

Thames View Infants' School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101200
Local Authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	276466
Inspection dates	3–4 November 2005
Reporting inspector	Mike Thompson

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr D Miles Mrs H D Collins
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Bastable Avenue Barking IG11 0LG
Telephone number	02082704317
Fax number	02082704319

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Thames View Infants School serves an area of significant social deprivation. Over the past few years the cultural mix of its pupils has changed rapidly as the proportion of pupils of White British heritage has sharply declined. Almost two thirds of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, and a small, but significant, proportion of these are asylum seekers. About a third of all pupils either join or leave the school during the course of each year.

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

Raise standards by improving systems for checking pupils' progress and tracking how well they are getting on, to ensure that: * teachers provide more consistently challenging work for more able pupils * the school becomes better informed about the performance of pupils with poor attendance * the school identifies more precisely the needs of pupils who are learning English as an additional language.

Achievement and standards

Grade:

Personal development and well-being

Grade:

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:

Teaching is satisfactory with some pockets of good practice. Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well, and use this knowledge to help manage pupils' behaviour and create a positive atmosphere for learning. In a Year 1 class, for example, the calm, reassuring manner of a teaching assistant helped a pupil to overcome a problem with forming letters correctly and defused the child's frustration. The teachers use questions well to involve all pupils in the lessons. However, they too readily accept pupils' answers and often miss opportunities to correct grammar and poor English. Teachers' planning generally caters well for pupils with learning difficulties and pupils of average ability, but more able pupils are not always challenged enough. Teachers place a good emphasis on ensuring that their pupils succeed, but this is sometimes achieved by lowering their expectations of what the most able could accomplish. The school recognises that arrangements for checking on pupils' rates of progress need to be improved and staff are in the process of introducing a new system. These new arrangements ensure that clear targets are set for individual pupils and are under regular review. Early indications are that this is beginning to accelerate the pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

The school correctly judges that it provides a satisfactory range of activities for its pupils. In the Foundation Stage a strong emphasis is placed on developing children's social and language skills and recent initiatives have further improved the range of activities available. The school works hard to compensate for the deprived social circumstances of many pupils. It makes sure that pupils, many of whom live in flats and have no opportunities for outdoor play at home, have regular opportunities for vigorous exercise, both in PE lessons and in lunchtime activities. It also ensures that pupils have opportunities to experience theatre productions and visits to places such as the seaside. However, the school's curriculum is not yet planned well enough to meet the wide variety of needs and abilities of the pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties are effectively supported. However, the level of challenge for brighter children is not always great

enough. Although the curriculum reflects the cultural diversity of the school's communities, the range of languages spoken by pupils continually varies as different ethnic groups move in to and out of the area. Important learning resources, such as bilingual books, to meet these changing needs are often in limited supply.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:

Inspectors agree with parents' views that the school is good at looking after their children. The school is a safe place for pupils and it works hard to maintain this ethos in a challenging environment. At the heart of this is the good quality of day-to-day care given to all pupils. School staff know pupils' personal needs very well. Pupils are very confident that they can approach staff with their concerns and that any problems will be dealt with effectively. Health and safety requirements are properly met, and child protection procedures are effective. The school is particularly good at making pupils feel welcome. For instance, pupil recorded 'welcome tapes' in a number of different languages often help to integrate newcomers who speak little English. Taken overall, the help the school currently provides for pupils to improve their work is satisfactory. Teachers mark children's work carefully and talk to them about how to improve. However, new systems to track pupils' progress are not yet fully established. This means the school is not yet fully effective in ensuring that some groups of pupils, such as those who are more able, make as much progress as they might. Similarly, the school is not yet tracking in sufficient detail the attendance of different groups of pupils and checking the impact of this upon their academic performance.

Leadership and management

Grade:

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

Following our visit to inspect your school we would like to tell you what we think about how well you are getting on and how well your school is helping you to learn.

We enjoyed seeing you at work and at playtimes and liked talking to you. There are lots of things that we like about your school. Some of them are: * Your school is friendly and welcoming. You behave well and get on well with each other. * When you find work hard, your teachers take care to see that you are given the right sort of help. * Your teachers work hard to organise lots of extra things for you to do. * All of the adults who work in your school make sure that you are safe and are really well looked after.

Your headteacher and all of the other people who help run your school want it to be even better. To help them to do this we think that the things to do next are: * Improve the ways that teachers check on how well you are doing and how often you come to school. * Give more difficult work to those of you who need more of a challenge.

Yours sincerely

The Inspection Team