



Southwold Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 100242
Local Authority Hackney
Inspection number 285753
Inspection dates 7–8 December 2006
Reporting inspector Mike Smith

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Detmold Road
School category	Community		Clapton
Age range of pupils	3–11		London E5 9NL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8806 5201
Number on roll (school)	269	Fax number	020 8806 9287
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Ms Tina Marie Walsh
		Headteacher	Mr Gary Boyd
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Southwold Primary is an inner city school serving an area of high deprivation in Clapton. Around ten percent of pupils are of White European heritage while the remainder represent a wide range of minority ethnic groups, the largest groups being from Black African, Caribbean and Asian backgrounds. Nearly two thirds of pupils have home languages other than English and one in seven is at an early stage of learning English. A few are the children of refugees or families seeking asylum or Traveller family children. An above average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. An above average percentage of pupils receive support for their special educational needs. Almost a third of the pupils join and/or leave the school other than at the end of Year 6 or at the end of an academic year. The school holds the Healthy Schools Award. The headteacher took up his post in April 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

Although Southwold provides an acceptable standard of education, it is not effective, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Overall, pupils' standards are very low and their achievement is inadequate. However, in a short period of time the newly appointed headteacher and senior leadership team (SLT) have initiated improvement strategies that are having a positive impact upon teaching and learning which are now satisfactory. The school environment has been improved. Parents recognise the improvements in the school due to the headteacher's clear vision and successful leadership. One parent said, 'I have to say that recent changes have been very noticeable. There have been amazing differences and the school is going forward, well done.' Although the basics have been established for future success much remains to be done. Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress from very low standards on entry, because staff organise a good blend of enjoyable play-based activities. This progress is not yet being maintained as pupils move up the school.

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils have good attitudes and enjoy school and understand the importance of keeping safe and leading a healthy lifestyle. Pupils' behaviour is good and they are well cared for. The school's self-evaluation and monitoring strategies are satisfactory. The school has an accurate view of the quality of education provided and what needs to be improved and how to achieve it. The quality of teaching has improved and is now satisfactory. It is weakest in Years 3 to 6, but has improved overall due to systematic monitoring and support. The school is aware that teaching needs to be consistently better if it is to make up the deficit in pupils' achievements. Monitoring has identified the need to improve the consistency of assessment and recording practices, so as to inform teachers' planning and to enable more accurate tracking and analysis of progress as pupils move through the school.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities have targets in place, but these are not consistently being used in teachers' planning and therefore pupils are not always making the progress they should. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English receive sound support that gives them appropriate access to learning opportunities, but they also make too little progress. The curriculum is satisfactory throughout the school. It caters for pupils' personal development and provides adequate opportunities for them to enjoy learning in a broad range of subjects. However, it does not provide enough scope for more able pupils to excel. Pupils enjoy school and attendance is satisfactory with the school implementing strategies to improve it even further. Pupils eagerly take on opportunities for team building and individual responsibility and learn helpful skills. However, their competencies in numeracy, literacy and science are too low. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and they make positive contributions to the community. Overall there has been inadequate improvement since the last inspection as standards are still an issue. The schools' leadership is now clearly demonstrating that pupil achievement is at the heart of all decisions. The school has the capacity to improve and raise standards.

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly

less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required to improve achievement and standards and the overall quality of teaching and learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards and achievement in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve the overall quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 to ensure the needs of all pupils are fully met.
- Enable teachers to achieve consistency in how they assess and record pupils' attainments, in order to inform their planning and to help in the tracking of pupils' progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards are well below average and achievement is inadequate. The starting points of children on entry to the Foundation Stage are very low and many are weak in their communication and social skills. In the Foundation Stage they make good progress in these areas, although in general their progress is satisfactory and their standards overall are still below average when they move to Year 1. By the end of Year 2 standards are still well below average and achievement is inadequate. This is also the case by the end of Year 6. By the time they leave school, pupils have not made anywhere near the expected rates of progress in English, mathematics and science. This is also the case for the majority of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and for those who are at the early stages of learning English. However, those pupils in both these groups who have been identified for intensive support make satisfactory and sometimes good progress. Afro-Caribbean boys do less well than other groups of pupils and more able pupils are not achieving enough. These issues have been identified and recognised as unacceptable. Appropriate improvement strategies are being implemented to rectify this.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory and in many respects are good. Pupils behave well, are polite and enjoy school very much, one said, 'I love coming to school, it's fun here and you learn lots of things.' They appreciate the clubs on offer and they enjoy the visitors who come in to school. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Right from the nursery class, pupils co-operate well together. A variety of colourful displays around the school promote and celebrate a range of cultures. The pupils understand what makes for a healthy lifestyle and run their own 'healthy tuck shop' at break times. Pupils feel safe in school and say that if there are incidents of bullying, they know what to do and who to talk to. Peer mediators act as 'playground friends' and pupils are confident to discuss anything with them. Attendance remains just below average, but the school has succeeded, through its

