



Park Primary School

Inspection report

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 102736
LEA Newham

Inspection number 275899
Inspection dates 6 - 7 July 2005
Reporting inspector Pat Kime HMI

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

Type of School	Primary	School address	Matthews Park Avenue
School category	Community		London
Age range of pupils	4 - 11		E15 4AE
Gender of pupils	mixed	Telephone number	020 8534 5216
Number on roll	469	Fax number	020 8555 6962
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Rebecca Swan
Date of previous inspection	June 1999	Headteacher	Mr P O'Donnell

Age group 4 - 11	Published July 2005	Reference no. 275899
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Introduction

The inspection was a pilot of the new arrangements for inspection announced by Ofsted in consultation paper of February 2004. It was carried out with the support and co-operation of Park Primary School and of the local education authority.

The inspection was carried out by four of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Park Primary is a much larger than average school housed in an old three-storey building with little outdoor accommodation. The school serves a community where levels of social and economic disadvantage are high and around two thirds of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. More than 90 per cent of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. They represent a wide range of ethnic groups. The school faces several challenges. About three quarters of the pupils speak English as an additional language and many start school with very limited English. Levels of pupil mobility are very high. Only about half the pupils who start in the reception year stay right through to Year 6 and many pupils arrive at Park part way through their primary education. Approximately six per cent of the pupils are refugees or from families seeking asylum. A tiny proportion of pupils is in the care of the local authority. The number of pupils with special educational needs is average for a school this size.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Park Primary School gives its pupils an outstanding education in a vibrant, stimulating and creative environment. It has a diverse yet harmonious learning community of staff and pupils who thoroughly enjoy school life and have very good relationships. The school is exceptionally well led and very well managed. It has improved a lot since it was last inspected in 1999. Senior staff lead development and innovation in a thoughtful and measured way. They know how good the school is and what could be even better and they have proved their capacity to bring about improvement. Although costs are higher than average, the school provides good value for money.

Pupils flourish here. The school sets great store by developing pupils as rounded individuals and pastoral care is extremely good. As a result, pupils' personal development is outstanding. They have excellent attitudes to learning and, by the time they leave, they are well equipped to make the most of their future education. Academic progress is extremely good. Pupils build very well on the excellent start they get in the reception classes.

Grade: 1

What the school should do to improve further

- make better use of the analysis of data on standards and progress

Achievement and standards

Pupils make excellent progress from a well below average starting point. Most start in the reception classes with attainment that is well below average for their age and those who join the school later are almost all behind in their learning. Standards in the Year 6 pupils' results in the 2005 tests are above average in mathematics and science and average in English. Most of the pupils who stayed at Park throughout Key Stage 2 did exceptionally well. Pupils do at least well in Key Stage 1 and the seven-year olds' standards are usually much higher than in similar schools. However, in 2005 the more able Year 2 pupils did not do quite as well as the school expected. The school provides very well-gauged support for pupils who need extra help. Consequently no groups of pupils underachieve. Many with special educational needs make exceptionally good progress. Those for whom English is an additional language make rapid progress towards fluency in the language.

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being

Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. Pupils respond extremely well to the school's provision. They make excellent progress in developing independence, initiative, responsibility and co-operation. They thoroughly enjoy school life. They are enthusiastic about their work and take justified pleasure and pride in their achievements. Pupils are, on the whole, exceptionally well-behaved, without the need for close supervision. They arrive at school keen to start each day.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of the school's work. The results are clear to see in the way pupils develop. They are courteous and friendly. They show a high degree of respect for each other and for all staff. The vibrant multi-cultural school environment helps pupils to learn about a wide range of cultures and the rich curriculum helps them to appreciate the artistic and creative.

Children learn about healthy lifestyles. For example, they are encouraged to eat healthily and understand why they should do so. However, some do not always practise what they have learned and choose to bring less healthy snacks to eat at school. Pupils and staff join in the exercise sessions that start each day on such a cheerful and friendly note. Pupils follow safe routines at work and move around the school sensibly and safely.

