



Eliot Bank Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 100711
Local Authority Lewisham
Inspection number 285853
Inspection dates 16–17 January 2007
Reporting inspector Wendy Simmons

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Thorpewood Avenue
School category	Community		Sydenham
Age range of pupils	3–11		London SE26 4BU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8699 0586
Number on roll (school)	414	Fax number	020 8699 4489
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs A Fahey
		Headteacher	Mrs K Palmer
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2002		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 16–17 January 2007	Inspection number 285853
--------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Eliot Bank is a large, socially and ethnically diverse school. The largest group of pupils is from White British backgrounds. Other large groups include pupils from Black Caribbean and Black African heritages. A high proportion of pupils speak English in addition to their home language, with over 30 different languages represented. Deprivation is greater than found in most schools, although pupils' social backgrounds are very wide-ranging. Mobility is very high. This means that an unusually high number of pupils join and leave the school at intermittent times throughout the school year. Mobility is increasing, largely due to housing needs and the rise in the number of pupils with complex needs. The school has a very high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The school has gained 'Healthy Schools,' 'Arts Mark,' and 'Investors in People,' awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

At the time of the last inspection the school was judged to be very effective. Since then, Eliot Bank has continued to improve and is now an outstanding school. Pupils say, 'We love our school and teachers really look after us.' Parents are supportive of the school and almost all have confidence in its work. Pupils are right to be proud of their school.

Outstanding leadership and management are at the core of this school's success and lead to outstanding achievement overall. The headteacher provides an exceptionally clear direction to the school, so that pupils succeed academically and socially. She is very well supported by her skilled senior management team and governors. Most pupils who stay at the school make very good progress and the school helps pupils who are new to the school to settle in very quickly and achieve well in the time that they are there. From a very low starting point, pupils reach average standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils do especially well at this school because staff assess pupils as individuals; they provide high quality support, an outstanding curriculum and clear guidance about how to improve. As a consequence, pupils' skills build up systematically and quickly.

The outstanding provision in English and exemplary leadership for pupils with learning difficulties contribute much to their very good progress. Teaching and learning are outstanding and mean that pupils enjoy a very high quality all-round education, which prepares them very well for their secondary schools. In the last year, the school has focused well on raising the achievement of higher attaining pupils in mathematics; standards are rising as a result. Leaders are keen to develop teaching and learning in mathematics as, although they are good, they are not as strong as in English.

The outstanding care, support and guidance lead to pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. Pupils grow in confidence and have a strong belief that they can do well. Pupils are enthusiastic learners who behave exceptionally well. They show considerable respect for others. They adopt healthy lives, know how to be safe and make a good contribution to their community. The outstanding partnership with local organisations enlivens pupils' enjoyment of learning, extends their knowledge and has lifted pupils' attendance considerably. These features contribute a great deal to pupils' overall progress. Overall, pupils are very well prepared for their future lives.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics, so that more lessons are outstanding.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Even though considerable numbers of pupils join and leave the school throughout the school year, standards are average overall. Achievement is outstanding. Pupils who have been at the school for a long time make very good progress and their standards

are above the national average. For example, last year 100% gained at least the expected standard and a good proportion of pupils reached even higher results by the end of Year 6. Those who join the school closer to the end of their primary education make good progress academically and, like all pupils, this group make outstanding progress in their personal development.

From an exceptionally low starting point, children make very good progress in the Foundation Stage in their social, language and early counting skills and good progress in other areas. Good progress continues in Years 1 and 2, with standards rising, although these are still below average by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Very good progress continues between Years 3 and 6, lifting standards to average by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science, despite the high mobility. Throughout the school, speaking skills are very well promoted and contribute significantly to pupils' outstanding progress in English. These features also help pupils with learning difficulties and those new to learning English to make outstanding progress. The school has focused on the achievement of the most able learners in the last year, especially as there was some underachievement in mathematics. Overall this group are now making good progress in both English and mathematics. The school has worked successfully to raise the attainment of pupils from Black Caribbean and African backgrounds, so that most reach average standards by the end of Year 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, as evident in their exemplary behaviour which highlights their tolerance, care and empathy for others. As a result, relationships are outstanding.

