

# Walnut Tree Walk Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100589
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lambeth
<b>Inspection number</b>	285827
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 March 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Marshall

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	274
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Reen Pilkington
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Jeanne Carabine
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 November 2001
<b>School address</b>	Walnut Tree Walk London SE11 6DS
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7735 1402
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7793 0981

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Walnut Tree Walk is a one and a half form entry school situated in a large Victorian building in the heart of an inner London community. Many different backgrounds and cultures are represented in the school where more than thirty languages are spoken. Over 50% of pupils have English as an additional language - with 28% at an early stage of language acquisition. Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is well below average for their age. An above average number of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. Pupils who join the school in both key stages have often experienced difficulties in other schools or are new to the country.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Walnut Tree Walk is a good school with many outstanding features. One parent summed up the feelings of many by saying, 'It is perhaps a cliché to describe a school as one big happy family, but that is truly what Walnut Tree Walk is; children from a multitude of diverse backgrounds learn to get along happily together and take a pride in their own and each other's achievements. Any child who goes to Walnut Tree Walk has an excellent start in life.'

The reason the school is so successful is due to the excellent leadership of the head teacher, the overall effectiveness of the management and the outstanding quality of pastoral care it provides for its pupils. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is excellent. These young children make a very good start to their education by quickly gaining confidence through high quality investigation work, and letter sounds activities (phonics) that play an important part in their success. From a well below average start in the Foundation Stage, pupils make very good progress and achieve standards in English that are consistently above expected levels for their age by the time they leave the school. Standards in mathematics and science, although improving, are not yet at the same levels.

Teaching and learning are good, and often outstanding. Observations and assessments of what the pupils know and can do in English are collected and shared well. As a result teachers are clear about the most effective ways to ensure that activities planned are interesting, inclusive and enjoyable. The school has implemented new initiatives for mathematics and science to raise standards in these subjects in line with the excellent results in English. Assessment information is used particularly well to ensure that the least able pupils progress very well. This is achieved by providing good quality help from very well qualified teaching assistants. The outstanding support for pupils with English as an additional language and their well considered individual improvement targets and the outstanding support they receive mean they make excellent progress.

All staff strive successfully to provide a superb climate for learning. As a result the standard of pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding and provides a good platform for future learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. A further noteworthy feature is the way in which staff constantly look for ways of motivating pupils through their thoughtful approach to planning the curriculum. The curriculum is exciting, covers all subjects very well and is enhanced by an outstanding range of additional activities.

The head teacher provides first-rate leadership. She is very ably supported by all staff and developments are driven forward at a very good pace. Strengths and weaknesses are speedily identified because the school has excellent systems for monitoring its work. Teamwork is excellent. There is an unremitting drive to improve. There has been very good progress since the school's last inspection, particularly in improving teachers' long-term planning, raising standards and enhancing pupils' use of information and communication technology (ICT). The staff's determination not to rest on their laurels is evident and the school has an excellent capacity to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Match standards in mathematics and science to those achieved in English, and further develop individual targets for pupils in these subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Most children enter the school in the school with standards that are well below expectations for their age. Due to the importance given to developing personal and social skills and the very effective organisation, children settle in quickly and make an outstanding start to their education in the Foundation Stage. They make outstanding progress in all areas of learning. However, from a generally below average start, in Years 1 and 2 the very good emphasis put on developing speaking and listening skills has a positive impact on the standards pupils reach in reading and writing. Overall standards in English are above average. National test results in Year 6 in 2006 were considerably higher in English than other subjects and well above those in similar schools. Although standards in mathematics and science are lower than in English the school has already implemented significant systems to address this imbalance and pupils make good progress from below average on entry to the school to above average by Year 6. The school's rich curriculum adds breadth to pupils' achievements and the quality of their work in music, drama and art is excellent. Pupils also make good use of ICT for research. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress overall. The many pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who do not speak English as their first language receive excellent support and achieve outstandingly well.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' outstanding personal development is based on their exemplary behaviour. The warmth of all relationships in the school allows pupils to admit their difficulties and learn by taking risks. As a result they have affection for their school and feel, 'That our teachers are there for us.' Throughout the school pupils show real enthusiasm for their lessons. Pupils learn to live healthy lifestyles through the very good school meals, and a focus on sports and social activities. Attendance has improved significantly thanks to the diligence and energy of the school staff. Assemblies are very special occasions and give all pupils opportunities to deepen their spiritual and moral understanding. Pupils gain a good insight into other cultures and values. As a parent said, 'The children develop confidence in sharing their differences and turning these into a strength of the school'. Pupils carry out a wide range of responsibilities with pride. The school council is greatly respected and involved in school improvement projects. Equally strong is the sense of involvement pupils feel with the wider community. For example, their work with the local Roots and Shoots organisation enables them to explore and value their own neighbourhood.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers plan very interesting lessons and as a result, pupils thoroughly enjoy learning and work hard. Outstanding relationships between staff and pupils together with teachers' excellent classroom management and questioning skills ensure that pupils have the confidence to inquire and contribute their ideas. Teachers ensure that pupils have maximum opportunities to use their excellent reading skills in all subjects. Staff are working to improve pupils' achievements in mathematics by increasing the opportunities for them to apply their knowledge to everyday situations and by enriching the mathematics curriculum and learning opportunities at school.

