



Odessa Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102735
LEA Newham LEA
Inspection number 276761
Inspection dates 16 November 2005 to 17 November 2005
Reporting inspector Andrew Howe AI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Wellington Road
School category	Community		London
Age range of pupils	3 to 7		E7 9BY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8534 7967
Number on roll	303	Fax number	020 8555 3235
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Emanuel Mkhosi
Date of previous inspection	15 January 2001	Headteacher	Ms A Hurfurt

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Odessa Infant School is a larger than average school of this type with a nursery in a deprived area of east London. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average. The majority of pupils come from various minority ethnic backgrounds, in particular Bangladeshi and Black African. The proportion of pupils whose home language is not English is high and the majority is at an early stage of learning English. The most common languages spoken include Bengali, Somali and Urdu. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. The school is generously staffed and staff mobility is low. There have been recent building and grounds improvements.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school rates itself as good and inspectors agree. Consistently effective, lively teaching and an active, enjoyable curriculum help pupils to make good progress. Staff take good care of pupils and ensure they are all valued and included. They respond with good behaviour and very positive attitudes towards learning. Pupils achieve well because the school's leadership has developed positive, professional practice that ensures teaching is good. Support staff and teachers work well as a team and their consistent expectations provide a secure framework for learning. However, the monitoring of teaching and pupils' performance is not formalised, so that, although the school's self evaluation is accurate, it is not rigorous enough to drive standards up further. There are no formal methods for gathering the views of parents and pupils. There has been sound improvement since the last inspection, particularly with respect to provision in the Foundation Stage, which is consistently good and which enables the youngest children to achieve well. However, attendance remains below average, despite the school's efforts. Inspectors judge that leadership and management and the capacity to improve are sound. The school provides good value for money. It is generously staffed and this makes a significant contribution to the good quality of care and pupils' progress.

What the school should do to improve further

* Formalise the monitoring of standards and provision by all senior staff and governors in order to improve school self evaluation* Ensure that pupils, parents and governors have formal opportunities for a greater say in school improvement* Take more determined action to improve pupil attendance, including exploring the best practice in other schools.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is well below that normally expected because of their limited English language and social development. They go on to achieve well in the Foundation Stage, developing increasingly competent speaking and listening skills and more mature personal and social behaviour. By the end of reception, their attainment is in line with the expected goals for mathematics, and communication, language and literacy skills and exceeds them for personal, social and emotional development. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 2. This is because the high ratio of stable staffing to children ensures pupils get a great deal of attention. Very good relationships promote pupils' confidence and positive attitudes to learning, so pupils do well and enjoy their learning. Pupils whose first language is not English make good progress because teachers continually focus on language development. Pupils with higher ability achieve their potential because the work is matched well to their needs. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well because support is carefully