Pupils attend very well and thoroughly enjoy coming to school. Children make very good progress with their social skills in the Foundation Stage. As they move through the school, pupils take increasing responsibility and work extremely well in groups. They are especially proud of how their views are valued through, 'Pupils' Voice'. Pupils develop high self-esteem and explore their feelings and emotions very well. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about philosophy, explaining why life is not always easy. One pupil commented, 'Along the road to life there are roadworks'. Pupils have a good understanding of anti-bullying, which helps them to be safe in the world around them. They are all becoming fitter even though limited space hampers competitive team sports. Sports trips to 'The David Beckham Centre' and 'Arethusa Centre' enable pupils to work with specialists and develop teamwork.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Pupils are highly motivated and keen to do well because teachers make learning challenging and fun. Teachers have high expectations, very good subject knowledge and plan lessons especially well. Skilful adaptation of activities means that the different needs of all pupils are well met. As a result, pupils make very quick progress. Teaching and learning are consistently at least good at all key stages with many outstanding lessons. Teaching and learning are outstanding in English and for pupils with learning difficulties. Exemplary questioning by teachers extends pupils' speaking skills. High quality visual aids and very attractive displays help pupils to understand new things successfully. Regular praise and outstanding relationships give pupils the confidence to express their opinions. Assistants give invaluable support and computer technology aids learning very well. Teaching and learning in mathematics are good overall and have improved in the last year, but are not yet as strong as in English because fewer lessons are outstanding.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Links between subjects are very well planned, so that learning is enjoyable and meaningful to pupils. The curriculum meets the needs of different groups of learners very well overall. A good range of extra activities, including an excellent range of visits and booster classes, helps pupils to achieve very well. There is an outstanding focus on pupils' personal development. For example, many pupils in Years 3-6, including the gifted and talented pupils, were involved in a superb arts and drama production of 'Eleanor Rigby.' This incorporated writing and research into history while exploring many complex emotions. The school is working to develop this kind of provision for gifted and talented pupils lower down in the school. Outstanding provision in design and technology and art lead to pupils reaching very high standards in these subjects. They develop creative flair and make a significant contribution to the community, for example by producing exhibitions.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils receive excellent care, guidance and support and this helps them to gain confidence and do very well during their time at the school. Child protection and health and safety procedures are very rigorous. The monitoring and assessment of pupils' progress in learning and personal development are excellent. Assessment information is used exceptionally well to provide support and guidance to pupils in how they can improve. This includes the verbal and written marking of pupils' work. Pupils with learning difficulties, receive excellent support from all staff. Outside agencies are used very well to support children who need extra help. There are strong procedures in

place for welcoming the very high number of children who arrive in the school throughout the year.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Very high expectations by all leaders and managers mean that the headteacher's vision of high achievement is fulfilled. She says, 'We can make a difference; our core purpose is raising standards.' All leaders and managers have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas of development that is realised by rigorous and effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating performance. The views of parents and pupils are highly valued.

The school has an outstanding capacity to improve. Since the last inspection, standards, by the end of Year 6, have risen from well below average to average. In the last two years attendance has risen from 91% in 2004 to a current level of 96% due to innovative leadership. For example, leaders contacted local doctors in a drive to reduce sickness notes by showing them how poor attendance leads directly to slow progress and low esteem of pupils. The school's development plan is of very high quality. Currently, the school is actively working to lift the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics, which is already good, so that it is as strong as in English.

Governors provide the headteacher and school with outstanding support. They are very effective in calling the school to account for its actions and carry out their roles and responsibilities conscientiously.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
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

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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?	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

You may remember that three inspectors came to your school recently to find out how well you are doing. Thank you for being so friendly and telling us about your school. We are writing to let you know what we found out.

Your school is outstanding, which means that it does many things exceptionally well and there are not many things to improve. Clearly you enjoy coming to school and like learning. Well done for behaving so well - please keep this up, as it is outstanding! Your teachers give you many exciting activities, which make learning fun and we know that you appreciate this. We especially enjoyed seeing your art and DT work and were impressed by your progress in learning English skills. Outstanding teaching and learning opportunities help you to make very good overall progress. Those of you who find learning difficult are given outstanding support and those who find learning easy make good progress. This means that you reach the standard that we expect by the time you are 11 year olds and some of you reach even higher levels. This is a real achievement, especially as many pupils join and leave the school at different times. Adults take very good care of you and in return you look after each other very well. You do especially well in English because you take part in many activities that help you to discuss your ideas, use new and difficult words and accurately read and write. Philosophy really helps you with this, as do your special productions, such as 'Eleanor Rigby.'

Your headteacher and all of the staff and governors are working amazingly hard for you all to make the school even better. We agree that the following important thing will improve the school even more.

- Make more mathematics lessons outstanding, so that you can make even better progress in this subject.

You can help them with this, by letting them know quickly if you do not understand something in a lesson or if you find the work too easy. Keep up the very good work, especially your excellent attendance. Well done, you are a great credit to your school and your parents! Remember to say thank you to your teachers for all of their hard work.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Simmons Lead inspector