



Childeric Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 100675
Local Authority Lewisham
Inspection number 285841
Inspection dates 22–23 November 2006
Reporting inspector Margaret Coussins

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Childeric Road
School category	Community		London
Age range of pupils	3–11		SE14 6DG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8692 3453
Number on roll (school)	329	Fax number	020 8691 4637
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Miss D Griffiths
		Headteacher	Mrs C Hollis
Date of previous school inspection	26 November 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Childeric is a large primary school situated in an area of considerable social disadvantage and has a culturally diverse pupil population. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals and those with learning difficulties or disabilities, is significantly higher than average. A very large majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. Over one quarter of the pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The school is about to move into temporary accommodation during a rebuilding programme.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Childeric is a good school. Pupils enjoy their time here and parents are pleased with what the school offers. The excellent care, guidance and support provided by teachers, support staff and learning mentors develops confidence and self-esteem very successfully and raises pupils often very low expectations of themselves. This contributes very effectively to their good personal development. Everyone benefits from the good relationships and staff provide good, consistent role models to ensure pupils have a good awareness of the need to live healthy lifestyles and stay safe. Teachers keep close track on academic progress and give pupils good pointers for improvement when they mark their work. There are not enough opportunities in lessons for pupils to develop independence by taking responsibility for their learning.

Children start at the school with attainment which is well below that found nationally. They make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage, but teachers' expectations, particularly of the youngest children, are not always high enough and they have too few opportunities to make choices and decisions. Across the school, there are extremely well organised systems in place to help all pupils make progress. By the time they leave the school, standards are below average. They are improving over time and are higher in English than mathematics and science. Many pupils, although reaching a satisfactory level of competence in speaking English, are still developing their understanding of scientific and mathematical technical vocabulary, which contributes to their weaker attainment in those subjects. Good teaching and an interesting curriculum make learning enjoyable and these factors, along with pupils' good attitudes and personal skills, mean pupils achieve well, whatever their starting point or background.

Central to the school's success is the headteacher's outstanding leadership. Together with her deputy and assistant, who form a strong team, there is a very clear view of strengths and weaknesses because of rigorous procedures to find out what the school is doing well and where improvement is needed. The results of their work show that the school has a good capacity to improve further. The school has a very strong commitment to including all children, very ably managed by the deputy and assistant headteachers. The school welcomes pupils who are new to the country many of whom do not speak English. The school celebrates the cultural diversity of its population and successfully maintains a continuity of education for pupils in spite of some having very complex learning needs.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve attainment in mathematics and science by ensuring that pupils learn and understand appropriate technical vocabulary.
- Raise expectations of children's capabilities in the Foundation Stage.
- Ensure pupils of all ages have more opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children start at school in the Nursery with very low attainment, particularly in their language and social skills. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, but standards are still well below expected levels when they move into Year 1. Many pupils join the school in other year groups and have complex learning needs or are new to learning English. By the time they leave in Year 6, standards are below average, but achievement is good given their starting points. Standards in English are better than those in mathematics and science where the pupils' lack of technical language and mental agility with words holds them back. The school has focused on English and as a result exceeded its targets for those reaching the nationally expected Level 4 and seen a big increase in the numbers reaching the higher Level 5. The very successful strategies, which led to improvements in Years 5 and 6, are now effectively reversing the previous underachievement identified by the school in Years 1 to 4 and standards are improving by the end of Year 2. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, those who are learning English as an additional language and those who start at school in different year groups are well supported to enable them to achieve as well as others.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Good teaching and excellent care, guidance and support enable pupils to develop positive attitudes to their learning. They feel safe in school and enjoy being there. As one pupil said, with much agreement from his friends, 'I enjoy school, it's brilliant!' Pupils behave well. They are rapidly and successfully taught to modify any inappropriate behaviour, which helps them do well. Attendance is below average due mainly to families taking extended visits to their home countries. The school does all it can to encourage regular and prompt attendance. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils reflect on their feelings and respect those of others, have a good understanding of other cultures and are gaining an appreciation of the wider world through art, music and drama. Pupils show a good awareness of healthy lifestyles and older pupils participate enthusiastically in the wide range of extra physical activities provided. Pupils value school 'buddies' and 'squaddies' and the work of the school council and these responsibilities are enjoyed and taken seriously. They lack a similar level of responsibility and independence for their learning in lessons. Their attainment in basic skills, including those in information and communication technology (ICT), prepares them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers work hard to pitch work at different levels to ensure that they challenge pupils of all abilities. Their planning is thorough and ensures that this happens. Teaching in the Reception class is good and it is satisfactory in the Nursery where expectations are not always high enough. Teachers' use of interactive whiteboards engages pupils and helps them be more motivated in lessons. Pupils work well in groups with high levels of good support and supervision. However, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to take more responsibility for their own learning, sometimes becoming too dependent on the support they receive. This can slow the pace of learning and the quantity of work children produce. Teachers keep a careful check on the progress pupils make and make sure they know how they can improve their work. Pupils are given many opportunities to develop conversational speaking and listening skills and teachers are good role models.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is broad, balanced and tailored successfully to meet the needs of all pupils. The school has a good personal, social, health and citizenship programme, which contributes well to pupils' personal development and well-being. Provision for ICT and its use in other subjects is satisfactory and has improved since the previous inspection. The planning in the Foundation Stage, particularly for the youngest children, does not always offer enough flexibility for them to choose and make their own decisions. There is a good range of popular, well-attended clubs which broaden pupils' personal experiences and learning, especially in relation to the sports and the arts, although currently there is no provision for pupils in Years 1 and 2. The curriculum is enriched with many visits and visitors to school, opportunities to learn Spanish and residential trips for pupils in Years 5 and 6.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils feel secure and safe in school. They know they can ask adults for help with any problems or concerns. Parents trust the school to take good care of their children. Staff work hard to make sure that pupils benefit as much as possible from their time at school. They know pupils, and their families, very well and work closely with parents, carers and outside agencies to make sure all pupils have good access to the opportunities. Systems for identifying and supporting pupils who are at risk of underachieving, those who have learning difficulties or disabilities or are at an early stage of learning English, are comprehensive and well thought out. Support is carefully targeted to meet individual needs. This often includes helping pupils to improve their personal and social skills so that they make better progress and achieve higher standards

