

Lark Hall Primary School (Including Lark Hall Centre for Pupils with Autism)

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100576
Local Authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	276334
Inspection dates	12–13 June 2006
Reporting inspector	Bernice Magson

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 on roll	
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Cryer Mr Ian Hyde
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Smedley Street London SW4 6PH
Telephone number	02076223820
Fax number	02076278854

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large 3-11 primary school was opened in September 2003 following a merger of three schools and includes a centre for pupils identified with autism. It is situated in an area of high social disadvantage. Above average numbers of pupils join or leave the school at times other than the normal admission. A few pupils, who join the school after the Foundation Stage, have had little or no schooling on entry. The majority of pupils are of Black African or Portuguese heritage. A very small minority of pupils are the children of refugees or asylum seekers or are 'looked after'. Most pupils speak English as an additional language. One in four pupils is identified with learning difficulties and disabilities, which is above average and includes 29 pupils with formal statements of special educational needs. The acting headteacher was appointed in January 2006.

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

- * Ensure that teachers provide work that closely matches the pupils' needs.
- * Ensure that pupils know how to improve their work.
- * Make staff with management responsibilities more effective in both their monitoring role and in leading improvement in teaching and learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade:

Personal development and well-being

Grade:

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and the Centre for Autism is good because teachers use assessment information effectively to ensure that pupil's work is planned to match their needs. The school is working to improve the use of assessment information in teachers' planning in Years 1 to 6.

Pupils show good attitudes to learning and teachers deal effectively with instances of minor disruption. Good lessons have a clear purpose, use a range of learning styles and motivate pupils to do well. Where teaching is less effective, such as in mathematics, there is a lack of challenge for some pupils. In some lessons the pace of learning is slow because pupils spend too long on a particular activity. The school has taken good steps to improve the quality of teaching and with demonstrable results. For example, strategies to improve speaking and listening include 'paired talk' which is successfully encouraging pupils to share their views and understand technical language. Teachers undertake marking regularly but do not always help pupils to know how to improve. Few pupils are given challenging targets against which to measure their improvement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

The curriculum is satisfactory and provides appropriate breadth and balance. In the Foundation Stage, areas of learning are linked well and the curriculum is good. The planning ensures that all pupils are able to play a full part in lessons, especially for the pupils from the Centre for Autism. There is a good induction support for pupils newly arrived in the school.

The school is continually evaluating and improving its curriculum. Good use is made of school visits and visitors. The planning for English curriculum is well structured and steps have been taken to improve the quality of speech and communication in all subjects. Plans are now in place to improve the planning of the curriculum in mathematics so that all pupils are challenged effectively. All pupils have regular physical education lessons each week. Extra curricular

provision is increasing and the range of activities is popular with pupils, particularly the good range of activities for physical activity at lunchtime and after school. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their mother tongue in extra curricular activities such as in a Somali club for mathematics and a Portuguese club.

Currently there are some inconsistencies in links across the curriculum and, as a result, pupils have limited opportunities to practice new skills in practical experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:

Care, guidance and support are good. The school has established an ethos which provides a safe, secure and welcoming environment where pupils feel valued and cared for. The outstanding care and support given to pupils in the Centre for Autism ensures they are fully included in the life of the school. The procedures to identify and support the needs of vulnerable pupils are good. Good liaison between all relevant school staff and outside sources of help means that needs are identified quickly and appropriate help given. There are very secure and sensitive procedures in relation to child protection issues, health and safety, risk assessments, first aid and in identifying security issues. Pupils know who to turn to if they have a problem. They say that the school's behaviour policy is fair and that rewards and sanctions are applied consistently. Academic support is adequate including useful strategies to help pupils improve their literacy skills. Induction into the nursery, and for pupils who join at other times, is good. Pupils are supported appropriately in transition to feeder secondary schools.

Leadership and management

Grade:

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Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Children

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school to see how you are doing. We very much enjoyed talking with so many of you. We are writing to tell you what we found out about your school. We agree with your teachers that your school is giving a satisfactory quality of education.

These are the things we liked most: * Most of you are behaving well and helping to make your school a happy place. * You are keen to learn and play well together. * You really enjoy all the extra activities and clubs that go on in and out of school. * Your headteacher and teachers are working hard to make your school even better.

To help them improve the school more, we have asked them to: * Ensure that you have work that makes you think hard, especially in mathematics. * Help you to understand what to do next so that you improve your work as quickly as possible. * Make sure that subject leaders keep a closer check on the teaching and learning. We hope that you will enjoy the rest of your time at Lark Hall School and we wish you good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Bernice Magson

Lead Inspector