

Culloden Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100899
Local Authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	276416
Inspection dates	23–24 May 2006
Reporting inspector	Kath Beck

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	Dr D Syndercombe Court Anne Watts
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Dee Street London E14 0PT
Telephone number	020 7364 1010
Fax number	020 7364 1022

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	23–24 May 2006
Inspection number	276416

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Culloden is a large primary school, serving an area of significant deprivation. Most pupils speak English as their second language and many are in the early stages of learning the language. The majority come from Bangladeshi backgrounds. The remainder are from White British and a diverse range of other backgrounds. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is very high as is the number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Thirty-three pupils have a statement of special educational need, which is much higher than usually found. Twenty-two are for moderate or profound hearing impairments and complex needs. The headteacher has been in post four weeks. There is a high turnover of staff with eight vacancies filled by temporary staff.

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 all staff are clear about their accountability and responsibility for taking action to improve pupils' progress
- iron out inconsistencies in teaching and assessment so that all pupils receive work with appropriate challenge
- improve the rate of attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade:

Personal development and well-being

Grade:

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:

Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory. An outstanding lesson in Year 3 enabled all pupils, including three with profound hearing impairments to learn at a fast rate. The class teachers' planning clearly showed how the specialist teacher and support staff would work together to ensure that all pupils were fully included in all aspects of the lesson. Practical activities captured pupils' interest, enthusiasm and eagerness to learn so they became fully absorbed, concentrating hard and doing their best.

Some good teaching in most year groups enables pupils to learn well, but in a significant number of classes, information from assessment is not used effectively enough to prepare work that challenges, interests and meets the needs of all pupils. At its best marking is thorough, positive and includes comments on how improvements can be made to the work, but this is not always the case.

Inadequate teaching in Year 4 slows pupils' progress considerably so they have a lot of ground to make up when they move into Year 5. Good teaching in English and their home language in the Foundation Stage helps children to become confident eager learners.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

Curriculum provision is satisfactory overall. Foundation Stage children enjoy many practical activities that promote their language skills. Displays around the school illustrate the emphasis on quality work in art. Skills in information and communication technology are enhanced by high quality resources. The focus on improving pupils' writing skills has proved beneficial. Timetabling variations between classes mean that some subjects are not uniformly covered and generally, physical education does not receive sufficient time. Opportunities for pupils to work in groups are inconsistent, especially when pupils with hearing impairments are withdrawn from literacy lessons. Challenge for the more able pupils is limited by the frequent use of undemanding worksheets.

Good, imaginative use is made of visits to the nearby library and London's museums to enrich learning. Year 6 pupils enjoy their residential visit that adds much to their personal development. A wide range of extra-curricular activities benefit pupils throughout the school. Much thought and enthusiasm is put into activities that develop sporting, musical and even film-making skills. Pupils experience real success through participating in them.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:

The school's concern for pupils' welfare is clear throughout its work. Teachers quickly notice pupils who are unwell, distressed or anxious, and have a good range of strategies, often involving parents and outside support agencies, to put things right. Pupils with learning difficulties or at an early stage in speaking English are identified early and the good help they receive ensures they progress well. Pupils' progress is tracked, but some teachers do not use the information or check how well their pupils are doing carefully enough. Marking is inconsistent. Pupils with hearing impairment are unclear about their progress because specific targets, identifying how they can improve their work, are not set.

Staff rightly see parental cooperation as a vital element in pupils' learning. They make strenuous efforts to help parents take a bigger part in educating their children. They provide good quality information, much of it in community languages, and they use interpretation services very effectively. The school provides a secure and harmonious environment for the pupils and police checks and risk assessments are carried out thoroughly.

Not all parents are diligent in ensuring their children attend regularly. This is a cause for concern because missed learning often cannot be made up later. Vigorous initiatives are taking place, with local authority support, to improve the position and these are already beginning to bear fruit.

Leadership and management

Grade:

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Children

We enjoyed our visit to your school recently, and it was very useful to have your views about it. I'm pleased we can write to you to let you know what we found.

You told us you liked school and enjoyed a lot of your lessons. You felt the school was a happy one and that children and adults get on well together. We agree with you. There is very little bad behaviour and we know that any suggestions of bullying or racial name-calling are dealt with quickly. Your teachers get to know you very well and they help you when you're upset. They help you to learn and those of you with hearing impairments or who are new to learning English do well. If you are going to make good progress in school, you have to come regularly! Some of you take too much time off during the term for unnecessary reasons. The school is rightly becoming stricter about this and you must play your part too.

In most lessons you work hard and learn a lot. Sometimes you let yourselves down by fidgeting or silliness and do not concentrate as well as you should. While we saw interesting lessons that taught you valuable new things, we know from your work this is not always true. Some lessons were rather dull, or too easy. We have asked the school to make all lessons good ones and ensure that teachers check how well you are doing often so that work challenges you to do your very best. We are confident the school, which is satisfactory, will continue to improve under its new leadership. We have asked the headteacher and governors to introduce their new plans for senior teachers and those responsible for checking how well you are doing in all your subjects as soon as possible.

Good wishes for the future,

Kath Beck

Lead Inspector