Arrangements to ensure pupils are clear about what they need to do next to improve are also under review. The outstanding teaching and learning in English begins in the Foundation Stage and continues through to Year 6. Throughout the school teaching assistants provide good support, so that all pupils can be equally included in activities. The work planned for learning English as an additional language is outstanding because activities and learning materials are specially made by staff for pupils' individual needs.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is very well planned to make learning enjoyable and challenging. In the Foundation Stage, there is a clear focus on providing young children with many opportunities for individual investigation as well as more formal work with adults. The curriculum meets the needs of different groups of learners very well. A good example of how the school raises the skills and self-esteem of different groups, such as boys who have difficulties with writing, is the Engineers Club. Philosophy lessons engage pupils in considering abstract ideas and stimulate all pupils to develop their powers of logic and debate. An excellent range of extra activities helps pupils to achieve well. For example, pupils worked with the 'Young Vic' and the 'Museum of Garden History,' to enrich their English, art and design skills. There is an outstanding focus on pupils' personal development with many pupils taking part in sports, music and drama that have a positive impact upon pupils' fitness, behaviour, attitudes and self-esteem. The quality of arts work is exceptional and allows pupils to develop their imaginations, creativity and confidence.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Children settle very quickly and happily into school when they join the Foundation Stage. All pupils continue to receive excellent pastoral care as they move through the school. Excellent relationships enable pupils to gain confidence, work hard, concentrate well and make good all-round progress. Child protection and health and safety procedures are rigorous. Teachers assess the pupils regularly and use this information to provide good support and guidance to pupils. Overall, pupils are exceptionally clear about how to improve their learning in English. With good support pupils are working towards developing this clarity in mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties receive good support, including excellent links with outside agencies. Exemplary introduction books, which are written in many languages, help pupils who are new to the school to feel welcomed and very well cared for.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Teamwork is of a high quality and everyone plays a valuable part in moving the school forward. The head teacher's leadership is excellent. All staff follow her dynamic lead and are very good role models in their own right, following her example in relating well with all pupils, parents and the local community.

The school's approach to self evaluation is rigorous and accurate. The school improvement plan outlines the right priorities for action and has a clear focus on raising standards. It sensibly identifies support and initiatives from a variety of appropriate sources. The excellent governing

body is involved in this process and they bring a wide range of skills to bear as they act as critical friends, challenging decisions and giving support whenever necessary.

The opinions of parents and pupils are always valued and frequently acted upon. Management at all levels is good with effective systems in place to monitor pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and learning. The assistant head has had a significant role in leading and supporting coordinators in achieving this. Within the school there is a high commitment to include all pupils in all activities and the care and concern for all pupils is high priority. Parents value this and see it as an important feature of the school. The school is excellently placed to continue to build on its successes.

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## Annex A

## 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>
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

19 April 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Walnut Tree Walk Primary School, Walnut Tree Walk, London, SE11 6DS

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school. We enjoyed our time with you and would now like to tell you what we found out about your school. We agree with what you told us - Walnut Tree Walk is a very good school.

We think you all do very well and really try hard at all times. You are all making very good progress and we were very impressed that you knew exactly what to do to be even better in reading and English. We saw that you know you are especially lucky to have so many different activities both during and after school. We also saw how keen you are to take part and how well you behave. Many of you told us how much you enjoy being at school, and how proud you are of what you can do. We are sure that you will continue to try hard so your school can be the fun place that you like and where you can all learn.

Your teachers are always trying to help you do even better in lessons. We have asked them to ensure that the work they set in mathematics and science is challenging and that you know what you need to do to improve.

Finally, we would like to thank you once again for all your help, and we wish you well in the future.

Yours faithfully

David MarshallLead Inspector