schools, contribute to improved outcomes. For example, a partnership with a local bank has provided a team of volunteers who help with pupils’ reading. This has raised pupils’ confidence and helped to improve their reading skills.

Members of the governing body support the school well and ensure that safeguarding arrangements comply with all statutory requirements. These include vetting of staff and promoting the safe use of new technologies. The school promotes community cohesion well and has a good understanding of the socio-economic context of its community. It develops pupils’ understanding of their cultural heritages and is developing international links. Local community links are mainly made through church events and collaborations with other schools.

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	3
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	3

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The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

On entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, children’s skills and abilities are well below those typical of their age. By the time they move to Key Stage 1, they have made good progress in all areas of learning. Regular observations by staff and detailed tracking of progress help them to plan effectively for the next steps in learning. Children’s emotional development is strong, as is the development of their language for communication and thinking.

Children settle in very quickly to the school and actively engage in lessons. They participate very well in activities of choice and they are provided with many opportunities to develop their basic skills. Staff are skilful in encouraging children to explore different activities, including the use of a good range of outdoor facilities. The environment is very well equipped and is bright and cheerful.

Leadership and management are good. A clear vision for improvements is based on accurate analyses of data. While partnerships with parents and carers are good, their engagement with their child’s learning is hindered by the inaccessibility of the Early Years Foundation Stage site. Nevertheless, the school makes every effort to keep parents and carers well informed about their child’s progress by inviting them in regularly for workshops. The ‘home-to-school’ book is an effective resource for helping parents and carers to record what their child can do at home. Children are cared for very well and safeguarding is good.

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

Just over one tenth of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, a response rate that is well below the average. Almost all are positive about their child’s experiences in school, with one writing ‘The staff are lovely and my son does very well. I couldn’t fault it.’ All of the parents and carers who responded feel that their child is safe and that they are well informed about the progress that their child

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makes. All of the parents and carers think that the teaching is good.

The vast majority of parents and carers who responded feel that the school is well led and managed and that the school takes account of their concerns. A very small minority of parents and carers think that the school does not meet their child's particular needs. Inspectors found during this inspection that the school meets the needs of individual pupils well and that, as a consequence, they make good progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Southwark Park 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 65 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 426 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	66	22	34	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	62	24	37	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	37	57	26	40	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	46	32	49	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	49	32	49	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	29	45	34	52	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	34	38	58	3	5	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)	20	31	38	58	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	24	37	36	55	3	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	35	41	63	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	28	42	65	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	43	36	55	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	34	52	31	48	0	0	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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.



15 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Southwark Park School, Bermondsey SE16 3PB

You may remember that three of us came to visit your school recently. I would like to thank you for your very warm welcome. We really enjoyed our visit and I am writing to tell you what we found.

Southwark Park is a good school that helps you to make good progress. We think that some of you, especially in Years 1 and 2 can make even better progress. We saw how much you enjoy learning and how well you work in lessons. You told us that you feel safe in school and that you trust the adults who help you. Although some of you feel that behaviour is not as good as it could be, we found during the inspection that you behaved very well and that you get on really well with each other. We could see that you enjoy practical activities in lessons and we were very impressed with the art work on display and with the films that some of you have made.

We have asked the school to do two things:

- to make some lessons even better in Years 1 and 2 by helping you with your writing skills, making sure you work at a good pace and by making sure that you have work that is at the right level.
- to give your parents and carers ideas to help you with learning at home.

Yours sincerely

Helen Howard
Lead inspector

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