

Sir John Cass's Foundation Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100000
Local Authority	City of London
Inspection number	276230
Inspection dates	21–22 September 2005
Reporting inspector	Usha Sahni HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr G Loughran
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	St James's Passage Duke's Place London EC3A 5DE
Telephone number	2072831147
Fax number	2076265071

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

This voluntary aided school is the only school maintained by the local authority, in the Corporation of London. There are 224 pupils on roll. The school serves a very diverse community; close to 80% of its pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, a third of whom are from Bangladeshi families. Two thirds of the pupils speak English as an additional language and about a third enter nursery with little or no English. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is almost double the national average at 31%. Over a third of the pupils have special educational needs, which is higher than national average. The school has recently expanded and now includes a Child and Family Centre for children aged three months onwards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade:

What the school should do to improve further

In order to raise standards further, the school should:* make better use of assessment information to speed up the progress of the pupils who are at risk of falling behind;* ensure that the teaching provides even greater challenges for the more able pupils so they achieve consistently high results across all subjects;* measure the success of the school improvement plan in terms of the children's learning and achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade:

Personal development and well-being

Grade:

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:

The quality of teaching and learning are good. The teachers and support staff plan in teams and this promotes good teaching and learning. In the good lessons observed, the teaching was lively and included practical work. All pupils made good progress and the pace was brisk. Teachers made good use of interactive white boards to demonstrate and clarify concepts, and engage pupils' attention fully. Pupils made thoughtful contributions in lessons in response to teachers' open ended and probing questions. Teaching in the Foundation stage is good overall. The teachers assess and analyse the pupils' progress and their test results carefully. However, this information is not always used promptly to put suitable teaching programmes in place, to speed up the progress of pupils who are at risk of achieving below their capability. As a result, some pupils achieve comparatively lower results in mathematics than in English or science. The school is reviewing its approach to the teaching of writing and mathematics because it recognises that standards in these subjects must rise further, particularly for the more able at Key Stage 1. Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs, and those at early stages of learning English

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

The school's rich and broad curriculum goes well beyond the statutory requirements and meets the diverse needs of the pupils well. A high priority is given to literacy and mathematics, although all subjects are given adequate attention. Provision for music teaching is very good. Every pupil benefits from an opportunity for musicianship and learns to play a string instrument. A rich and varied provision of arts, music, sport, modern foreign languages and extra-curricular activities is highly valued by the pupils and parents and contributes significantly to pupils' all round achievement. Curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Suitable activities and resources help pupils to learn complex ideas and skills in a practical and fun way. There is very good emphasis on relationships, sex, health and drug education and personal safety in

the curriculum. The opportunities for pupils to manage charity events and visit different work place environments contribute to their preparation for the world of work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:

The school rightly believes that the provision for pupils' care, guidance, and support is exemplary, and inspectors agree that this is a significant strength of the school. Parents were particularly impressed with the excellent care of their children during the recent bomb scares and evacuations. Safeguarding the health and well-being of the pupils is at the heart of everything that the school does. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are in place fully and all the staff are trained in child protection procedures. Very good outreach work contributes significantly to the well-being of vulnerable children and their families. The pupils draw comfort from their belief that their teachers are 'good at solving any problems' they bring to them. The staff work closely with the parents and pupils to help them make a smooth transition from home to school, and to each new stage of their schooling thereafter. Effective links and partnerships with parents and external agencies help to support pupils' individual needs.

Leadership and management

Grade:

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Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for being so welcoming and for your help with the inspection of your school. We enjoyed our visit to your school very much. Ms Rodney and I told you that we would write to you to tell you what we found out about your school. These are the things we liked about your school.

* You told us that your headteacher and all your teachers work very hard, look after you very well and you trust them. You said that they listen to your ideas and opinions and take them seriously.* You were well behaved at school and told us that you feel very safe. * You care a lot about other people, raise money for charities, and would like to do more to help those who are poor.* You are very friendly and kind and look after each other. You told us that most people follow your school's code of conduct and anti-bullying policy and there are very few disagreements. * You always try to work and concentrate hard and in most lessons, you learn something new. You find science lessons especially interesting because you get to do a lot of interesting practical work.* You think it is great that everyone in your school gets a chance to learn music and to go on lots of trips. You love all the out of school activities as these help you to learn new skills in sports and stay healthy.

We know that you will want to help your school to become even better. Some of you told us that sometimes the work is too easy, and we agree with you. Therefore, we have asked your teachers to make sure that you learn quickly and have harder work to do. We have also asked your teachers to explain to you how well you should be doing and help you to get your best results always, so make sure you listen to them! We know that you can do even better! Thank you again for talking to us and telling us such wonderful stories about yourself and your school. We wish you the very best of luck in the future.