



George Spicer Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101993
LEA Enfield LEA
Inspection number 276631
Inspection dates 3 November 2005 to 4 November 2005
Reporting inspector Graham Lee AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Southbury Road
School category	Community		Enfield
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		EN1 1YF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02083631406
Number on roll	419	Fax number	02083671411
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Richard Jacobi
Date of previous inspection	31 January 2000	Headteacher	Mr J Abbey

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 3 November 2005 - 4 November 2005	Inspection number 276631
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

George Spicer is a large primary school situated in the London Borough of Enfield. Most pupils are of white British heritage although the school serves an increasingly diverse community and a quarter of pupils come from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Around 25 languages are spoken in the school but only a few pupils are at the early stages of learning English. Approximately one in five pupils have learning difficulties and 11 have statements of special educational need. This figure has risen sharply in recent years. The school serves a socially mixed area and the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is about what would be found nationally.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

George Spicer is a good school with outstanding features. This agrees with the school's own evaluation. Pupils are proud of their school and all it has to offer. They achieve well and are enthusiastic about their learning. Their behaviour is good and they feel happy and secure because of the very supportive learning environment that has been created. The care and support offered to pupils is outstanding. The school is held in regard high by its parents. It offers good value for money. The headteacher and deputy head offer outstanding leadership based on a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and a relentless drive to make things even better. This is evident in the many improvements that have been introduced since the last inspection. They are very effectively supported by an enthusiastic staff and resourceful governing body. When they enter the school children's skills and understanding are below average, particularly in language and communication. They make sound progress in the infants but standards in reading and writing remain below average by the age of seven. Pupils' progress accelerates considerably in the juniors and they reach good standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school. Pupils achieve well because of good teaching with some particularly strong teaching at the upper end of the school. Accurate assessment systems ensure that pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve. The curriculum both within and beyond the school day provide a rich range of experiences for pupils. Computer facilities are currently insufficient to allow pupils to make best use of them to support their learning.

What the school should do to improve further

Improve standards in reading and writing in the infants.* Improve computer facilities to ensure that pupils are able to use them more effectively to support their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well in their time at George Spicer. Children arrive at the school with skills and understanding which are below average, particularly in language and communication. They make a good start in the reception classes and staff help them to settle well in to school routines. By the time they enter Year 1 many of them reach the goals set for children of this age. However, standards remain below average in language and communication. In the infants pupils make satisfactory progress as a result of sound teaching. By the age of seven they reach levels that are broadly average in mathematics. In reading and writing standards remain below average overall principally because boys' reading and writing skills remain under-developed. In the juniors pupils' progress accelerates markedly and they achieve very well, generally meeting the challenging targets that are set for them. This is because they have become more confident in their communication skills and they receive some very good teaching. Standards have been rising for several years in English, mathematics and science and by the age of 11 they are reaching levels that are above average in these subjects.

This grounding means that they are well prepared for secondary school and the world beyond. Pupils with learning difficulties and those learning English as an additional language make as much progress as their peers because they receive very good support. An increasing number of boys come into school with emotional and communication difficulties and not ready to learn. The good progress they make in their personal and social development allows them to make more rapid academic progress as they move into the juniors. It also accounts for boys not doing as well in the infants as girls.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is very good and, in some aspects, outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally good and contributes significantly to raising their self-esteem. For example, in assemblies pupils displayed a great deal of awareness of other faiths and cultures and were extremely respectful of one another. Indeed, relationships in the school are outstanding and stem from mutual trust and respect between staff and children. Pupils' behaviour is good, bullying is rare and there have been no exclusions in recent years. All pupils feel safe and secure in school. Pupils enjoy being at school and this is demonstrated by their generally good attendance and punctuality. They have good attitudes to learning and enjoy school very much. Older pupils are very keen to be involved in supporting school initiatives such as helping the younger pupils in lessons and acting as monitors or playground buddies. The daily exercise sessions in class and the good range of extra curricular activities contribute very well to pupils adopting healthy lifestyles. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthy foods and drink water regularly. They have an exceptionally good understanding of the need to adopt safe practices as seen in the responsible way they move around a difficult building. Pupils' views are obtained through surveys and the school council is well established with pupils proudly participating.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning is good overall. During the inspection some particularly strong teaching was seen towards the upper end of the juniors. Some good teaching was also seen in the reception and infant classes. Teachers plan lessons carefully and activities generally engage pupils well. Where the teaching is very good teachers set high expectations and very good levels of pace challenge pupils to learn effectively. In a Year 2 literacy lesson pupils identified alliteration accurately before composing their own poems using this skill. In another lesson in Year 6 pupils debated building up story content maturely as a result of evocative illustrations being shared with them. Teachers' expertise is used effectively to enhance pupils learning, for example the use of specialists in physical education and music has a very positive impact on pupils' progress and enjoyment. The use of assessment to track pupils' learning improves their work consistently. Relationships are very good and teachers often transmit their own