Pupils make a strong contribution to the local and wider communities. Some benefit from exceptional opportunities to perform at prestigious venues such as the Royal Festival Hall. Others help older people locally by organising and performing concerts in local care homes. The Pupils' Council contributes significantly to the life of the school and gives pupils a clear understanding of important democratic processes such as debating, presenting themselves for selection and voting. Pupils who are Council members speak highly of the way it works and the opportunity it gives them to help improve their school.

The school makes strenuous efforts to promote good attendance and this has paid off. Attendance has improved significantly this year and is now satisfactory.

Grade: 1

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. The school rightly believes that there is a high proportion of very good and outstanding teaching. In the reception classes teaching is consistently of a very high quality. In the rest of the school there is a small proportion of teaching that is merely satisfactory.

Without exception, staff have very positive relationships with pupils, take pleasure in their achievements and want them to do well. In almost all lessons teachers maintain very good class control. The school has adopted new teaching methods very successfully and there is a high degree of consistency in teachers' work. Inspectors saw this for instance, when they observed all the mathematics 'sets' in Year 4 and Year 6 during the same hour and visited all three reception classes. This consistency is a key contributory factor to pupils' outstanding progress.

In the best lessons teachers provide a very good range of activities to help pupils understand new work so they remember what they have been taught. Teachers deploy teaching assistants well to support pupils who find learning difficult, though occasionally, in Key Stage 2, they are under-employed when the teacher is talking to the whole class. Teachers adapt the work very effectively for pupils of different abilities so that all are able to succeed yet the most able are stretched. They keep all the pupils actively involved and trying really hard throughout each lesson, for instance by using individual whiteboards for them to write answers on or by posing challenging questions for them to discuss in pairs.

When the teaching is less good, it is because a few pupils are not so fully involved in some activities and for some attention lapses periodically, or because work is not so well matched to pupils' different needs. Very occasionally, too little is covered in a group teaching session to enable the pupils to make the progress they could. The marking of pupils' work is not yet consistent. Much is extremely useful to pupils but some does little to show them how they might do better.

Despite the unpromising building, the school has been turned into an extremely attractive and stimulating learning environment which reflects pupils' achievements and the school's ethos.

Grade: 2

Curriculum and other activities

The school provides a broad, rich, stimulating and well-integrated curriculum which interests and motivates pupils, reflects their cultural heritages, and links subjects coherently. There is a very strong and highly effective emphasis on learning through creative and practical and on activities that promote pupils' personal development, particularly independence, initiative and co-operation. Pupils benefit from an excellent range of enrichment activities, such as many educational visits and several musical performances and work in the school's drama studio. The curriculum is supplemented very well by extra activities that cater for a wide range of interests including dance, gymnastics, choir, Bengali and French.

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support

The school looks after its pupils and promotes their well-being outstandingly well. The excellent support for pupils starts with an extensive programme of home visits to families whose children are about to start school. This ensures pupils' backgrounds are understood, their needs are known and a strong partnership is built between home and school. Support continues as very positive, relationships are established between teachers and their pupils. Relationships are based on mutual respect and agreed rules and guidelines. Staff and pupils clearly enjoy working and learning together. There is a consistency in the way staff work with the pupils that promotes a high standard of behaviour and creates a culture of working hard and helping others. Pupils thrive in the ethos that is based on encouragement, praise and reward alongside challenge to achieve. They know their targets and are keen to achieve them.

Child protection procedures are in place and well understood by staff. Children feel safe at school. The school works very well with a wide range of external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families are well supported. There are several examples of the school providing care and support of the highest order to pupils who face difficulties in their lives. This has helped raise their aspirations and enabled them to fulfil their potential. The learning mentor plays a key role in supporting pupils and they know they can approach her with any problems.

Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well and given the extra help they need.

Pupils who arrive at Park part way through their primary education are speedily assessed and they are very well supported. For example, pupils explained how

teachers provided them with 'buddies' in the class and at playtimes and helped them to learn English.