in their academic work. Tracking pupils' progress enables teachers to know exactly how well both individuals, and groups of pupils, are doing and this information is used to provide excellent guidance. The school ensures that pupils and staff work in a safe and healthy environment. Child protection arrangements meet legal requirements.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Since the previous inspection, standards, achievement, teaching, learning and the curriculum have improved. This is a result of the headteacher's outstanding leadership, a strong effective leadership team and the work of the governing body. They have demonstrated that the school is good at evaluating where its strengths lie, knows what needs improving and acts effectively to bring this about. This has been shown in the improvement in English standards. The impact of leadership and management has not been as marked in raising achievement in mathematics and science as it has been in other areas. The ethos of inclusion is subscribed to by all to ensure that all pupils have the similar opportunities, whatever their backgrounds or particular learning needs.

Success is celebrated and the school actively and, sometimes, imaginatively finds ways for all pupils to succeed. Challenging whole school targets are set, tracked and monitored and, if necessary, early intervention or other support is quickly and effectively provided. As a result, pupils who start the school with attainment that is well below average, achieve well in their work and make good gains in their personal development.

The governing body supports the school well and fulfils all its statutory responsibilities. The school has good partnerships with other schools and agencies and the local community, which contribute well to pupils' achievement.

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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	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

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?	1

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

I am writing to let you know how much my colleagues and I enjoyed our visit to your school and what we found out. Thank you all for making us so welcome, for talking to us about your work and telling us what you think about your school.

We found out that yours is a good school and here are the reasons why.

- You achieve well even though some of you find learning quite difficult. You do particularly well in your English lessons.
- Everyone in the school looks after you really well and they help you develop your confidence and the belief that you can succeed in whatever you do.
- Your behaviour is good and although some of you find it hard to control your behaviour, the school helps you do the right things.
- Your headteacher does an excellent job in making your school even better than it is.

There are three things we think could be better.

- Improve your achievement in mathematics and science, so it matches your achievement in English.
- Children in the Foundation Stage could have more opportunities to choose and teachers could expect more from them.
- You could learn to be more responsible and independent in your lessons so you can learn as well on your own as you can when you are with your teachers or teaching assistants.

Thank you again for all your help. I hope the move to the temporary school goes well.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Coussins Lead Inspector