



# Canonbury Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 131773  
**Local Authority** Islington  
**Inspection number** 282256  
**Inspection dates** 10–11 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Malcolm Johnstone

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Canonbury Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		London
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		N1 2UT
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	02072265020
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	432	<b>Fax number</b>	02073598198
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Ms Caroline Russell
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Jay Henderson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 February 2000		

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3–11	10–11 October 2006	282256

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This large primary school serves a culturally diverse community with a mixture of privately-owned and rented housing. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage with an above average percentage from several minority ethnic groups. The largest groups are of Black or Black British Caribbean and Turkish heritage. A few of these pupils are at the early stages of learning English. Attainment on entry is broadly average. The school has been through a turbulent five years since the previous inspection, including a number of changes in leadership and staffing. The current headteacher has been in post for eighteen months.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education that is improving at a good pace. This is because the headteacher is providing clear direction and the firm steer that had been missing since the previous inspection. He has gained the confidence and support of staff, governors, pupils and parents. This is because of his passion and commitment to gaining the best for all the pupils. There is a buzz in the school with all going about their work with a smile. There is good capacity for further improvement. As one parent wrote, 'the headteacher has the energy, charisma and commitment to turn the school around and take it forward'.

Pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Good teaching in the Foundation Stage has ensured that children make good progress. In English, standards are above average. This results from greater consistency in the teaching of the subject. Key skills in reading and writing are developed well from year to year. Standards are improving but are not yet high enough in mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). This is because key skills have not been developed progressively from year to year and more pupils should be reaching higher levels. The school is aware of this and is beginning to take effective action.

Based upon its impact on pupils' achievement over time, teaching is satisfactory. It is improving. Mostly good and some outstanding teaching was seen during the inspection. This reflects the teachers' hard work, higher expectations and more rigorous monitoring of teaching by the headteacher and senior leaders. All staff have a strong commitment to professional development. There is still some satisfactory teaching and in these lessons, progress is not rapid enough to make up for gaps in pupils' learning. Day-to-day assessment is mostly good, although information gained is not always used consistently to challenge the more able pupils.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Self-evaluation is good and based on information from tracking pupils' progress. In some key areas, leadership has been highly effective. For example, the strong teamwork and shared commitment to improve creates a happy atmosphere and exciting curriculum that meets the needs of most pupils well. Pupils enjoy learning, are proud of their achievements and behave well. This is because relationships are strong and pupils know what is expected of them. Pupils are cared for well. They know how to lead a healthy lifestyle and how to keep safe. Personal development and well-being are good. There is scope to extend opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. They are not involved enough in setting their own targets and the more able do not have enough opportunities to plan their own lines of enquiry in subjects such as mathematics and science.

### What the school should do to improve further

- \* Raise standards and pupils' achievements in mathematics, science and ICT.
- \* Improve the overall quality of teaching so that pupils make consistently good progress in all lessons.

\* Provide more opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage so that most reach the goals set for the end of the Reception year. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average and have improved since 2005. More pupils are now reaching the higher levels. There are similar improvements in other year groups but this is not yet fully reflected in national tests at the end of Year 6. In 2005, standards in English were above average and have improved since the previous year when they were broadly average. Standards in mathematics remained broadly average, although standards in science and ICT were below average. In mathematics and science, not enough pupils reached the higher levels. The more able pupils did not achieve as well as they should, particularly in applying their skills to investigative learning. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because of the effective support and guidance they receive. The school exceeded its target in English but failed to reach it in mathematics. The situation is now improved for the current Year 6. The school has set more challenging targets for 2007 and reliable school data and inspection evidence indicates that it is on course to achieve them.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy school and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. As a result, they develop into sensible, mature and interesting individuals with a strong sense of respect for others and responsibility towards the school community. One boy said: 'There is no bullying or racism here'. Pupils say that they feel safe and know how important it is to tell an adult if they are unhappy. They have confidence in the school's ability to deal with any problem.

Pupils particularly like the clubs, visits and theme days. For example, great excitement was generated by the 'Under the Sea' theme day. Behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Pupils have high aspirations for their future and are prepared to work hard to achieve them. They work effectively in groups. Their ability to work independently, however, is not so well developed and their basic skills are satisfactory. Hence, their economic well-being is satisfactory overall.