matched to their needs. There is no significant variation in the standards attained by different minority ethnic groups.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of pupils are good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils form positive relationships with each other and with adults in the school. Because of the good coverage of the beliefs and customs of different cultures, both in assemblies and in lessons, pupils grow in respect and mutual understanding. Pupils enjoy learning and demonstrate excellent attitudes to their schooling. However, attendance is unsatisfactory because too many parents remove their children for holidays during term time. Absence has remained stubbornly above the national average, despite the sympathetic efforts of the school to bring about improvement over recent years. Pupils show a good understanding of the importance of leading a healthy life and keeping safe. They speak confidently of what they have learnt about diet and exercise in lessons, as one pupil said, 'so that we do not become couch potatoes'. Pupils develop a sense of responsibility for their community through the jobs they are given in class and around the school. They raise funds for local charities and initiated a collection for the Pakistan earthquake relief fund. Progress made in acquiring basic skills and the familiarity they develop in using information communication technology (ICT) prepares pupils well for their future social and economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is consistently good. Pupils enjoy their learning and behave well, because teachers have clear expectations of conduct and lessons are lively and well planned. Because learning frequently involves games and the use of practical resources, pupils become really involved in what they are doing. Teachers and assistants concentrate on developing pupils' oral language in all lessons. In one mathematics lesson, for instance, the support assistant focused on mathematical terms associated with subtraction, such as difference, while demonstrating with mathematical equipment. She used adept questioning so that pupils were able to explain the concept for themselves. This approach is commonly used across the school and is particularly helpful for the many pupils whose first language is not English. Teachers ensure these pupils are successfully included in all lessons. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good because staff have very clear objectives for all activities. Detailed individual assessments ensure that teachers know pupils very well and can plan for the next stage in their learning. However, the tracking of pupils' achievement is not recorded sufficiently formally to ensure teachers can monitor it over time.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum for its pupils. Children in the Foundation Stage are well provided for: good opportunities for learning through play are planned both indoors and outside. Throughout the school, the good emphasis on practical work and speaking and listening helps pupils to make good progress in acquiring English vocabulary and spoken grammar. The curriculum is well balanced with good provision for science, which leads to above average standards at the end of Year 2. Pupils' own cultural heritage is represented well in art, religious education and history. Good use is made of visits to extend pupils' experiences of the world. Visitors, such as authors, are used effectively to support learning. There is a good emphasis on personal, social and health education so that pupils develop positive attitudes towards diet and exercise. A parent commented 'my son comes home and tells me what I should and shouldn't eat, all the time'. Building works have interrupted extra-curricular activities temporarily, but there are plans to reinstate various clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is good. All staff take good care of pupils' particular needs and make effective use of specialist support from outside agencies where appropriate, such as for hearing impairment or severe physical difficulty. Child protection procedures are rigorous and health and safety arrangements systematic. Support staff are well organised and their time used well. They are included in meetings to decide on individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties so that the support given matches closely the targets set for improvement. Very good quality support is given to vulnerable children, for instance in the regular 'rock and roll' sessions provided by support assistants that foster social and physical skills. Individual day to day assessment is detailed and helps teachers plan the next stage in pupils' learning. Teachers set pupils useful individual targets in writing, but this practice does not extend to reading or mathematics.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school rates leadership and management as good, but inspection evidence indicates that it is satisfactory, with significant strengths. In particular, the headteacher's vision and example have enabled a strong staff team to meet all pupils' needs effectively and ensure they enjoy their education. Good professional development and constant dialogue about teaching and learning lie at the heart of the school's success. Senior staff have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, but the monitoring of teaching is largely informal. Together with the patchy tracking of pupil progress, this means that teachers do not consistently get the feedback that would enable them to raise standards further. The school is open to the views of parents, governors and pupils and the overwhelming majority of parents are supportive and

appreciative. Governors describe the headteacher's approach as 'transparent'. However, school self evaluation is limited because these groups are not formally consulted. There is a useful school improvement plan but the process of drawing it up and evaluating its success does not involve governors or parents. The school has made sound progress with the issues identified at the previous inspection. The provision of good quality outdoor play experience for children in the Foundation Stage has improved. Governors now fulfil all statutory requirements and are developing their ability to question and challenge the school's performance. However, pupils' attendance remains a significant concern. The school has a sound capacity 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	3	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	3	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	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	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?	2	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?	3	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	3	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	3	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	NA
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

Thank you for helping us when we visited a little while ago. You told us a lot about Odessa Infant School. We enjoyed our time with you, and now it is time to let you know what we think about the school.

Odessa Infant School is a very caring place. There is always an adult you can go to if you have a problem. Teachers and helpers take good care of you. Most children make good progress. Children who find learning hard, or who speak a language other than English at home, also do well, because teachers and helpers make sure there are lots of chances to speak and listen in lessons. Most of the lessons we saw were good. You certainly enjoyed them. You work hard, because teachers ask a lot of you, and lessons are interesting. Most children behave well and want to learn. Well done. You get plenty of help with your work because there are a lot of helpers as well as teachers.

There are some problems we need to mention to you, though. Too often children are absent from school for unacceptable reasons, such as holidays taken in term time. We are asking the staff and governors to try to put this right, because children miss important work, which usually cannot be repeated. We also think that the headteacher and governors could check up on what you are learning more often and make sure that teachers are doing the best that they can all the time. They could also find more ways to listen to your ideas and those of your parents. That way you can all work together to make the school even better. Odessa is a good school. If you continue to work as hard, and behave as well as you do now, it could become even better.