



# Thorpe Hall Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 103060  
**LEA** Waltham Forest LEA  
**Inspection number** 285170  
**Inspection dates** 23 March 2006 to 24 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Tusha Chakraborti AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Hale End Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Walthamstow
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		E17 4DP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	02085274062
<b>Number on roll</b>	441	<b>Fax number</b>	02085230397
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Kevin Patmore
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Paulette Houghton

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 23 March 2006 - 24 March 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 285170
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Thorpe Hall Primary is larger than most primary schools. It serves an area of significant deprivation. An above-average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is broadly average. An increasing number of pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being Black British. Attainment on admission is below average. A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language and 54 of them are at the early stages of learning English. There are currently six refugee pupils, three travellers and one looked-after pupil on roll. The mobility of pupils is high, and there has been high staff turnover in the last few years.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Thorpe Hall Primary is a good school and gives good value for money. The school had a modest view of its effectiveness, which it evaluated to be satisfactory. Good leadership by the headteacher and determined and hard work by the senior managers and other staff have led to improvement in pupils' achievement, which is now good. Standards in writing are still below average but they are improving. Behaviour is good and pupils learn with confidence and enjoyment.

Effective and rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning means that the quality of teaching is good and pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress. Pupils in Years 1 to 6, including those with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress. A good range of extra-curricular activities fill the children with enthusiasm and help them achieve well.

The provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but there is room for improvement. Lack of adequate provision for outside play facilities for the reception classes means that activities cannot be planned effectively enough. Children come to the nursery with low average attainment in English language skills. Although they make satisfactory progress, this is not good enough to enable them to achieve the nationally expected levels when they transfer to Year 1.

The school has successfully addressed most issues raised in last inspection. It is well placed to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

\* Improve the provision in the Foundation Stage, particularly for pupils who are at the early stages of learning English.

\* Raise standards in writing across the school.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Most pupils join the school with skills that are lower than those usually found. In addition, almost half of the children in the nursery and reception are at the early stages of learning English. Although these children make satisfactory progress, a lower than average proportion reach the goals expected of them by the end of reception. This is because they do not make sufficient progress in acquiring English language skills at this stage.

Standards are average in Years 1 to 6 and most pupils achieve well. Pupils of different backgrounds and those with little or no knowledge of English when they first start school make good progress overall. Those with learning difficulties achieve well. This good progress, regardless of background or ability, is directly attributable to good teaching and the pupils' positive attitudes to their work. Consequently, standards are rising.

The school sets, and usually meets, challenging targets for the pupils' performance. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in the most recent national tests in Year 6 was lower than expected. However, the work of the pupils currently in school shows that higher attaining pupils are achieving well and, in Year 6, more are performing at the higher level. The school has rightly identified that standards in writing are below average. A good range of strategies has been introduced to raise attainment. This is beginning to pay off, but the school recognises that there is still more to do.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Relationships throughout the school are very positive and all pupils benefit from the secure, caring and inclusive environment, which supports learning well. The vast majority of pupils behave well and demonstrate positive attitudes towards their work. However, there have been a large number of exclusions this year. This is because of the challenging behaviour of a small number of pupils. Pupils say they feel very safe at school and free from harassment and racism. There is little bullying and, when it does occur, pupils say they receive good support. Attendance has improved and reflects pupils' enjoyment of school.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a good sense of right and wrong. They greatly enjoy and are proud to be in the 'merit' book, sharing their work in assemblies and participating in class reward systems. They have a good understanding of multi-cultural issues and show respect for and value the views of others.

