

Sullivan Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100339
Local Authority	Hammersmith and Fulham
Inspection number	285772
Inspection dates	23–24 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Lynn Bappa

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	283
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs C Langton
Headteacher	Ms A Newbold
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2003
School address	Peterborough Road London SW6 3BN
Telephone number	020 7736 5869
Fax number	020 7736 2858

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Sullivan Primary School is similar in size to other primary schools. It serves a generally disadvantaged area of south Fulham. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average. Well over half the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and one in four speaks English as an additional language. These figures are much higher than are found in most schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is higher than average. The number of pupils entering the school other than at the normal time of transfer is increasing. This is largely a result of changing patterns to school populations locally. The school came out of special measures in April 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Parents are very pleased with the quality of education it offers. As one parent commented, 'I have experienced the bad times and the good times that Sullivan has gone through. We are now in a very good time with everyone pulling in the same direction and can only see Sullivan going from strength to strength'.

The school provides a stimulating learning environment in which pupils are able to blossom. Teachers make good use of the accommodation, with a well equipped playground and bright and cheerful classrooms. Good provision for care, guidance and support has established a strong ethos of care and respect for others. Pupils are developing well as individuals. They feel safe and welcomed from the start. They thoroughly enjoy lessons and other activities. The steps taken by the school to promote good attendance and punctuality are beginning to have a positive impact. Punctuality, for example, has improved since the last inspection. However, there are still a small number of families who do not ensure that their children come to school regularly enough. This is having an adverse effect on the school's attendance figures.

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage because of good provision. Their achievements in personal and emotional development are particularly good. As they get older, pupils continue to achieve well and attain well above average standards overall by Year 6. This is the result of good teaching, good provision for vulnerable pupils, and a good curriculum. The school has rightly identified, however, that it needs to do more to raise standards in mathematics in Years 1 and 2, particularly in problem solving and investigations.

Leadership and management are good. There is a strong commitment to making every child feel valued. Staff, parents and pupils are rightly proud of this aspect of school life. The headteacher and the governors provide a clear direction to the work of the school ensuring that everyone, including the premises manager, office staff and support staff play an integral part in moving the school forward. The drive to improve standards is fully supported by subject leaders but at the moment they do not all have the time or training to play a rigorous enough part in checking and evaluating work in their areas.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics in Years 1 and 2, with a particular focus on problem solving and investigations.
- Work with parents to improve the attendance of the small number of pupils who do not come to school regularly.
- Involve subject leaders more in improving teaching and learning and raising achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are well above average and achievement is good overall. When children enter the Nursery class, their standards are much lower than those seen in most schools, with particular weaknesses in communication, language and literacy skills. Three quarters, for example, speak little or no English when they arrive. Despite this, secure foundations for learning are laid and children grow quickly in confidence. They make good progress towards the expected learning goals and are well prepared for more formal learning when they enter Year 1.

Standards by Year 2 are below average. The school is working hard to raise attainment in Years 1 and 2 and its actions have begun to bear fruit. The most notable successes have been in writing, where the evidence indicates that standards are likely to improve this year, with a significantly higher proportion of pupils producing work at the expected levels. The pupils' performance in mathematics, however, lags behind that of other subjects. This is because pupils are not given enough opportunities to work on problem solving and investigative activities, particularly in subjects across the curriculum. Progress accelerates in the junior classes, resulting in well above average standards in English, mathematics and science by Year 6. Pupils do particularly well in English. Their progress in this subject is exceptional and is in the top 2% of schools nationally.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, as well as those with English as an additional language, make good progress because they are supported well by teachers and classroom assistants. Pupils who join the school during the school year also achieve well, making similar rates of progress as their classmates. The school sets challenging targets for pupils and these targets are generally met.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They are clearly proud of their school. Children in the Foundation Stage settle quickly and make good strides in their personal, social and emotional development. They develop positive attitudes to their learning, which are subsequently maintained across the school. As a result, they work hard and behave well. Pupils have very good manners. They are keen to take responsibility and contribute well to the school and wider community. Members of the school council are proud that they 'help to make the school better' and point to their achievements, such as the additional play resources and the money raised for charity. The school is working hard with parents to ensure that their children come to school regularly. As a result, attendance has improved, although it remains slightly below average. Too many families, however, take their children away on holiday during term-time.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies are recognised by pupils as important community occasions in which they can celebrate the success of others. They show respect for each others' feelings and different viewpoints. They say that being part of such a diverse community helps them to get to know each other. As one pupil commented, 'It's great to be all mixed up, that's how you make friends. This is a school for everyone'. Pupils participate enthusiastically in sports and show a good understanding of which foods are good for you. The pupils' good basic skills, coupled with their well-developed social skills, prepare them well for the next stage of their education. As one Year 6 pupil said, 'I have thoroughly enjoyed my time in this school and now I am ready to go to secondary school'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. This is a major factor in the pupils' good progress. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is lively and interesting and provides children with good opportunities to acquire essential skills. During the inspection, for example, an effective role play activity helped them to learn how to cross a road safely. Teachers' expectations of work and behaviour

