

Turnham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100753
Local Authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	285877
Inspection dates	17–18 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Gulshanbir Kayembe

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	451
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr C Pearce
Headteacher	Miss D M Dance
Date of previous school inspection	28 January 2002
School address	Turnham Road Brockley London SE4 2HH
Telephone number	020 7639 0440
Fax number	020 7635 8034

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Turnham Primary School is located at the heart of an estate in Lewisham. Over four fifths of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and more than a third speak English as an additional language. Only a small number are beginners in English. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is well above average reflecting the high level of deprivation in the local area. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is broadly average but the proportion with statements is below average. Pupils come with a wide range of knowledge and skills when they join the school but their attainment in literacy and numeracy is well below average. The attainment on entry has been declining over recent years. Levels of mobility have increased in recent years and a significant number of pupils join the school at various points throughout Years 3 to 6. After many years of very stable staffing, there has been a higher turnover recently. Most of the teachers joining over the last couple of years are at the start of their teaching careers.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Turnham Primary School is a good school. It provides a warm and welcoming atmosphere for its pupils. There is a good focus on achievement. Consequently, pupils make good progress, including in the Foundation Stage, and achieve well. The good teaching, especially in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2, makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. However, in a minority of lessons, mainly in Years 3 to 6, issues in the pace of teaching, level of challenge and variety of methods used by teachers means pupils do not always work as effectively as they could. In most lessons, pupils work hard in response to high expectations from teachers. They usually achieve the very challenging performance targets set by the school.

Standards in English and mathematics remain below average by the end of Foundation Stage, though pupils achieve broadly average standards in most other areas of learning. Their standards in personal and social development are particularly strong. Standards are average, or close to average, by the end of Year 2 reflecting the very good progress many pupils make from low starting points. Standards by Year 6 are currently average, though they have been higher in the past, reflecting some inconsistencies in teaching. Pupils make best progress in reading where they often exceed national averages. Writing standards are not as high especially by the end of Year 6 though most pupils improve their writing significantly during their time at the school. Many find it difficult to provide detailed explanations when speaking and when writing. Pupils do well in science in Years 1 and 2 but their progress slows across Years 3 to 6 largely because pupils do not make enough progress in investigation work. Hence, standards are below average by Year 6. In both science and writing, lack of skills and confidence to talk through and expand ideas prevents many pupils from reaching higher standards.

The curriculum is good and is particularly strong in provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is outstanding. Overall, pupils' personal development is good. They become responsible and mature by the time they reach Year 6. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and know how to keep themselves and others safe. They enjoy school and show a strong desire to learn and do well. Their good behaviour and attendance reflect this. The good quality of care, guidance and support contributes in no small measure to pupils' strong sense of well-being and happiness at school as well as their good progress. Pupils get on well with one another and make a good contribution to the school and wider community. They are well prepared for the next stage of education.

Leadership and management are good. There is regular checking of the school's work though lesson observations are not closely enough focused on pupils' learning. Nonetheless, the school has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses and knows how to improve. The headteacher provides strong leadership with a clear focus on standards and achievement. One of her key strengths is the ability to identify and tackle issues that are having an adverse impact on pupils' learning. Governors are highly committed to the school and carry out their responsibilities effectively. Thus, the school is well placed to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Teaching and curricular provision are good and parents are involved well in their children's learning. Teachers' detailed and clear planning develops children's skills well. Children get off to a flying start in the Nursery. Here the classroom

is particularly interesting and attractive and children settle quickly into school routines. Many start Reception with improved standards though these are still some way below expectations, especially in language, communication and mathematical development. Most make good progress, although standards attained remain below average by the beginning of Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing by giving pupils more opportunities to explain and talk through their ideas.
- Improve progress and standards in science by improving pupils' investigative skills in Years 3 to 6.
- Ensure that teaching in Years 3 to 6 has a greater impact on pupils' learning by making it more challenging and better paced and involving pupils more actively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are average in English and mathematics by Years 2 and 6. Pupils perform better in reading than writing because many lack the vocabulary to write more fluently. Current standards by Year 6 and the results of the most recent national tests are lower than those of the previous year especially in English, where they are usually above average, and in science. The drop in English is mostly a result of the changing nature of the school's intake, particularly the increase in mobility and higher proportions of pupils with English as an additional language. Changes, and some instability, in staffing have impacted on science where standards are below average because pupils make limited progress in investigative work. Those with English as an additional language do well and, though there are small differences between different ethnic groups, most groups achieve well, especially Black Caribbean pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported and make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' appreciation of Black achievement and their understanding of different cultures are very good indeed. This encourages pupils from very diverse ethnic backgrounds to work and play happily together. Pupils take responsibility willingly as members of the school council or as lunchtime monitors.

