



Fossdene Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 100125
Local Authority Greenwich
Inspection number 285720
Inspection dates 21–22 February 2007
Reporting inspector Brian Evans

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Victoria Way
School category	Community		Charlton
Age range of pupils	3–11		London SE7 7NQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8858 5585
Number on roll (school)	283	Fax number	020 8293 9547
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Marie Westlake
		Headteacher	Ms C Doyle
Date of previous school inspection	11 November 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Fossdene Primary is of average size. Pupils belong to a diverse multicultural community in which White British, Asian and Black African are well represented. There are significant numbers of refugees and asylum seekers. Just over half of pupils speak English as an additional language, the main languages being Nepalese, Filipino and Vietnamese. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. Standards on entry to the school are very low and the school has a much higher proportion of pupils with learning difficulties than most other schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Fossdene Primary accurately perceives itself as an effective school. Children enter the school with well below average language and communication skills. Pupils of all abilities and ethnic groups achieve well to reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. Within this positive picture, pupils' progress varies. In the Foundation Stage, children make satisfactory progress and their speaking and listening skills develop slowly. This satisfactory progress continues in Key Stage 1 so that, by the end of Year 2, standards in reading and mathematics are below average. Standards are well below average in writing in Years 1 to 3. Pupils' progress accelerates during Key Stage 2. This is reflected in the national test results in recent years which, taking account of pupils' prior attainment, represents a rate of progress that is in the top five percent found nationally.

Teaching and learning vary from outstanding to satisfactory and are satisfactory overall. The curriculum is satisfactory with a number of good features including provision for music. However, teachers do not consistently ensure that all pupils do work which is well suited to their needs. Nevertheless pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2, particularly in Year 6, because teaching is good and the headteacher and senior managers provide effective additional learning strategies that complement work in the classroom. Good assessment programmes track each pupil's progress through the school. Each day for example, small groups, including gifted pupils, extend their basic skills by using computer programmes before school or during breaks. Similarly, new pupils who have little or no English, or pupils who need specific learning support, regularly attend small group sessions and make good progress. These and other extra-curricular initiatives promote pupils' good achievement.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and this has a positive impact on their good achievement. Care, support and guidance are good and underpin a positive learning environment. Active, healthy lifestyles and aspects of economic well-being are promoted well and pupils make an excellent contribution to the community. Behaviour is outstanding and there have been no exclusions in recent years. Pupils listen carefully, enjoy their class and group discussions and sustain their concentration over long periods. The overwhelming parental view is that of contentment with the school. One child's parents stated 'the atmosphere within the school is fantastic and my son looks forward to going to school.'

Leadership and management by the headteacher, deputy and governors are good. Self-evaluation processes give the school a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses. The school responded well to issues raised in the last inspection. Information and communication technology is now an integral part of a pupil's learning experience. Given its recent track record and the strong leadership team, the school's capacity to improve is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards of writing, particularly in Years 1 to 3.

- Improve the consistency of teaching by ensuring that work meets the learning needs of all pupil

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From their low starting points, pupils achieve well and, by the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, teaching is generally satisfactory and so children make satisfactory progress to reach below average standards by the end of Year 2. Listening and speaking skills are improving but the school recognises that writing remains well below average and is a continuing weakness, particularly for many pupils in Years 1 to 3.

Overall the school meets its challenging targets. The school uses a range of strategies, including writing projects, to boost pupils' performance. This, together with good teaching, is particularly effective in Key Stage 2 and is reflected in improving national test results in Year 6. Pupils for whom English is an additional language, the gifted and talented and those who have learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because of good individual and group support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils enjoy learning, have positive attitudes to work and show great concern for the welfare of others. There are rigorous systems in place to monitor and discourage absence. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils respect the beliefs and cultures of others. One pupil said 'I love my school and never want to leave it'.