are high and pupils try to live up to these. Teachers make tasks interesting and make imaginative use of resources such as interactive white boards. As a result, pupils enjoy lessons and want to do their best. As one pupil commented, 'I really love this class. I've learned so much this year!' Nevertheless, in a few lessons, teachers do not match work sufficiently to individual pupils' needs and this slows the progress of a few learners.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is planned well to meet the needs of the mixed-age classes and offers a good range of interesting experiences to make learning interesting. The Foundation Stage curriculum covers all areas of learning imaginatively and successfully targets those areas where children need most help. The outdoor area for Nursery and Reception is well used. There is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' speaking, listening and writing skills through initiatives such as the 'Big Writing' scheme. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to improve their numeracy skills in a similar way. Creative links between subjects are emerging but are not yet fully established. The school is now keen to take this work forward by making more use of the school's impressive wild garden as an outdoor classroom.

Pupils are enthusiastic about the good range of extra-curricular clubs and enrichment activities. These include specialist singing lessons throughout the school, the opportunity to learn to dance through the Royal Ballet Company's 'Chance to Dance' scheme and master classes with a local secondary school for pupils in Years 5 and 6.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The pastoral care of the pupils is a strong aspect of the school's work. Teachers are caring and approachable and, as a result, pupils feel safe and secure. Child protection procedures are robust and thorough. The school works effectively with outside agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils are supported well through well-targeted intervention programmes such as play therapy. Well-established systems help pupils, including those who arrive during the school year, to settle quickly.

Procedures for monitoring academic achievement have improved so that it is easier to identify pupils who need extra help or who are at risk of underachieving. Teachers do not yet make consistent enough use of assessment information, however, to set targets and help pupils to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has established a clear educational direction for the school's improvement. She has worked very hard to raise its profile and reputation in the local community. She is well supported by a dedicated and able deputy. The school has good systems for checking how well it is doing and uses them effectively. A good start has been made in raising standards in Key Stage 1, and there is a tangible sense of determination to do better. There has not yet been sufficient time, however, to see the full impact of all the initiatives to raise standards. The pupils' performance in mathematics, for example, still lags behind that in English in Years 1 and 2.

Parents express confidence in the school's work. Governors play an increasingly important role in evaluating the school's work and determining its priorities. They are able to question the school's leadership and show good awareness of its strengths and weaknesses. There are many signs of real improvement and the school is in a good position to build on these. Issues from the last inspection have been tackled well.

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Annex A

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	2
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	2
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	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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	2
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?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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.

Annex A

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

6 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sullivan Primary School, London, SW6 3BN

Thank you very much for your warm welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking with many of you and were particularly impressed with our discussions with the school council and with those of you who showed us your work.

We think that you go to a good school. You behave well, enjoy your lessons and other activities and are very good at taking on responsibility. All your teachers and other staff work really hard to help you concentrate on your learning. You have plenty of opportunities to learn by doing interesting things, not just by listening. All this means you make good progress in your learning, especially in writing. The headteacher and all her staff have worked hard to improve the school. They certainly believe that all of you can achieve well, so it's up to you to keep on proving them right.

To make the school even better, we have asked your teachers to do a few things. A small number of you need to come to school more often. It is important to remember that you should be in school unless you are ill. Work has begun on helping the younger pupils do better in mathematics. We have asked the school to carry on doing this. You can play your part in this by always working as hard as you can. We have also asked your headteacher to find ways of making sure that teachers who are in charge of looking after subjects have more time and training to do this work so that they can help your school get even better.

We hope that you continue to enjoy your time at school and wish you well for the future.

Lynn Bappa Lead Inspector