

**Snowsfields Primary School incorporating the Tim Jewell Unit for
Children with Autism**
Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100811
Local Authority	Southwark
Inspection number	276391
Inspection dates	14–15 November 2005
Reporting inspector	Sheila Nolan

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 Jolyon Maughan Ms Juliet Cooper
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Kirby Grove Bermondsey London SE1 3TD
Telephone number	02075259065
Fax number	02075259066

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Snowsfields Primary School serves a richly diverse inner city community in Bermondsey, close to London Bridge. Many of the pupils are recent arrivals in the area and have a home language of African origin. A number are refugees, housed temporarily in the locality, and sometimes with difficult histories. The number of pupils who leave or join the school at other than the usual starting and leaving times is much higher than in most schools. The turnover of pupils is close to 50 % in older year groups. Currently the school is undersubscribed. A well-above average proportion of the pupils are identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities. The school hosts the Tim Jewell Unit for Children with Autism so that the number of children with a statement of special educational need is high. Eligibility for free school meals is well above national figures. The erratic pattern of entry to the school poses challenges in planning the pupils' learning programmes.

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

The school recognises where improvement is needed and now should focus on: * raising standards in the main school, particularly for more able pupils* improve the proportion of good and better teaching* taking forward rapidly plans to ensure that classroom assessment practice is more rigorous

Achievement and standards

Grade:

Personal development and well-being

Grade:

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:

The school has rightly evaluated teaching and learning as consistently satisfactory and often good or better. Most lessons benefit from the high number of classroom assistants and support staff. Despite the school's best efforts, pupils' erratic entry to the school, coupled with previous difficult histories sometimes slows the pace of learning in some classes. The best teaching is underpinned by high expectations and warm working relationships that make for very good behaviour. Lively and interesting activities match the needs of pupils well. There is a strong emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills. The new computer resources are used enthusiastically and effectively to help focus pupils' attention and provide stimulating visual material. As a result pupils enjoy learning, try hard, and work well individually and in groups. In a few lessons, however, pupils spend too long listening or working on one task with little practical activity. As their concentration wanes, their progress slows. The school recognises that the quality of marking across the school is too variable and is taking steps to promote the best, encouraging pupils to respond to teachers' comments.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

The curriculum is effectively planned and meets all statutory requirements. It matches the needs of pupils well at all key stages including that of the Tim Jewel unit. In the Foundation Stage, there is a good mix of independent and well-resourced activities to complement teacher-led sessions. The main school has rightly placed a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy while at the same time drawing on and celebrating the varied ethnic backgrounds of the pupils. Within the special unit, there is very good timing of 'box work' to promote learning early in the day. Enrichment opportunities both within and beyond the school day are very varied. There is a good range of theatre and other visits as well as school journeys. Optional activities within the timetable are much appreciated by pupils. The work of learning mentors is encouraging parents to begin to contribute to the wider curriculum. Personal and social education is enhanced by the healthy lifestyles programme and sessions for older groups on relationships and the misuse of drugs. The school has forged excellent links with local

communities to widen the pupils' experiences. As a result, the school has improved resources systematically, including the library and the garden. These provide very positive experiences for many pupils without such opportunities beyond the school day. Year 5 are able to explore issues on 'running' their own business through the links with the business community.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:

The school cares for its pupils very well and they feel safe and secure. The school rightly judges that care for one another is central to its ethos and a dominant feature in its planning. Bullying is very rare. Parents are very pleased with the school and the care provided for their children. Children report that they are fairly treated and are clear as to the consequences for misdemeanours. Regular formal and informal opportunities are available for teachers and parents to meet. Most parents are content with the information they receive on pupils' progress. The school makes good use of targets that provide helpful reminders for pupils of what they need to improve. Health and safety routines and risk assessments are fully in place as are child protection procedures. There are very good arrangements for tracking vulnerable pupils that provide well co-ordinated support. Strong links with outside agencies facilitate access to additional help such as family counselling and care for refugee families.

Leadership and management

Grade:

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Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Following our visit to your school, I would like to thank you for making all of the inspectors so welcome. Thank you for talking to us about your work, the clubs you go to and the many really good things you enjoy about your school.

* We think, as you do, that you go to a school that is getting better all the time. * You are looked after very well indeed and are given lots of opportunities to succeed. You value the many rewards available to you. * You behave sensibly and are good at considering other people. The school helps all of you from different countries to work and play sensibly together. * Some of you do very well in helping children in the unit. You are proud of being able to sign. * You tell us, and we agree that all grown-ups make sure they do the best for you. You often get lots of extra support in lessons. * We saw you enjoying lessons that were lively and had many activities. Just sometimes, though, you get restless when lessons seem long and you do not work fast enough. * Your school has projects with a number of businesses so that you can begin to learn important ideas about work for when you eventually leave school. * You told us how confident you were about going to your teachers if you are worried about anything.

For your school to get even better, it needs to: * help more of you in Year 2 and Year 6 to do better in the national curriculum tests* make sure that your work is marked more thoroughly to check that you make enough progress in class and homework* make sure you get even more of the exciting teaching that you enjoy so much.