Pupils develop a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and this is reflected in the school being awarded Healthy School Status. The school councillors participate well in decision-making and they are pleased with their contribution to behaviour systems and the playground development. The school's success in developing good levels of basic skills by the end of Year 6 and good personal development prepares them well for later life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching is particularly strong in years 5 and 6. Very good relationships and management of pupils' behaviour mean that pupils develop very good attitudes to learning and work well together. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and value their contribution to class discussions. Pupils recognise this very well; as one pupil confirmed, 'of course, teachers have high expectations of us; they need to get us ready for Year7!' Teachers engage pupils effectively in their learning and encourage them to work effectively, both together and independently. This was evident in a Year 5 history lesson where pupils prepared

and presented interviews to find out the life style of children in Victorian times. Most lessons have a good pace and challenging questioning ensures that pupils make good progress. The support staff are used effectively to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils are assessed well in general, although assessment results are not used consistently to plan lessons.

The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. Although nearly half the children are at the early stages of learning English, there is limited opportunity for children to develop their language skills. Assessment is not effective enough to identify areas for development and often does not inform planning. As a result, although teachers work hard, children do not achieve as well as they should. Lack of outside facilities hinders planning for appropriate outdoor activities for children.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good and contributes effectively to pupils' achievement. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties, those who speak English as an additional language and more able pupils is good and a wide range of strategies are used to support them. Effective links are developing between different subjects, which enable pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills to support their learning across the curriculum.

The curriculum is greatly enriched by a wide range of club activities and the specialist teaching of music and French. There is strong emphasis on music, art and sports activities. Pupils have recently produced very good quality paintings. These have been framed and sold to raise funds. This contributes very well to pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Sports activities like ' Soccer in Schools ' as well as day trips to places of interest and a residential trip further afield enhance pupils' learning experiences successfully.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are cared for well. Parents support this view and feel confident that their children are safe and well looked-after. Pupils say there is always someone to talk to if they have any problems or concerns. Systems for supporting those pupils who have special learning requirements are good and well managed, although children learning English in the foundation stage do not always get sufficient help to develop their English language skills. This is a school where every child matters. The school has good child protection procedures in place and all staff are well informed regarding them. It meets all requirements for health and safety, with procedures for risk assessments effectively and conscientiously observed. The school works well with other agencies to support vulnerable pupils. There are effective partnerships with other local schools to ensure smooth transition of pupils both in and out of the school.

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## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and have a significant impact on the pupils' achievement and personal development. The headteacher, staff and governors are committed to raising standards. A new, effective leadership structure has clearly defined roles that are closely focused on improving pupils' learning. The role of governors has improved since the last inspection. They are well informed and provide a good level of challenge and support.

The school monitors its effectiveness thoroughly. Parents' views are taken into account and many parents report that their children are listened to. A very close check is kept on teaching and learning, and this has helped to maintain good teaching despite a number of recent staff changes. Newly appointed teachers, including the newly qualified and those trained overseas, are given good guidance and support to improve their performance. Information from tests and assessments is analysed carefully. This emphasis on developing teaching and learning has meant that standards and achievement are beginning to rise and weaknesses are being tackled. Strategies to raise standards in writing have been introduced and are beginning to take effect, although the school recognises that there is more to do to ensure consistency across the school.

The school has an accurate evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses, although it is modest in some of its views. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. Given its recent track record, the school is well placed to secure further improvement.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</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>	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	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	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

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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 us to your school. It was a great pleasure to visit your school and talk to you about it. We know that most of you really enjoy coming to school and value what it has to offer you. We think you have good opportunities to develop your skills in areas such as music and sports and to have such a good range of club activities. We are pleased to tell you that Thorpe Hall is a good school.

We are impressed by your good behaviour, the way you concentrate on your work and join in activities, and your willingness to take responsibilities and carry them out successfully. As a result, you achieve well. We think that you understand the importance of staying safe and healthy very well and take part in the wide range of physical activities to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

We are pleased with your progress in all subjects and agree with the school in its aim to do even better. We would, therefore, like to see that you improve your writing skills in all year groups. We think that children in the nursery and reception classes need to gain English language skills at a faster rate to achieve even higher in later years. We are confident that you will continue to work hard and achieve even better in the future.

With our every good wish for the future

Tusha Chakraborti

Lead Inspector