Relationships and behaviour in class and around the school are good. Pupils indicate that bullying is not a problem but some say that games in the older pupils' playground are sometimes too boisterous. Pupils enjoy coming to school and value the number of clubs that are provided. Attendance rates are high. Pupils know how to keep safe and successfully adopt healthy lifestyles. With the exception of writing, the development of basic literacy and numeracy skills and pupils' ability to co-operate with each other prepare them well for their future education and beyond. However, some are too passive in their lessons.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching in most lessons is good, especially in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 to 2. Unsatisfactory teaching is rare. Although there is good teaching right across the school, most

of the satisfactory teaching tends to be in Years 3 to 6. Teachers establish good relationships with pupils encouraging them to behave well and work hard. Planning for English and mathematics ensures that work is suitably matched to pupils of differing capabilities. Where teaching is mostly satisfactory, pupils are not always actively enough involved. Pace sometimes slows because tasks are not effectively organised or pupils do not understand what they have to do. Occasionally, tasks lack challenge. Support staff provide good support ensuring that pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities or English as an additional language work well and contribute to lessons. Pupils' work is very thoroughly assessed enabling staff to quickly identify those who need more help. However, marking does not always tell pupils how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well organised. Consequently, pupils have good opportunities to learn in school, after school and through visits and visitors. Good planning in subjects ensures all teachers build new learning on firm foundations. However, investigative work in science is not well developed across Years 3 to 6. Good links are made between English and work in history and geography to enhance pupils' writing. Links between different subjects through themes have begun in Year 1 but overall are at an early stage of development across the school. Cultural diversity is promoted outstandingly well with a very good range of visitors linked with Black achievement. This contributes very effectively to pupils' confidence, self-esteem and mutual respect for one another. The good range of activities outside lessons attracts strong levels of attendance.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are well cared for and looked after. All adults in the school community work consistently to encourage pupils to do well and value their contributions. The school's excellent partnership with parents secures their support exceedingly well. One wrote, 'I have found the school to be a nurturing and encouraging community.' Clear procedures ensure the needs of vulnerable pupils, or those who might be at risk, are met well. Appropriate background checks are made on those working in the school. Strong links with external agencies ensures their input when required. Child protection and health and safety procedures are good, as are procedures for supporting academic progress. The significant amount of assessment information is used well to identify how well pupils are progressing. It is also used effectively to set learning targets. However, many pupils are not sure about their targets or how to use them to improve their work because teachers' marking does not refer to these often enough.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school benefits from the stable and steady leadership provided by the headteacher. Senior staff have clear and well-defined roles, which are geared towards achieving challenging targets for pupil achievement. Managers across the school are effectively involved in checking the quality of the school's work. Weaknesses identified are promptly corrected. The school has effectively tackled the issues arising from the last inspection and is already working on weaknesses in writing and science, identified through accurate evaluations and assessments.

Staff turbulence has had a negative effect on the standards in, and management of, science. The leadership team has acted decisively to secure effective management in this area and weaknesses in science are beginning to be addressed. Governors play an active role in managing the school's finances and premises. Thus, the school is well resourced and in good condition. Support staff make a strong contribution to the school's overall work.

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

27 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Turnham Primary School, London, SE4 2HH

We enjoyed visiting your school very much and particularly enjoyed talking to you, and we would like to thank you for making us feel welcome. The school is providing you with a good quality education. We saw many things that were good, including ways in which you help to make the school a better place.

- You enjoy school and are very keen to do well in your work.
- Children in the Nursery get a great start to their education.
- Teaching is good, enabling you to make good progress and achieve well.
- You develop your personal skills well and leave school as confident and well rounded youngsters.
- The school works outstandingly well with your parents who think very highly of the school.
- Your headteacher works with the staff to make sure that the school is as good as it can be.

There are a few things that could be better. These include:

- helping you to improve the quality of your writing
- making sure that you do enough investigation work in science in Years 3 to 6
- making sure that you are always actively involved in lessons, work at a good pace and are challenged enough, particularly those of you in Years 3 to 6.

You can certainly help by making sure you find out what you need to do to improve your work and achieve your targets as well as by continuing to work hard and enjoying school.

We wish you all well in the future.

Gulshan Kayembe

Lead Inspector