



Ellen Wilkinson Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102759
LEA Newham LEA
Inspection number 276767
Inspection dates 2 May 2006 to 3 May 2006
Reporting inspector Lyn Riley AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Tollgate Road
School category	Community		London
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		E6 5UP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 7511 9414
Number on roll	456	Fax number	020 7474 0798
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Dawn Hutcheon
Date of previous inspection	27 January 2004	Headteacher	Sue Ferguson

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Ellen Wilkinson is a larger than average primary school serving an area of significant social and economic deprivation in East London. The largest groups of pupils are of White British and Black African heritage. The proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language is well above average and the number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is also high. The school has a high number of pupils who leave or join the school during the academic year. The school was identified as having serious weaknesses at the time of its last inspection in 2004. A new headteacher was appointed following the previous inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Ellen Wilkinson Primary School provides a good standard of education and the school's previous designation as having serious weaknesses no longer applies. The headteacher's rigorous evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses provides an accurate view of the school's performance. However, the inspection team disagree with the school's judgements on their overall effectiveness, the curriculum and leadership and management as inspectors consider these to be of a higher standard than the school's own evaluation has judged them to be. The school's more modest judgements reflect the headteacher's very high expectations and clear vision for further school improvement.

The senior leadership team support the headteacher wholeheartedly, work enthusiastically together and share a strong commitment to school improvement.

From very low starting points, children make good progress in the Foundation Stage but standards are still below age-related expectations when they enter Year 1. In Year 1 and Year 2 the quality of teaching is satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress. Teaching is consistently good in Years 3 to 6 and this enables all pupils to make good progress and achieve well in relation to their starting points. The school has good monitoring, pupil tracking and assessment systems but the presentation of pupils' work and the quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent.

The school works tirelessly to tackle low attendance but, despite the school's best efforts, attendance remains below average. Parental support for the school is very positive.

The governing body is well organised and ensures all statutory requirements are met. The budget is managed well. The school has made significant progress since the last inspection, has good capacity for further improvement and provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in Year 1 and Year 2 to ensure that all pupils make good progress and fulfil their potential
- Improve the quality of teachers' marking so pupils are clear as to what they should do to improve their work
- Improve the standard of handwriting and the presentation of pupils' work in books and displays
- Continue to promote good attendance and tackle absenteeism

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From very low starting points children make good progress and achieve well in the nursery and reception classes because they receive consistently good teaching.

Year 6 test results in 2004 showed that, although standards were below average, all groups of pupils achieved significantly well. This was repeated in 2005, when the school was among the highest performing in terms of pupils' progress and achievement. Pupils' achievement was satisfactory in English, due to the high number of pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The school sets challenging targets for achievement and carefully tracks pupils progress towards these, ensuring that all pupils achieve as much as they can from their given starting points.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 but teachers do not routinely plan work that is sufficiently challenging for the most able pupils. Therefore, standards at the end of Year 2 are well below average.

By the time pupils reach Year 6 there is no significant difference in the progress made by boys and girls. Since the last inspection the school has improved the effectiveness of support given to pupils learning English as an additional language and this ensures that they, as well as pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, make good progress and achieve well. Standards in information and communication technology are broadly average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Despite the low attendance of a small minority of pupils, most clearly enjoy school and behave well in lessons and around the school. They have positive attitudes towards learning and talk enthusiastically about their school, their friends and their teachers. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and are developing good social skills, for example, they understand and appreciate the role peer mentors play in resolving playground disputes.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. A pupil told inspectors that everyone gets on really well and they have respect for each other's backgrounds and cultures. Pupils also report that bullying does not happen and that minor disputes are quickly resolved. The school council is well-run and has a clear voice in school developments including the imminent opening of a Healthy Tuck Shop.

Pupils are clear about the need to develop a healthy lifestyle and are very appreciative of the wide range of after-school clubs that provide opportunities for exercise, including, football, netball and belly-dancing. Pupils are prepared well for their future economic well-being through the good teaching of basic skills and the development of very positive relationships and attitudes to work. Pupils make a good contribution to the local community through their involvement in projects as 'Make A Difference Day' and 'London Cares'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Staff in the Foundation Stage create a stimulating and welcoming environment and plan their work with a very good understanding of how young children learn. The good teaching, and the detailed records that are kept, ensure that children make good progress.

