



Alfred Salter Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 100819
Local Authority Southwark
Inspection number 285892
Inspection date 15 January 2007
Reporting inspector Lynn Bappa

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Quebec Way
School category	Community		London
Age range of pupils	3-11		SE16 7LP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02072523676
Number on roll (school)	426	Fax number	02072523835
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs A Ashley
		Headteacher	Mr S Hayter
Date of previous school inspection	12 November 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a large school serving a socially and economically diverse community in Rotherhithe. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. The percentages of pupils from minority ethnic communities and with English as an additional language are higher than average but lower than found in most London schools. Although there are fewer pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities than found in most schools, the proportion with statements of special educational need is very high. These pupils have a wide range of often severe difficulties, including hearing impairment and physical disabilities. Many have speech and communication difficulties.

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. Parents agree and say that the school provides a first-rate start to their children's education. There is a very strong commitment towards making every child feel valued and fully included in every aspect of school life. Staff, parents and pupils are rightly proud of this. As one parent commented, 'This is a wonderful school. Because my children are educated alongside those with disabilities, they have learnt respect for differences and this shows when we take them outside school'.

The environment for pupils is excellent. Classrooms are bright and attractive, and the very well-maintained accommodation and playground provide pupils with very good opportunities to learn and play.

Pupils enter the school with standards that are below average, particularly in communication, language and literacy skills. They get off to a very good start and are well prepared for more formal learning when they enter Year 1. By Year 6, standards are well above average in mathematics and science and above average in English. The school has put into place strategies to improve the pupils' performance in English, with a particular focus on sentence construction and punctuation. Inspection evidence confirms that these are already bearing fruit and that standards in this area are rising. Pupils make good use of 'punctuation pyramids', for example, to check their writing.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding because of the excellent pastoral care provided. They thoroughly enjoy school, attend regularly, behave extremely well and work hard. They have excellent relationships with each other and with staff, and contribute very effectively to the school community. Their extremely positive attitudes are a major factor in the high standards achieved.

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Pupils experience a very good range of interesting activities to help them to learn, including good use of local places of interest. As a result children enjoy their lessons, are very well motivated and work hard. The excellent curriculum makes very good provision for art and music, as well as for basic skills.

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. He works in close partnership with a dedicated and talented leadership team to ensure that pupils develop a deep love of learning and school. In consequence, the pupils' personal development is excellent. A real strength of the school is the high quality of teamwork and commitment which ensures that everyone, including support and premises staff, the lunch time supervisors and office staff play an integral part in moving the school forward.

What the school should do to improve further

Although there are no substantial weaknesses, the inspector agrees with the school that in order to build on its success it should concentrate on:

- implementing current plans to further improve standards in English

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards are well above average and achievement is excellent. Pupils start school with skills that are below what is expected for their age, with particular weaknesses in communication, language and literacy skills. This means that, despite good progress, by the end of the Foundation Stage, pupils reach below expected levels.

Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are just below average by Year 2. Excellent progress throughout the junior classes results in well above average standards in mathematics and science and above average standards in English by Year 6. Pupils do particularly well in science, with almost all attaining above the expected levels and no-one failing to reach them. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, as well as those with English as an additional language, make excellent progress and the school makes sure that these pupils are fully included in every part of life.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils speak with great pride about all the school does for them. Children learn to cooperate with each other in the Foundation Stage and develop positive attitudes to their learning, which are subsequently maintained across the school. A separate 'nursery lunch', for example, helps them to develop their social skills. They sit in small groups to eat, sharing bowls of salad and taking it in turn to act as helpers. Pupils know how to keep safe and willingly ask for help when needed. They are keen to take responsibility and contribute extremely well to the wider community, recently raising £6000 to buy bicycles for girls in Ghana. They are proud to represent their class on the school council and feel their views are listened to. Pupils take part in a good range of activities and clubs. They know the difference between right and wrong and appreciate the wider world of art and music. They participate enthusiastically in sports and show a good understanding of why it is important to take part in them. They can explain which foods are good for you and enjoy the tasty and nutritious meals they eat at lunchtimes. By Year 6, they are lively, thoughtful, responsible and sensitive youngsters, who are very well prepared for secondary school and for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Despite constant difficulties in recruitment, and the employment of many overseas teachers, the quality of teaching remains consistently high and is a credit to both the teachers and to the school. Relationships are good and teachers' expectations of work and behaviour are high. As a result, pupils work hard and behave very well. Teachers work hard to make tasks interesting and pupils really enjoy lessons. As one child commented, with enormous enthusiasm, 'I am such a busy boy!' They take pride in

their accomplishments and those of their classmates. A major contribution to learning is made by the skilled support staff. This is particularly true of those pupils who have statements of special educational need, who are helped sensitively to play a full part in lessons and other activities, and whose progress is much greater than might be expected in light of their difficulties.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum encourages pupils to think for themselves and develop a thirst for learning. It is enhanced by a strong creative element. Some of the results of this can be seen in the impressive range of art work on display. Links between subjects are very well developed. Pupils' understanding of 'green' issues is developed well through use of the school's environment area. There are good links with local secondary schools and special schools. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities. All Year 5 pupils, for example, have specialist samba lessons and there is a well-attended street dancing club. Regular visits provide first hand learning experiences and promote pupils' social development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of pastoral care is excellent and enables pupils to make outstanding progress in their personal development. The school is a very welcoming place for children. It is clear that every child matters at Alfred Salter. The school provides a calm, orderly learning environment where pupils feel valued. The school is rightly proud of its very caring ethos where every pupil is known and treated as an individual. As one parent commented, 'Our children are happy and thriving as well as learning'. The very positive relationships with parents and the good levels of support from outside agencies contribute significantly to pupils' good progress. Vulnerable pupils, including those with disabilities, are very well supported. There are good procedures for child protection. The induction of children into the Foundation Stage is thoughtfully planned, as is the support given to those pupils who arrive later in their education. As a result, children settle quickly.

Academic guidance is very good. Teachers have greatly improved their tracking and assessment procedures so that it is easier to identify pupils who need extra help or who are at risk of underachieving.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding because there is a clear focus on maintaining and improving high standards as well as promoting the personal development and well-being of pupils. The headteacher is very well supported by other staff and parents. The school takes good account of the views of parents, who

particularly value the open and friendly leadership style. The headteacher knows the school very well and this is evident in the high quality of the school's own self-evaluation. This is comprehensive and rigorous, clearly identifying strengths and areas for improvement. There were no issues relating to the last inspection. Governors are supportive and have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The school is in a strong position to continue to improve.

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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?	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	2
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	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

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	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

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

Thank you for your very warm welcome when I visited your school. I particularly enjoyed talking to some of you about your work and being shown how to play a maths computer game by a pupil. Thank you and well done for that!

You all told me how good your school is and I agree. It is outstanding. You make excellent progress because you work very hard. The teaching in your school is excellent and you told me that lessons are fun. The samba lesson in Year 5 certainly looked exciting!

All the staff look after you very well and make sure you are happy and safe. You are lucky to have such an excellent headteacher who is helped by the rest of the staff and governors to make sure that your school always wants to get better. I was very impressed by how well you all get on together and how sensible and friendly you are. The behaviour I saw around the school was excellent.

There is very little that needs to change in your school, but I have agreed with your headteacher that teachers carry on with the plans they have to help you to do even better in writing. You can help them in this by continuing to work hard and help each other.

I hope you all keep on enjoying school and wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Lynn Bappa

Inspector