



St Edward's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102769
LEA Newham LEA
Inspection number 285339
Inspection dates 24 May 2006 to 24 May 2006
Reporting inspector Hugh Protherough AI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to inspect any school in England. The inspection is to be treated as a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Green Street
School category	Voluntary aided		Upton Park
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		London E13 9AX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02084724337
Number on roll	461	Fax number	02084704522
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Anthony Kieran
Date of previous inspection	21 May 2001	Headteacher	Mr Christopher Mabey

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. In the course of the visit he met with staff, pupils and the chairman of the governing body. The school was observed at work and a small sample of lessons was visited. The school provided a wide range of supporting documentation in support of its extensive self-evaluation. Well over 250 parent questionnaires were returned which further assisted the writing of the report.

Description of the school

This large primary school serves a complex and rapidly changing community which includes areas of significant deprivation. Pupils come from a very wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest groups represented are from Africa, the Philippines, Eastern Europe and India. Four out of five pupils speak a language other than English at home and about a third is at an early stage of learning English. Although an average proportion of pupils claim free school meals, the school's data show that many more are entitled to receive them. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is average. Many of these are pupils who experience emotional and behavioural difficulties. There have been three changes of headteacher in the course of the past five years and a substantial turnover of staff at all levels. All current pupils have been baptised in the Catholic faith.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an excellent school. On stepping across the threshold of St. Edward's visitors are instantly struck by the quiet and purposeful working atmosphere that is in stark contrast to the noise and bustle of the busy East London streets outside. From school reception to the kitchens, Foundation Stage to Year 6, adults and pupils are tangibly committed to the pursuit of excellence. It is no surprise to discover that parents are overwhelmingly positive in their views of the school. Many wrote to acknowledge the depth of care and support provided to their families, 'My daughter used to cry every morning going to school and without her teacher and teaching assistant I think she would still do that.'

School leadership is young, dynamic and successfully distributed throughout the staff team. There is a relentless and successful focus upon pupils' achievements and the provision of high quality teaching that addresses the complex needs of different groups of pupils. High standards have been sustained for several years and boys and girls of all backgrounds and abilities make excellent progress. Outstanding provision in Foundation Stage helps young children enter smoothly and swiftly into the world of school. Conversations with the current Year 6 pupils show that they have been effectively primed for transfer to secondary education.

A key factor in the school's success is that it is continually seeking to improve and refine its practice. It rightly judges its own performance as highly effective, yet throughout the inspection the staff team were continually rehearsing their views about ways that the school could be made even better. The current priorities of the school improvement plan, such as extending pupils writing, are the right ones and there is excellent capacity for further improvement. Issues from the last inspection have been rigorously tackled addressed, most significantly in improving pupil behaviour. The overwhelming majority of pupils are considerate and polite. They offer their views thoughtfully and are keenly appreciative of the education they receive. A Year 6 boy summed up the views of many, 'Our voice is heard and every child matters.' This school provides excellent value for money.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Taken overall, standards at the end of Year 6 are high and have been significantly better than the national picture for the past three years. Challenging targets are set and often exceeded. Pupils are helped to make very good progress regardless of ability or background. For instance, the work of several pupils who arrived at school in the past eighteen months with little or no English shows rapid improvement and growing self-confidence. More able pupils are driven to attain the higher levels in national tests as a result of the teachers' high expectations and their well structured teaching. Children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress from a wide range of starting points. The current school focus upon improving pupils' writing has successfully extended the range and quality of the pupils' work.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The overwhelming majority of pupils display very positive attitudes to school. They behave well and treat each other with care and respect. The pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding. A small minority of pupils with emotional and behavioural problems can sometimes behave poorly, but because the staff apply school behaviour policy in a consistent fashion these pupils are very well managed.