Pupils understand the benefits of healthy eating and exercise and are beginning to incorporate these into their own lives. The school council, prefects and peer mentors have a beneficial impact on the life of the school community and take their responsibilities very seriously.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

All teachers are working hard and with greater focus since the headteacher arrived. As a result of the high expectations of teachers, pupils develop a strong work ethic and behave well. Relationships are strong and pupils know that their ideas will be valued. The sharing of learning objectives ensures that pupils know what they are expected to learn. Teaching partners and nursery nurses support pupils well both in lessons and when working in small groups. Work is generally matched well to pupils' needs, although on occasions it does not offer enough challenge for the more able pupils and they do not make the progress they should. The pace of learning in these lessons is too slow. The teaching of mathematics, science and ICT is improving but new initiatives such as refinements to setting procedures are not sufficiently embedded in the teaching. Whole school assessment systems are good and pupils' overall progress is carefully and regularly monitored. There are good examples of effective use of day-to-day assessment and target setting to inform future learning but this is not embedded across the school.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is responsive to national initiatives and has been better planned over the past year. This is helping to ensure greater continuity of learning. It has been more successful in English than in other subjects where some inconsistencies remain. The Foundation Stage curriculum is stimulating and promotes effective learning. Effective curricular provision for pupils with learning difficulties enables them to make good progress. Good links are made between subjects, although computers are not used enough to support learning and develop pupils' skills across the curriculum. There are special events such as Black History Month, themed days, visits, and a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These make learning more exciting and develop pupils' academic and personal development well. While there is still scope for development, pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are being used increasingly well to support work in other subjects.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Parents trust the school to take care of their children. There are excellent systems to modify any poor behaviour. Involving pupils in the anti-bullying charter has ensured a very effective whole-school approach to this type of anti-social behaviour. Staff will always listen to pupils' concerns and this helps them to feel safe and happy. The school takes the health, safety and protection of children very seriously and ensures that robust measures are in place to achieve this. Academic progress is tracked well, although the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. The help and guidance for pupils

with learning difficulties is good and outside agencies support the school well in meeting their needs.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher is an inspirational leader who leads by example in his commitment and drive to improve all aspects of pupils' learning. He has been highly successful in raising expectations of what might be achieved in all aspects of pupils' education. All the staff and governors support him well and share his determination and vision. This has led to a significant rise in pupils' standards and achievements in English, but more needs to be done to raise standards and pupils' achievements in mathematics, science and ICT.

Since the headteacher took up the post, the senior leaders and subject coordinators have been empowered to develop their roles more effectively. They have good understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards and school improvement plans point a clear and appropriate way forward. Self-evaluation has developed well over the past year and is now good. It is based securely upon accurate tracking and data analysis. This is helping to raise standards by targeting additional support where it is needed most.

Governors are led by a knowledgeable and perceptive chairperson who has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school responds to the concerns of parents. For example, the school has a website where parents' questions and the headteacher's response are posted.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

We would like to thank you all very much for your help when we inspected your school. It was good to see how polite and welcoming you were. You told us how much you enjoyed coming to school and about all the exciting things that happen. It was fun when you dressed up for the 'under the sea' day. You told us that you feel safe and know what to do if you are ever bullied. You know the importance of eating healthy foods and taking regular exercise.

We found that your school provides a satisfactory education that is improving rapidly. The really good things are;

- \* How hard you work, how well you get on together and how well behaved you are in lessons
- \* The care and support you receive from all the teachers and teaching partners
- \* How well your headteacher is improving the school
- \* You do well in reading, writing and you speak and listen well
- \* It was really good to see how well the older pupils care for the younger ones
- \* We believe that your school is ready to improve even more.

Here are some of the things that we think can be improved;

- \* The standards you reach in mathematics, science and information and communication technology
- \* Some of the lessons could challenge you more
- \* We think that your teachers could give you more opportunities to help plan your own work.

We know that you will all do your very best to help the teachers to make this an even better school.

Good luck for the future

Mr. M. Johnstone

Additional Inspector