Pupils at the early stages of learning English are taught well and make good progress. The teaching of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good and they, too, achieve well. Teachers' planning files are monitored closely and very helpful records are kept.

Teaching and learning from Year 3 to Year 6 is consistently good and is well matched to pupils learning needs. Teaching in Year 1 and Year 2, although meeting the needs of pupils with average and below average ability, does not sufficiently stretch or challenge the more able pupils and is satisfactory overall.

Teachers are developing a good knowledge of the different ways in which pupils learn. They use a variety of teaching techniques to maintain pupils' interest and keep them well motivated, including the effective use of interactive whiteboards in lessons. Although the quality of the content of pupils' work has improved, standards of handwriting and presentation are inconsistent across the school and the school has plans to address this.

Improved assessment and tracking procedures now provide teachers and school leaders with clearer information about pupils' progress. The marking of work varies in quality from class to class but where it is most effective, pupils are given a clear indication of how well they are doing and what they must do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that is well matched to the needs of all pupils. Developments, such as, the introduction of French in Year 2 and Russian and philosophy in Year 4, have had a positive impact on improving pupil's thinking and communication skills. Good planning in the Foundation Stage provides a stimulating and exciting curriculum with a strong emphasis on learning through practical activities.

Links between different subjects are good and continually developing, notably drawing on and using ICT to support learning. The success of this work to develop a creative approach to the curriculum shows the determination the school has to continuously evaluate and improve.

The school provides an impressive range of extra-curricular activities and visits, which add greatly to pupils' enjoyment, learning and personal development. For example, the pupils are very proud of their success in a recent football competition.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Health, safety and risk assessment procedures are robust and there are secure procedures for child protection. The school works hard to improve the attendance of a small minority of pupils and works tenaciously with outside agencies. However, despite the school's best efforts, there remain a small number of families who do not, regularly send their children to school.

Pupils are well supported in their academic and personal development and say they feel confident about approaching teachers and learning mentors for help and advice. There are effective procedures to combat bullying and pupils believe that such incidents are very rare and dealt with swiftly.

There is a good programme of personal health and social education which contributes strongly to pupils' understanding of the need to stay healthy and safe.

Academic progress is regularly and effectively assessed and pupils' progress is tracked well. There is good support for pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities as well as those whose first language is other than English.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides strong, clear leadership and is well supported by the senior leadership team and the governing body. The headteacher's evaluation of the school's performance is honest and rigorous. The headteacher and senior leadership team have high expectations and a very clear vision for school improvement which inspires and motivates teachers and pupils to do their best. As a result, the school has a good capacity to improve.

Governors are kept well informed by the headteacher and have a good understanding of school developments and priorities. The Chair of Governors ensures that all governors receive regular training and have clear roles and responsibilities through an effective committee structure which holds the school to account well. The budget is managed well and the school provides good value for money.

Middle managers and subject leaders are trained and developed well and play a key role in school improvement. There are very good pupil assessment systems in place which inform school self-evaluation and improvement planning very effectively. The school regularly consults with parents and pupils and uses information from these surveys to inform developments.

The school has improved significantly since the last inspection and has made particular improvements to the quality of teaching and pupil achievement. All the key issues identified at the time of the last inspection have been successfully addressed and the school no longer has serious weaknesses.

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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	4	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	2	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	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?	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?	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	2	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

Pupils

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team to your school and for taking the time to talk to us in lessons and around the school. We would particularly like to thank the School Council for their valuable contribution to the inspection.

The inspection team think that Ellen Wilkinson Primary is a good school that provides you with a good standard of education and looks after you very well. The last time the school was inspected, in 2004, it had some serious weaknesses but these have been overcome and the school has made significant progress since then. You told us that you enjoy going to school and that you all get on well together and respect each other's cultures and backgrounds. We saw this for ourselves in lessons and in the playground where you work and play very well together. We think your headteacher and teachers work very hard to make sure you are all taught well and make good progress by the time you leave.

We have asked your headteacher and governing body to do the following things in order to help the school to get even better:-

- * Improve the teaching and learning in Year 1 and Year 2*
- * Improve teachers' marking so you know how to improve your work*
- * Help you to improve the handwriting and presentation in your books*
- * Continue to encourage you to come to school every day!

We enjoyed our time in your school - everyone we met was welcoming, polite and helpful, and we wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Lyn Riley

Lead Inspector