Pupils of all ages have an active voice in shaping the school's direction through their school council. For example, pupils were largely responsible for shaping improvements to the playground environment which now make playtimes such a pleasant and harmonious time for them. As one pupil said 'we have lots of good games we can play with our friends'. Pupils recognise the importance of exercise and eating sensibly in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Very strong links exist with the community and this makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' learning. They are prepared well for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but there is some good and outstanding teaching in Year 6. All pupils respond well and relationships amongst the pupils, and between pupils and adults, are good. New technology is used effectively to motivate

learning; for example, Year 4 pupils enjoyed problem solving involving clocks in which the teacher used an interactive whiteboard. Pupils enjoy opportunities to work in pairs and to talk about their learning with a partner. This helps them to develop their social skills as well as their speaking and listening.

Individualised and targeted support for pupils help them to make good progress in Key Stage 2. For example, pupils work in small groups with teaching assistants to meet their targets and pupils in Year 6 attend additional classes in mathematics. However, teachers' planning is not consistently good enough to ensure that tasks are well suited to the individual needs of all pupils in lessons, particularly during independent work. The involvement of additional adults during lessons is inconsistent and does not always ensure that pupils who need extra support receive the help they need.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Good features include provision for swimming and singing, as well as opportunities for pupils in Year 4 to learn a choice of musical instruments including African drumming and the flute. The popular residential visit for pupils in Year 6 gives pupils opportunities to develop team building and problem-solving skills. Themed weeks such as Reading Week enrich pupils' learning. Pupils enjoy a satisfactory range of educational visits to local places of interest and speak enthusiastically about visitors who have come to school to speak to them. More able pupils are encouraged to develop their strengths through a variety of activities including art, mathematics and ICT clubs in school and the Greenwich Youth University. The school acknowledges that changes to the way writing is taught are needed to improve standards. The curriculum is now being reviewed to develop links between subjects and provide more creative activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Nearly all parents say their children feel safe and well cared for in school. Pupils are given good guidance on how to take care of themselves and make healthy and safe choices. Health and safety procedures are effective and are reviewed regularly. Child protection procedures are good. The school's effective links with a range of external agencies help to promote the welfare of the pupils and support the school's efforts to improve. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good. There are effective small group arrangements for inducting new pupils who speak very little English. These enable them to make very good progress in settling in to school so that they can join in classroom activities. Assessment procedures and monitoring of pupils' academic progress are very good in Years 1 to 6 and are having a positive impact on achievement. In the Foundation Stage they are satisfactory but are not as systematic as those in Key Stages 1 and 2.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and are improving provision and raising attainment. The headteacher is a good leader and is very well supported by her deputy. Their shared vision for the school is driving change to ensure that all pupils 'expect, believe and achieve' as well as they can. Recent changes to the school management structure, together with increasingly effective teaching, particularly in Year 6, have resulted in steady improvements in achievement. As a result, pupils achieve well from their starting points. Monitoring of teaching is systematic and leads to improvements in learning but inconsistencies remain that account for differing rates of progress as pupils move through the school. Literacy, numeracy and ICT coordinators work closely with class teachers to ensure the impact of new initiatives. For example, teachers and classroom assistants have been trained in the use of computers and interactive white boards, which are used well to support pupil progress.

Governors have a close relationship with the school and are committed to supporting the leadership team in bringing about improvements. They visit the school regularly and are keen to keep parents well informed of their work, for example, through regular articles in the Fossdene Newsletter.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
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	2
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

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. On arriving at Fossdene we were very impressed by your bright colourful playgrounds and the high standard of your work on display around the school. Yours is a good school. There are other things too that we particularly liked about your school.

- We were very pleased with your excellent behaviour and how keen so many of you are to enjoy your learning.
- You are good listeners, you try hard in lessons and join in well with discussions. You make good progress by the time you leave the school.
- You say to us that you feel really safe and happy at school. Your representatives on the school council helped the school to make your play times more enjoyable by providing fun ideas and suggesting play equipment.
- We heard some really good singing in assemblies and by the school choirs.
- The headteacher and her staff, with your support, are making sure that the school continues to improve.

These are things we asked the school, with your help, to do to make it even better.

- Improve your standards of writing especially in Years 1 to 3.
- Teachers to look again at the lesson targets they set you so that they are not too hard or too easy for you to achieve. You can help by always telling your teachers when you do not understand the work you are given or by saying when it is too easy.

Thank you again and best wishes for the future to all of you.

Yours sincerely

Brian Evans Lead inspector