



Little Ilford School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102776
LEA Newham LEA
Inspection number 276769
Inspection dates 10 October 2005 to 11 October 2005
Reporting inspector Ramesh Kapadia HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Browning Road
School category	Community		London
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		E12 6ET
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02084788024
Number on roll	1332	Fax number	02084785954
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr S Mares
Date of previous inspection	15 May 2000	Headteacher	Ms Yvonne Powell

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 16	10 October 2005 - 11 October 2005	276769

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors and led by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Little Ilford School is a large comprehensive school with over 1300 pupils aged 11 to 16, with more boys than girls. It is located in a relatively disadvantaged part of London but is a vibrant community with pupils from over 50 different countries, including many from the Asian sub-continent. A high percentage of pupils speak another language at home, including a large number who are at an early stage of speaking English. The number of pupils with special educational needs is relatively high; about a fifth of pupils are asylum seekers or refugees. Over 400 parents responded to the questionnaire.

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 assesses itself as good in all areas, with very good features such as the care it provides. Inspectors judge that all aspects of this effective school are good and some are outstanding; it gives good value for money and has the capacity to continue improving. The outstanding leadership of the head, well supported by her senior team permeates many aspects of the school with a common vision and purpose. Inclusion, with all staff (both teachers and other adults) working together, is at the heart of this multi-faceted community. There is strong yet challenging support from the governing body and the school has improved markedly since its previous inspection. It now promotes high achievement for the vast majority of its pupils and exceptional achievement for some groups. Teaching is good and the curriculum meets pupils' needs well. Pupils achieve well in many subjects, including the core subjects of English and mathematics, where middle managers promote consistency in teaching. A few subjects such as French and technology have yet to achieve the high standards vigorously promoted by the senior managers. The rich tapestry and quality of care ensures a rewarding experience for pupils, especially those who are the most vulnerable. The school has the increasing confidence of parents and works effectively with a very wide range of partners. Teachers and children enjoy each other's company and share a common purpose in striving to improve together in this inclusive school.

What the school should do to improve further

Continue to take steps to raise standards in subjects such as French, and aspects of technology. Ensure a consistently high standard of teaching and learning across all subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Though standards in the school are lower than the national average, they have risen rapidly in the last three years, especially in English and mathematics where almost half the pupils attained a higher grade at GCSE (General Certificate of Education) in 2005. Progress in the school is very good. Exceptional progress is being made by several groups of pupils, including Bangladeshis and pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. This is helped by the challenging targets the school sets itself, beyond predictions from the data produced by the Department for Education and Skills. Pupils come to the school with relatively low attainment at Key Stage 2, but progress well during their time in the school. During Key Stage 3 a high proportion of pupils progressed from Level 3 to Level 5 in mathematics in 2004. This has been maintained in 2005 and the percentages of pupils achieving Level 5 or above have increased by about 10 percentage points in English and mathematics to 60% and 67% respectively; test results in science are also rising but are lower. At GCSE around 40% of pupils attained five or higher grades at GCSE, including about a third who achieved higher grade in both English and mathematics, a creditable achievement since most pupils in