Attendance is monitored closely and there are close links with the Education Welfare officer. Pupils who need support to help them attend school are identified and appropriate action is taken swiftly to tackle poor attendance. As a result, attendance rates have improved significantly.

Grade: 1

Leadership and management

The headteacher has created a very positive ethos at Park. He leads the school extremely well and has real vision for its continuing development. Because of his leadership there is a clear, shared philosophy behind everything that is done and pupils benefit from consistent provision, for instance in teaching methods, the curriculum and the approach to discipline. The headteacher is supported extremely well by very committed middle managers who take a lead on aspects of the school's work, such as developing teaching and learning, pastoral care and provision for pupils with special educational needs.

The school takes a measured approach to innovation and prepares the ground for change carefully. For example, once senior staff are convinced of the case for change, staff are trained in new methods before they are introduced. The effectiveness of this approach is seen in the way stability has been maintained and standards have risen whilst new teaching methods have been introduced.

The school recruits many new young teachers and brings out the best in them. Their fresh ideas are welcomed and their potential is developed so they can take responsibility early. Teachers with advanced skills are identified and utilised very well. The staff are enthusiastic and clearly love teaching here.

A slip in standards in mathematics and science has been reversed as a result of changes introduced by the subject leaders and taken on wholeheartedly by all staff.

The school monitors and evaluates its work well. Senior staff observe lessons regularly and their records show they have noted the same strengths and weaknesses as the inspectors. However, they tend to focus more on what teachers do than on the quality of pupils' learning. Similarly, the school's improvement plan could focus more on how improvement is to be measured. The school holds a lot of data about pupils' standards and progress. This is analysed to determine whether all pupils are doing as well as they can and where improvement might be made. Plans are laid accordingly. However, the data should be analysed more sharply to pinpoint areas for improvement more precisely. Also, it could be more readily accessible to guide the work of all teachers with leadership roles, such as subject leaders.

The involvement of the governing body in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance has improved considerably since the last inspection and is now good. Race equality is promoted very well but the governing body has not formally assessed the impact of its policy in this regard.

Grade: 1

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INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	School Overall
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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

How well do learners achieve?	1
The <i>standards</i> ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners' make <i>progress</i> , taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community.	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

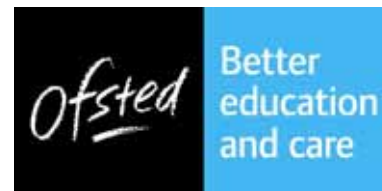
¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	Delete as appropriate
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily.	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise.	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse.	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health.	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe.	Delete as appropriate
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements.	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place.	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism.	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them.	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	Delete as appropriate
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships.	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them.	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	Delete as appropriate
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills.	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams.	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in Key Stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form.	N/A
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy.	N/A

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Park Primary School
Matthews Park Avenue
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E15 4AE

July 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for making us so welcome in your school. We had a lovely time. We really enjoyed seeing your lessons and talking with you.

There's a great atmosphere at your school. We think it is such a very good school that we've described it as 'outstanding'. That's our top grade. We could see that you and your teachers really enjoy being at Park too.

You all come on ever so well in your school work. The teaching is good and all the staff do things the same way so you all know where you stand. We think those of you who need extra help get just what you need. You all have targets to reach and we could see that you want to do well.

The teachers make lessons interesting for you and there are lots of extra activities for you to do, like the after-school clubs and the trips.

We were very impressed with the way your school takes care of you and helps you to grow up well. You are learning to be responsible and independent. You behave yourselves very well and you all get on very well with each other and with the staff. By the time you get to Year 6 you are ready to make the most of the opportunities you will get at your next schools.

Your headteacher runs the school tremendously well. The school is a lot better now than last time inspectors came, six years ago. The headteacher wants to keep on improving it and he and the teachers know just how to do that. The most important thing to do to make your school even better is for the teachers to make more use of your test results.

Keep on working hard and enjoying school.

Pat Kime

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools
(on behalf of all the inspectors)