



Chestnuts Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 134680
LEA Haringey LEA
Inspection number 282643
Inspection dates 15 March 2006 to 16 March 2006
Reporting inspector Keith Williams AI

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | St Ann's Road |
| School category | Community | | Tottenham |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 | | London N15 3TD |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 02088002362 |
| Number on roll | 406 | Fax number | 02088801372 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Ms Barbara Brownlee |
| Date of previous inspection | Not applicable | Headteacher | Ms Cal Shaw |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

Chestnuts opened in September 2004, following the amalgamation of the former infant and junior schools. The school serves an area of significant deprivation and is larger than most primary schools. The pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The proportion learning English as an additional language is much larger than in most schools. Many join the school in Years 1 to 6, some coming directly from abroad having had minimal schooling. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much higher than usually found. An above average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties, although the number with a statement of special educational needs is similar to most schools. The headteacher was appointed at the time of the amalgamation. Major building works are nearing completion.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school's view that it provides a satisfactory standard of education. The school currently provides satisfactory value for money but this is improving because the headteacher and governors, well supported by staff, are focused on raising standards. A high priority is given to promoting pupils' personal development and ensuring that those of all backgrounds and ability are well cared for. The pupils benefit from good links with a range of outside agencies. Successful efforts to improve pupils' behaviour are ensuring that they are able to learn in a calm, supportive and safe environment. Consequently, most pupils enjoy school, although attendance rates remain stubbornly well below average and a few pupils are unpunctual. Standards are well below average but, given the low starting points of many pupils, this represents satisfactory achievement. Improvements to the quality of teaching are beginning to speed up their progress, although the school recognises that there are still inconsistencies, for example to the marking of pupils' work, to be ironed out. A new system of assessing and keeping a check on the pupils' progress is supporting the drive to raise standards, but has not yet had time to be fully effective. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and they make sound progress. Many parents report the school's good improvement since it opened. The headteacher, staff and governors ensure that there is good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

* Implement fully the school's policies for assessment and marking. * Improve pupils' attendance and punctuality.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Most pupils join the school with skills that are much lower than those usually found. The achievement of children in reception is satisfactory, although a much lower than average proportion reaches the goals expected of them by the end of the year. Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation that the current group of children in reception contains a wider range of attainment than seen in other years. Standards are well below average in Years 1 to 6. This is reflected in the most recent national tests for seven and 11 year olds and represents a satisfactory level of success for these pupils. The school sets, and pupils usually meet, suitably challenging targets. Pupils of different backgrounds and those with little or no knowledge of English when they first start school make satisfactory progress. Recent improvements to teaching mean that the rate of progress made by most pupils is beginning to increase. This is particularly so in Year 6, where good and occasionally outstanding teaching is ensuring that these pupils are now achieving well. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve satisfactorily.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They have positive attitudes, behave well in lessons and around the school and are polite and courteous. Pupils feel safe because they know that adults will help them if they have a problem. Active school and class councils represent the pupil's views well and help them to contribute to the community. They recognise that their ideas are taken seriously because, for example, their school council has secured the availability of water bottles. Pupils understand the need to live healthily and enjoy the good opportunities for exercise and sport. They, and their parents, learn about healthy exercise and breathing in 'Yoga Bugs', recently been formed by the Parent School Association. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They respect the views, values and beliefs of others and treat those who find it difficult to learn sensitively. The pupils make sound use of their literacy and numeracy skills to prepare for their future well-being. Despite the best efforts of the school, attendance remains stubbornly well below the national average and the school is currently pursuing a variety of strategies in order to raise attendance and improve punctuality.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory but are improving. Recent changes to staffing, and the steps taken to develop and improve the quality of teaching, mean that pupils are now increasingly exposed to good teaching. This is having a positive impact on the pupils' learning. A new teaching team in reception is providing the children with a widening range of experiences and ensuring that they make a sound start to their schooling. Across the school, teachers plan interesting activities, have high expectations of how the pupils should behave and approach their work. Accordingly, lessons invariably take place in a calm and supportive atmosphere and relationships are very positive. Pupils appreciate the help they are given. 'Teachers try to make work fun' and 'they break things down to help us' are just two of the many positive comments made by pupils. Despite this improving picture, there are still inconsistencies. In the best lessons, very good account is taken of the pupils' differing needs. In an outstanding lesson in Year 6, for example, detailed planning ensured that pupils with limited English, those with learning difficulties and the more capable pupils were challenged or supported as necessary. As a result, pupils of all backgrounds and ability made excellent progress. Occasionally, though, the work presented to pupils is either too hard or too easy for large proportions of the class, which limits the progress they make. A new policy for marking is not yet used consistently to provide enough information for pupils to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. The school is currently combining the two approaches it inherited from the amalgamation into a coherent plan that takes better account of the pupils' needs. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Provision in music and swimming are good because of the use of specialist teachers. Lessons in French, Spanish and German help pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 to have a better understanding of other cultures. The school has introduced a focused system to help pupils learn their letter sounds and is beginning to link subjects together to make learning more meaningful. For example, having studied their local park in geography, Year 3 pupils are writing to the local council with suggestions on how to improve it. The newly installed computer suite has improved provision significantly. Visits and visitors, and a range of after-school clubs, enrich the curriculum appropriately.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This school takes good care of pupils and they, in turn, support and care for each other. As one member of the school council said, 'we co-operate with each other and work as a team'. Well-understood routines create a very orderly, safe and secure community. Child protection and health and safety procedures are very explicit and are well known by staff. The school makes good use of a wide range of outside agencies to supplement the support they provide. Parents value the way that their children settle quickly when they first start school. Pupils are given good support for their personal development and relish the opportunity to take responsibility by taking on jobs and participating in class and school councils. Those who have difficulty learning are given appropriate assistance in lessons. Information gleaned from a new system of assessment is beginning to be used to keep a check on the pupils' progress and identify those needing extra help. However, the school recognises that this is not yet well enough established to raise pupils' standards further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory with several key strengths. In the past eighteen months the school has undergone a challenging amalgamation. The good leadership of the headteacher has provided drive and vision and has successfully united a staff committed to raising standards. Every effort is made to ensure that all pupils, whatever their background or ability, are valued and given an equal chance. Parents appreciate the way the school is improving and most are pleased with the way they are consulted. One, reflecting the views of many, commented 'There is a strong sense of unity of purpose from which the children are clearly deriving benefit.' The headteacher is ably supported by the deputy head and, together, they have built up a strong management team. Their emphasis on improving teaching has meant that standards and achievement are rising and weaknesses are being tackled. Major building