the school speak English as an additional language. GCSE results in other subjects such as fine art and sports studies are good; areas which are weaker include aspects of technology, and French where too few pupils either achieve a higher grade or a graded result. In 2005, over 90% of pupils gained five or more passes and 98% at least one graded result. This good attainment for the year group as a whole shows the inclusive nature of the school, especially since around a fifth of pupils join the school after Year 7. Both boys and girls make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and the gap between their results narrowed at GCSE in 2005. During the inspection, pupils made good progress in the majority of lessons. This was observed in a mathematics lesson where errors relating to complex algebraic factorisation were resolved with skilful use of questioning and discussion, and an interactive whiteboard to record pupils' reasoning. Outstanding progress in pupils' understanding of character and plot was observed in a lesson on the play 'A View from the Bridge', based on formative assessment by the teacher.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good overall, with some very good features such as the promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A multi-faith curriculum in religious education encourages students to live respectfully in a multicultural society. In assemblies, students are encouraged to reflect and be thoughtful. Events such as Ramadan and Vaisakhi are celebrated in the school, and visiting authors deliver workshops during Black history month. Pupils explored the conflicts and resolutions associated with different cultures in a Bollywood style film, featured on national television. Pupils enjoy school, as demonstrated by their very good attendance. They speak warmly about their school and have good attitudes to learning. A minority of parents expressed concerns about behaviour but inspectors observed good behaviour in lessons and around the school, with minor misdemeanours firmly but effectively dealt with. The school is rightly proud that the number of exclusions has been reduced to a reasonable level. Pupils feel safe within the school and are given good advice on health issues, with an increasing range of healthy foods available. The sports provision, leading to the Sportsmark gold award, contributes well to the adoption of healthy lifestyles. Pupils express their views through regular questionnaires and the school council, though a minority of parents feel that children's views are not acted upon. They develop a sense of responsibility and make a worthwhile contribution to the wider community. There are strong relationships between all members of the school community. The school works effectively with a range of external agencies to support pupils and to prepare them via effective work-related learning, for economic well-being in their later life and future careers.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school judges rightly that its teaching is good, and inspectors agree. The regular, systematic and rigorous monitoring of teaching undertaken by senior leaders ensures that most lessons are well structured and result in effective learning and good progress. The school has given a high priority to developing a wider range of teaching strategies in order to suit the learning needs of all pupils; a high proportion of lessons are good or better. The most effective lessons contribute significantly to pupils' language skills, their confidence and their personal development. Outstanding lessons were seen in English with skilful questioning and 'hot-seating' to promote enjoyable learning. In a few lessons the work was not well matched to pupils' needs, leading to limited progress. As a whole, behaviour in class is well-managed; pupils are attentive, enjoy their learning and work together well in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance and respect for both their teachers and peers, who are often from different ethnic backgrounds. Teachers' marking and assessment are regular and thorough. Consequently most pupils understand clearly how they can improve. This has proved effective in raising attainment in tests at Key Stage 3 and GCSE examinations. The support provided by teaching and learning assistants is greatly valued by pupils, including those with special educational needs. These pupils are motivated and as a result achieve very well. Pupils identified as gifted and talented have access to a wide range of enrichment and extension activities. The good relations the school has with parents and carers help pupils to succeed.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a broad curriculum that has improved since the last inspection, and now meets the range of needs of its pupils well. A particularly effective part of this provision is the priority given to pupils transferring from primary schools to help them to develop their skills in mathematics or English. Intervention strategies in Key Stage 3 give further help to pupils in English. In Key Stage 4, there is a wide range of subjects available, including appropriate opportunities for pupils to study vocational courses. Higher attaining students in mathematics and history have access to work beyond GCSE. A range of work-related learning activities provides good preparation for pupils' future economic well-being. Good quality careers education and guidance encourages a high percentage of pupils to remain in education or training after the age of 16. The school provides a wide and effective range of activities that extend and enrich pupils' learning experiences. These are popular with students and contribute to their overall achievement.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding care for its pupils and caters very well for a complex and varied range of needs. Health and safety routines and risk assessments are well established alongside the full range of child protection procedures. Adults in the school are very alert to pupils' needs and provide good guidance and effective support for all pupils. Pupils report that any incidents of bullying or harassment are identified and quickly dealt with, and this contributes strongly to the calm and harmonious atmosphere. Pupils feel secure and free from discrimination. They have very good relationships with each other and with teachers, reflecting the school's commitment to the development of racial harmony and responsibility. The school provides high quality support for the academic and emotional needs of all pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and those with limited knowledge of English. Good relationships exist with parents and external bodies, so that information regarding these pupils is shared and built upon. Pupils and parents are actively involved in the process of review and target setting. Vulnerable pupils including looked after children, and refugees receive exceptionally good care and guidance, and therefore achieve very well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The headteacher, ably supported by a committed leadership team, is the driving force behind a shared vision of exciting improvement and high achievement. Middle managers and all staff share this vision. The school's performance is rigorously monitored and evaluated. There is no complacency. New and challenging targets are regularly set: for example, many teachers are introducing elements of kinaesthetic approaches to enhance learning; another example is the introduction of advanced courses in mathematics and history. All staff are trained to evaluate their teaching, and the school fully meets the professional development needs of teaching and non-teaching staff, and of governors, who are knowledgeable and actively involved. The school promotes equality of opportunity and actively addresses issues of discrimination, so that the school is a harmonious and inclusive community. It seeks the views of pupils and parents in deciding how it should develop further. Governors support and yet constructively challenge the leadership, for example on the provision of off-site courses and possible implications for basic skills. Senior staff maintain a high profile around the school, ensuring smooth day to day management, so that pupils feel secure. The school is rightly proud of its ability to attract and develop high quality staff who work together as a team. The school has improved notably since the previous inspection and has an undoubted capacity to continue to improve still further. It gives good value for money by managing its finances well, whilst supporting ambitious developments, such as planning to build a school for the future.

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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	NA	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	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	1	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	1	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?	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?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	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	1	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	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for welcoming us so warmly when we came to inspect your school on 10th and 11th October 2005; it must have been difficult for those of you who were fasting during Ramadan, but you coped well. We enjoyed talking to you and hearing what you feel about the school.

The particular strengths of the school we have noted are: * you are taught well and make very good progress* results have improved in the last few years, especially so in the core subjects of mathematics and English, which is a second language for many of you;* your headteacher provides outstanding leadership, well supported by senior members of staff;* you come from a wide range of backgrounds, but get on well together* you are cared for very well, especially when problems arise * teachers and other adults put much effort into checking that you are happy, safe and enjoying life* the school listens to what you say and respects your opinions.

Of course, there are always things that could be better, and we mentioned two in the report: * changes in French and some aspects of technology should help you achieve better* your learning could be even better if lessons included a greater range of activities, as already happens in the best lessons. It is encouraging that almost all of you attend regularly because it is a good place to be. Good luck with your work and your future.