enthusiasm to pupils. Pupils identify with this readily and respond with enjoyment. They are clear about what they have to do to improve. Support staff are deployed effectively in order to give high levels of important help to the number of pupils needing it.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has thoroughly reviewed and developed its curriculum since the last inspection and there are good links between different subjects. Activities such as the Victorian day when staff and children come to school in role, enhances the enjoyment and relevance of the curriculum to pupils. The provision for Reception children emphasises speech and language development to improve communication skills. This focus is being effectively continued in the infants in recognition of the difficulties some children continue to experience. The older pupils are provided with a curriculum which is rich and diverse to reflect the school's ethnic and religious profile. The personal, social and health education provision makes a significant contribution to helping pupils stay safe and healthy. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities available for pupils and they are well attended. Good use is being made of external facilities to compensate for the lack of playing field provision within the school. The curriculum has been enhanced to provide Spanish lessons which are stimulating pupils' interest in languages. The current computer facilities are insufficient for pupils to use them effectively to enhance their learning in different subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of the care, guidance and support the school provides is outstanding. This care is extended beyond the school day with breakfast and after school clubs. Child protection procedures are fully in place and the needs of all vulnerable groups of pupils are monitored and addressed as a priority. Pupils themselves speak very highly about the friendly staff who provide a good level of support and show a genuine interest in them. The school's approach to health and safety is outstanding with thorough risk assessments and regular comprehensive audits which are followed up by recorded actions. Staff monitor pupils' work very well and provide good academic guidance for them and appropriate targets to meet which are discussed with parents and pupils. Pupils who have a limited knowledge of English and those with learning difficulties receive good support in class and parents are fully involved in review processes. Vulnerable pupils receive additional support from the learning mentor. The school works in close partnership with parents who hold it in high regard.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is very well led and managed. The senior leadership team have high expectations of staff, governors, parents and pupils, successfully involving them in its

efforts to improve. This results in morale being high in all aspects of its endeavours. The outstanding team of head and deputy has worked hard with teachers to ensure good teaching and learning overall with many very good aspects. These features are supporting improvement in pupils' progress. Governors have been very effectively involved in this, observing lessons and making significant input into the school's development processes. Through parent governor involvement parents are aware of the expectations of their contribution to their children's learning. Governors contribution to the school's development is outstanding. The school has a vibrant learning environment as a result of the efforts of the leadership team and governors. The school has an outstanding ethos and is a united community. All recognise the need to continue the process by developing further the skills of middle managers and subject leaders, many of whom are new to their roles. Self-evaluation procedures are very good and the whole team ethos has focused all staff appropriately on school improvement. Year on year there has been improvement in standards, achievement and teaching since the last inspection. This has been achieved within a very well managed budget. Within the recognition that there are still things to be done evidence from commitment and actions, shows that the school is well placed to improve further.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to thank you all for making my team so welcome when we visited the school last week. We really enjoyed our time at George Spicer and you all helped us by being so friendly and willing to talk to us. I thought you would like to know what we found out.

You are rightly proud of your school because it is a good school and a very happy place to be. We were very impressed by your good behaviour and enthusiasm for your lessons. For example, all you in Year 5 entered in to the Victorian day very well and clearly enjoyed it. You do very well in your learning in your time at George Spicer. In reception staff help you to settle down and get ready to learn. As you move through reception and the infant classes you learn more and more although some of you boys are still having problems with reading and writing. In the juniors you do very well and reach good standards in English, maths and science by the time you leave the school. Your teachers work very hard to help you to do so well. They make lessons fun and interesting. There are lots of interesting things for you to do both in the school day and in all the extra things you have at lunchtime and after school. We were particularly pleased with how hard you work to keep fit and healthy. The school is doing well because of the good teaching and excellent leadership. Mr Abbey and Mrs Ballantine work very hard to make sure that the school is an even better place to be. They are helped a lot by all the other staff and the governors.

We have asked your headteacher and staff to improve just two things. We want you to do even better with your reading and writing in the infants. We also want them to improve the computer suite as it is a bit small and cramped at the moment. Otherwise we are sure that George Spicer will continue to be a good place to be.

Yours sincerely,

G.D.Lee

Lead Inspector