hard work, in bringing about good improvement. The school council makes a thoughtful contribution to school life and has plans to raise money for playground equipment. Pupils contribute well to the community and write regular newsletters, some of which are published in the local press. Contact with other schools is good. The lack of progress which many pupils make in their literacy and numeracy skills limits their preparation for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory. Although there are examples of good practice across the school there is just insufficient consistent good teaching to make an impact on pupil attainment. There is a positive ethos of reward and celebration where learning is made fun and where expectations are rising. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is good enabling children to make satisfactory progress overall and good gains in their social development and language and communication skills from very low entry levels. In most lessons throughout the school, teachers give clear explanations and specify learning objectives and intentions, so pupils know what is expected of them. Relationships are good and behaviour management is effective, so that pupils are happy in their work. Senior leaders together with external support monitor teaching and learning closely and there is evidence that this is bringing about some improvement, now that staffing is more stable. Work is not always pitched at different levels to reflect the wide range of pupils' abilities, and not enough account is taken of the learning needs of individual pupils. However, improvements can be seen, for example, within assessment, planning and recording, although consistency across the school is still to be achieved and the impact upon pupil achievement is yet to be established. The best teaching practice is not sufficiently shared across the school. Support staff are generally well used to help pupils with learning difficulties and those pupils who are at the early stages of learning English.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory throughout the school. It has improved as a result of recent developments implemented by the senior leadership team. Subject leaders have clear roles and responsibilities. There are now examples of good practices in curriculum planning that need to be shared more widely. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn about healthy living and to keep safe. It also fosters pupils' personal qualities and helps prepare them for living in a harmonious community. However, the curriculum is not effective in catering for the needs of all learners as it does not offer enough opportunities for more able pupils to excel. Good use is made of special events, such as National Poetry Day and Black History Month, to encourage pupils' interest and motivation. The school is in the process of re-developing and updating its information and communication technology provision (ICT). A range of extra-curricular

activities, clubs and visits to places of interest, provide additional opportunities for pupils to enjoy their learning and further develop their personal skills and qualities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Overall, the care and welfare of pupils are satisfactory with some good elements. However, systems recently put in place for the academic guidance of pupils have yet to become fully effective. Strategies to support pupils who need extra support have not been fully developed. For example, the individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties are not consistently used well in the classroom. Checks have been made on adults who work in the school and risk assessments are thorough. Arrangements and procedures are in place to protect vulnerable pupils and staff know what to do. Recent training has been undertaken by the person in charge of child protection. Pupils feel safe and know where to go for help if necessary. Outside sources of help and advice are used well. These good levels of care are now beginning to have an impact on pupils' personal development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher faced a number of significant challenges on taking up the post less than a year ago. He has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has acted promptly and vigorously to make significant improvements. The recently appointed deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher have energetically and positively focused on school improvement and raising standards. Improvements have been brought about in teaching and learning and in curriculum development where expectations are clear and higher. Parents are very supportive of recent improvements. One commented, 'there have been tremendous improvements since the new headteacher has been here'. There are satisfactory procedures in place for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and areas that require improvement are being addressed. However, in common with a number of other reforms they are too recent to have had a significant impact on how well pupils are doing. The governing body has full confidence in the headteacher who has high expectations that they will become more pro-active in their monitoring. They fulfil their legal obligations and are involved in a basic level of school monitoring and strategic management. Support from the external adviser is helping everyone focus on more effective ways of working in partnership. Although pupils are underachieving and the school's effectiveness is currently inadequate, leadership and management are having a positive impact on provision and the school shows it has the capability to bring about the necessary improvement. A number of difficult problems left over from previous inadequacies of leadership and management have been confronted and resolved, and the school is now well placed to raise standards.

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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?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
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	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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	4

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?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming us into your school and a special thank you to the school council who met with us and said what they liked about the school. Although we think Southwold Primary School provides an acceptable standard of education, it does need to improve. The school knows what it has to do to make things better for you and you can help by asking questions in class about what you need to do to get better in all your work. We noticed that you really enjoy coming to school and working in your lessons and you all get on with each other so well. We particularly liked the fact that:

- your relationships with each other and all adults are very good
- you have good attitudes to learning and your behaviour is good
- your understanding of different cultures and religions is good
- the school looks after you well
- you think about others less fortunate than yourselves and you make a good contribution to the community
- the headteacher and staff are working hard together to make the school better.

There are a few things the school knows it can improve upon:

- too many pupils are not making enough progress in English, mathematics and science
- your teachers should monitor and record your progress in a consistent way so they know how well you are doing as you get older
- teachers need to make sure that your lessons offer you challenging activities and support all your different needs so all of you can make the best progress you are capable of.

Once again, thank you for being so friendly and making our visit such a happy one.

Yours sincerely

Mike Smith Lead inspector