works have been well managed, so avoiding any adverse effect on pupils' education. Teachers are taking on more responsibilities and are growing in confidence in their management roles. The school is well served by a vibrant and determined governing body that has steered it through a period of considerable change. Governors are well informed and provide a high level of challenge and support. There are appropriate systems in place for monitoring the school's effectiveness. These help the school leaders to form an accurate view of their effectiveness. Occasionally, however, the interpretation of data is a little generous as, for example, when evaluating the impact of teaching which the school judges to be good. The school's leaders have clear and comprehensive plans for improvement and together with the progress already made it means that the school has good capacity to achieve them.

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Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3 | 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 | 3 | 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 | NA | NA |

Achievement and standards

| | | |
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| How well do learners achieve? | 3 | NA |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 | NA |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 3 | NA |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 3 | 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 | 3 | NA |

The quality of provision

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 3 | NA |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 3 | 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 | 3 | 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 | 1 | NA |
| How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money | 3 | 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

As you know, your school was recently inspected. I am writing to thank you for the very friendly way you welcomed us into school and to tell you about our findings. We enjoyed talking to you and your views and opinions have given us a lot of helpful information. Your school is satisfactory but it is improving because you, your headteacher and the other adults in school are working together to make things better. Many of your parents told us how pleased they to see things improving.

Watching you in lessons, we can see that you work hard and try to do your best. We are pleased with the way that you all get on together in lessons and on the playground. You told us how you feel safe and well looked after. We agree with you. Because of your good behaviour and the care the staff take of you, you are able to get on with your work in lessons and play safely. Well done for continuing to work hard, even with all the building work going on. You are right to be proud of your school council and we are pleased to see so many of you helping by doing jobs around the school.

We agree that your teachers try to make learning fun. They work hard to make sure that those of you who need extra help or harder work get it. We have asked them to make sure that even more of your lessons are good and to give you more information about how you can make your work better. Although you told us that you enjoy school, some of you have too much time off and we want you and you teachers to improve this. We also want those of you who are sometimes late to make sure you get to school on time. Once again, thank you for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed being in your school and we wish you good luck for the future. We know you will work with your teachers to help your school to carry on improving.

Keith Williams

Lead inspector