

# Michael Faraday School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100803
<b>Local Authority</b>	Southwark
<b>Inspection number</b>	285885
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christopher Gray

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	329
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Joan Amodio
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Fowler
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 June 2001
<b>School address</b>	Portland Street Walworth London SE17 2HR
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7703 5806
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7252 7663

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is larger than most primaries and serves an area of considerable deprivation. Many more pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds than in most schools, and the proportion of pupils at the early stages of learning English is high. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. Children start school with low levels of skills, especially in personal development and communication. The school holds the Healthy Schools' awards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school of which a parent, with some justification, wrote 'Michael Faraday is the best'. Pupils' achievement is excellent and they reach above average standards by Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. Standards are also above expectations in information and communication technology (ICT), musical performance and art.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding and produces a real sense of community. This was evident in the spirited singing in assembly of the 'Pollution Calypso'. A group of four volunteers then sang it by themselves, and the atmosphere of support and encouragement produced by the way all the others listened was remarkable. Behaviour is excellent and pupils have every reason, and do, feel safe in school. The preparation for future life is exceptional, as shown by their involvement with the architects in planning the school's new buildings.

Children in the Foundation Stage get off to an excellent start. The accommodation is small but excellent use is made of it to produce different learning areas. The support given to the children enables them to settle down and grow in confidence. They make outstanding progress as a result of excellent teaching.

Teaching and the curriculum are outstanding because they appeal to pupils' interests while meeting the needs of all groups. The use of ICT by adults and pupils alike is a real strength. For example, a group of Year 4 pupils took their own model siege weapons to the Tower of London, to test in the moat. Other members of the class filmed the event, which formed part of a multi-media presentation. Pupils script the text for such presentations in literacy lessons and help to edit them subsequently. 'We put in music to give the right atmosphere', one boy said.

Leadership and management are outstanding at every level. This is why the school is so successful, because all adults share in the responsibility. The headteacher's outstanding direction and energy inspire the whole staff to strive for excellence. The school was inspected in the week of the National Curriculum tests; to encourage full attendance and alert minds, staff prepared breakfast for all the Year 6 pupils. This is an example of the outstanding care, guidance and support given to pupils. Governance is outstanding. This is shown by the governors' objective during the forthcoming rebuilding: 'Ensure that core business is not affected by the redevelopment of the school site'. The test of the success of this focuses sharply on pupils' attainment and continued enjoyment of school. This is evidence of the school's outstanding capacity to undertake further improvements.

### What the school should do to improve further

There are no major issues to address because of the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation. The school is to be rebuilt over the next two years and the following is from the current development plan:

- Prepare for the transition to the new buildings.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding. Children start in the nursery with very low skills, knowledge and understanding. A large proportion of them are new to learning English. This means that, despite

rapid progress, standards are below average by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils work hard in Years 1 and 2 and continue to make very good progress, especially pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those with English as an additional language. The proportions of these are high and few pupils receive help with their learning at home, so standards are still below average by Year 2.

As pupils' levels of confidence and English advance, their progress accelerates in Years 3 to 6. Standards by the end of Year 6 are above average, as the expected results of the recent national tests indicate. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make exceptional progress, as shown by the measure of value added by the school, which was in the top 2% nationally last year.

Standards in other subjects are also good. The quality of music in the school was seen in the after-school brass club where about 30 pupils played impressively on a range of instruments, including trombones, trumpets and tenor horns.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils are proud of their school and are impressive ambassadors for it. Their excellent behaviour and good attendance enable them to enjoy learning and make outstanding progress. The youngest children make particularly good progress in personal and social development. This is one of their greatest needs on starting school and they learn to be considerate and well-behaved in work and at play.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils value the backgrounds and beliefs of others and respect their cultures. When asked why this is important, one person said, 'It's a good thing to take an interest in what others think because you would like it if they showed an interest in you'. Another observed that belief could be a good idea 'because it gives you someone to look up to'.

Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles with enthusiasm and are aware of the need for a balanced diet and exercise. Pupils contribute to the school community through the school council and also reach out to the world through effective links with a school in Cape Town.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teaching and learning are outstanding and make a vital contribution to pupils' all-round development. Excellent relationships are evident in all parts of the school and this mutual respect is the foundation of pupils' excellent behaviour. Teachers make very good use of interactive whiteboards and multi-media facilities to make learning come alive. A revision session for the following day's mental mathematics test was enlivened by the use of a video about problem-solving. The marking of pupils' work is thorough and teachers make effective use of evaluating pupils' progress in one lesson in order to plan for their learning in the next. Teaching assistants play an important part in this process.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is innovative, adventurous and highly effective in meeting pupils' needs. The very well planned range of interesting and exciting activities engages pupils very effectively in their learning and promotes great enjoyment of school.

An excellent range of support programmes meets the differing needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are enabled to make outstanding progress because the school makes rigorous evaluations of their language needs. Gifted and talented pupils receive special programmes, as was seen in the intriguing face masks being produced by a group of talented artists.

Provision for the performing arts is outstanding. Pupils are given wonderful opportunities to show and develop their skills and strengths, and they clearly love performing at venues such as the Globe and the Purcell Room.

The extensive range of visits to places of interest, visitors to school and after-school clubs greatly enrich pupils' experiences, enhance their learning and contribute enormously to their personal development.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

All adults in the school enable pupils to thrive in a safe and caring environment. Each pupil is valued as an individual and given the confidence to succeed. Pupils know that they have someone to talk to and that their views are highly valued. Robust procedures for child protection ensure pupils' health and safety. Very thorough attention is paid to catering for pupils' personal needs.

Assessment procedures are very good and teachers make outstanding use of the information to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress. Pupils are encouraged to contribute to this process; as one said: 'If you feel less able about English or maths you can go to the booster group'. Excellent arrangements help parents make informed choices about transition to secondary schools.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher has established a flourishing and justly popular community. She sets high expectations and is an inspiring leader who has the confidence and respect of staff, governors, parents and pupils. The school fosters an open and creative environment where there is an exceptional commitment to valuing every child. There is a strong focus on pupils' personal development as well as their academic achievement. The highly motivated leadership team knows the school well because of the excellent quality of the school's self-evaluation. This very clear vision and sense of direction for improvement is shared with staff and governors and ensures that the school development plan sets appropriately challenging targets for the school's performance. Monitoring systems are highly effective and very good use is made of performance data to accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards. Professional development for staff is equally effective in helping them further their careers.

Governors provide an extremely effective balance of support and challenge to the school. They have a thorough knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school works hard to support and involve parents. Their views and those of the children are highly valued and acted on when deciding priorities for development. The school is very popular with parents. One wrote to say that the school provides 'a perfect foundation for future learning'.

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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	<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>	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

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

<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	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1
<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>	1

<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

25 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Michael Faraday School, London, SE17 2HR

All three inspectors want to thank you for the big welcome you gave us recently and to tell you how much we enjoyed being in your school. When I spoke to you in assembly, I promised to tell you in this letter what we thought of your school: it is outstanding (which is another word for excellent).

I also promised that I would quote in the report some of the things you said and did. I hope the older children might read the report and recognise their own words or actions. Inspectors found your behaviour and attitudes to learning to be outstanding. This is just the recipe for making excellent progress in your work, as you do. You reach good standards in English, mathematics, science, ICT, musical performance and art by the end of Year 6. These were just the subjects we looked at in our two days.

Another ingredient in your success is the excellent teaching you receive. I loved the example you told me of how you used the video of a tag-rugby session to spot how you could play even better.

All the adults care about your present and future development, and your parents agree. Your headteacher is outstanding and all her staff are exceptional in the way they help you grow into responsible and successful people. Because the leaders and governors of the school are so good at planning for the future, there is nothing extra that I have asked them to do. You know that you are to have a new building, because many of you are involved in planning for it. This is what I have asked the adults to concentrate on in the coming years. I know that you and they will want the school to continue to be as strong as it is now. Good luck to you all.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Gray  
Lead inspector