Pupils respond positively to opportunities to accept responsibility. Prefects carry out their duties conscientiously. The school council has done an excellent job in encouraging all classes to re-cycle waste materials and the catering staff have followed suit. Many pupils eat healthily because school meals include a daily salad bar and fresh fruit. They take regular exercise. The inspector witnessed a very good number of pupils walking to school as part of the 'Walk on Wednesday' scheme. Many pupils have also benefited from the new games equipment provided for lunch times in direct response to the requests of school council.

The school takes a robust approach to discouraging holidays in term time and as a result attendance is above average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The high achievement of pupils reflects the consistently good and frequently excellent quality of teaching at the school. At the heart of this success lies the teachers' incisive approach to assessment. They know their pupils very well and as a result set work that is closely matched to the wide range of needs found within each class. Pupils' work is regularly marked and in most instances the teachers' comments provide good advice about how they can improve. The use of individual target sheets is well established and older pupils are encouraged to 'self-review.' Teachers' expectations are very high and pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for some of their own learning. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 explained patiently to the inspector the school's successful approach to homework. A Year 6 boy summed up by observing, "Oh yes, Year 6 get a lot more homework and it's a great deal harder!"

Recent work on improving writing has been successful. Strategies such as 'talking partners' have encouraged pupil discussion and engagement within the lesson prior to starting to write. The range of writing genres has broadened to include report writing, journalism and factual accounts that often motivate those boys who are reluctant writers. Teaching takes full account of the language needs of the many pupils who speak English as an additional language. The effective support of additional adults such as classroom assistants and student teachers makes a valuable contribution in supporting all pupils, including those with learning difficulties.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school provides an excellent curriculum that reflects the cultural diversity of the communities it serves and that is well matched to the individual needs and capabilities of its pupils. An excellent range of extra-curricular activities is provided. Cross curricular links are developing well, not least because of the successful teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The high quality of the school's provision has a very positive impact upon the pupils' personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

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Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher is doing an excellent job. He leads from the front and has won the admiration and respect of staff, pupils and parents. Like several of his colleagues he grew up in the area and demonstrates a passionate commitment to his parish and local community.

The school's success is rooted in its rigorous approach to evaluating every aspect of its performance and the acuity of its judgements. This is achieved through the successful development of all staff as leaders and managers. For instance, part of the inspection focused upon the leadership of English which is outstanding. The subject leader articulates a clear view of standards across the school, she has detailed records of the progress of every pupil and has checked the quality of their work and the teachers' marking in each class. She is an astute judge of the quality of teaching and again, has observed lessons throughout the school. She provides training for staff and organises meetings for parents to explain how their children are being taught. The cycle set out within the school improvement plan and the well ordered documentation provided for each subject indicate that this is not the exception but the norm.

The governors are conscientious in discharging their duties, offering strong support and thoughtful challenge. The budget is managed effectively and ensures that the school is well resourced.

Vigilant leadership is aware of the social trends that are subtly changing the make-up of the school and is planning accordingly. For instance, the balance of different ethnic groups is shifting and the number of pupils entering and leaving school mid-term is rising. Staff recruitment is well managed and the staff team more settled. The school's

excellent support of young student teachers provides a regular supply of fresh talent, some of whom apply successfully for teaching posts at the school.

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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?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	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?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	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	1	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	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

I should like to thank you all for the friendly way that you welcomed me to St. Edward's in May. I was disappointed to have only a day in your school and would have liked to stay longer as there was so little time in which to meet you all. Those of you who spoke with me will know that I promised to write and tell you what I thought about the school, so here goes...

St Edwards is a fantastic school. Many of you told me that you feel happy, safe and that there are always interesting things to do. I agree. All the grown-ups work really hard to help you and as a result you learn quickly and produce some excellent work. The school council is doing a really good job in sharing ideas and improving things for you all. The new games equipment has given you more to do at lunchtimes and projects such as 'Walk on Wednesday' will also help you get the regular exercise you need each day.

I hope that you will all have a happy and successful end to the school year and that those Year 6 pupils leaving for 'St Bon's' and St Angela's carry on their excellent work in their new schools next year.

Yours sincerely,

Hugh Protherough

Lead Inspector