



The Stepney Greencoat Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 100946
Local Authority Tower Hamlets
Inspection number 285929
Inspection dates 1–2 November 2006
Reporting inspector Malcolm Johnstone

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Norbiton Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Limehouse
Age range of pupils	4–11		London E14 7TF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 7987 3202
Number on roll (school)	180	Fax number	020 7537 1407
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Rev. Chris Burke
		Headteacher	Mrs Vivian Onwubalili
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2002		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 1–2 November 2006	Inspection number 285929
--------------------------	--	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

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 two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is situated in an area with features of social and economic disadvantage. It is smaller than average and over a half of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, mainly of Bangladeshi origin. A high proportion of pupils have English as an additional language. Attainment on entry is below average, although the full ability range is present. The proportion of pupils who have free school meals is well above average. A below average proportion of pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties, although an above average proportion have a statement of special need.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is an improving school that provides a satisfactory quality of education with some good features. It has made good progress over the past two years and there is good capacity for further improvement. The school is at the heart of its community and is highly regarded by most parents. As one parent wrote, 'I am very happy that my son goes to this school. He was immediately made welcome and settled very quickly'.

Pupils' personal development is good. The Christian nature of the school forms the foundation of the good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. The rich cultural diversity of the school population is celebrated and racial harmony figures strongly. Pupils enjoy school and behave well. They speak highly of the good curriculum enrichment activities provided. Pupils develop good attitudes to learning. They have good knowledge of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and how to keep safe.

The headteacher leads the school well. Over the past two years she has ensured that it has made good progress with weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. She has set a clear direction for the school and raised expectations of what might be achieved. Self-evaluation is good and as a result, there is accurate knowledge of where improvement is needed. The headteacher is supported well by governors and staff. A good partnership has been established with parents, other schools and outside agencies and this is helping raise achievement.

Overall, standards have remained broadly average over the past three years despite a number of staff changes. Although pupils' achievement is satisfactory, standards in writing and information and communication technology (ICT) are not high enough. This is despite recent improvements in resources and teachers' knowledge and expertise. The ICT suite is used regularly but classroom computers are underused. Good additional support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and pupils who are the early stages of learning English ensures that they make good progress.

Teaching is satisfactory and improving. This is because of the good teamwork, the shared commitment to professional development and good monitoring of teaching by the headteacher. Whilst good teaching was seen during the inspection, there is still too much that is satisfactory and at these times pupils' progress is not as rapid. Care, guidance and support for pupils is good. Assessment systems are good, although information gained is not always used consistently to challenge the more able pupils. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall but has improved in terms of the outdoor accommodation and curricular planning. Children settle quickly to school routines and enjoy learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing and ICT. Use classroom computers more to develop learning across the curriculum
- Raise the quality of teaching so that a higher percentage is good
- Increase the level of challenge in the work of the more able pupils

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. It is better in science, mathematics and reading than in writing where there is some underachievement. The provision for the more able pupils needs to improve for them to achieve their full potential. Good additional support for pupils with learning difficulties and the pupils from minority ethnic groups who are at the early stages of learning English enables them to make good progress. Pupils in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress, although a significant minority do not reach all the goals set for children when they enter Year 1. This is due to their below average starting point.

Standards are broadly average by the end of Years 2 and 6 and have remained consistent over the past three years. In 2006, more pupils reached the higher levels at the end of Year 2 than in 2005. By the end of Year 6 in 2006, standards in English fell slightly on those attained in 2005, due to weaknesses in writing. The school met its targets for 2005 and 2006 and is on course to achieve its more challenging targets for 2007. Good specialist teaching in music and sport helps pupils achieve well in these areas. Provision in ICT has improved but standards remain below national expectations.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. As a result, pupils behave well and enjoy school. They have good understanding of multi-cultural issues and have good knowledge about other faiths as well as Christianity. Racial harmony is strong, as one pupil said, 'We all get on well together.' Pupils are polite and courteous. On rare occasions when bullying occurs, parents and pupils say it is dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils know the benefits of regular exercise, a good diet and about the dangers of substance abuse. Attendance is broadly average and has improved as a result of good school initiatives. Pupils are prepared satisfactorily for their future economic well being. Good co-operative skills, teamwork and work ethic prepares them well but there are weaknesses in their ICT and writing skills. The school councillors are proud of their contributions to improve the school and have been involved in the launch of a healthy tuck shop.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Most pupils' learning and progress are at least satisfactory and improving. However, there is still not enough good teaching to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress. New staff are settling in well, teamwork is good and a more consistent focus on agreed priorities to improve learning is developing. Typical strengths in the teaching include clear and effective planning, good relationships, sharing of learning

intentions and good use of learning support assistants. Teachers have high expectations and aspirations for the pupils and this is reflected in the pupils' enjoyment of learning and good work ethic. Reading is taught well with key skills being developed progressively from year to year. As a result, pupils make good progress. The teaching of writing is not as strong since there is not the same level of consistency in teaching key skills. Teachers do not use classroom computers enough to support learning and so pupils do not have consistent opportunities to develop their skills.

There has been good overall improvement in assessment procedures, although a lack of consistency in the use of day-to-day assessment results in insufficient challenge for the more able pupils. At these times, they do not achieve their full potential.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad, balanced and meets the needs of most pupils well. It helps pupils achieve well in their personal development and satisfactorily in their academic achievements. It is enhanced by a good range of visits, visitors and an impressive range of after school clubs. These are well supported by outside specialist teachers and include sports and the arts. Themed days, such as a history day, promote pupils' knowledge of other cultures and past historical events well. The Foundation Stage curriculum covers all the areas of learning and there has been significant improvement in the outdoor learning environment which is used increasingly well to stimulate a range of learning. At all stages, teachers plan meaningful links between subjects and these make learning interesting and more exciting for the pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils say there is always someone to talk to if they have any problems or concerns. Good opportunities are provided in personal, social and health education lessons for pupils to share and consider the feelings and thoughts of others. Systems for supporting pupils who have learning difficulties and those at the early stages of learning English are good, well managed and inclusive. A wide range of additional help is targeted where needed. All staff pay good attention to health and safety and regular risk assessments are undertaken. Child protection arrangements are good and the school works well with other agencies to support vulnerable pupils. Academic guidance is mostly good although day-to-day assessment is not used consistently to guide the work of the more able pupils. There are effective partnerships with other local schools to ensure smooth transition of pupils both in and out of the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. In the two years since her appointment, the headteacher has been effective in setting a clear direction for the school and

raising expectations for all pupils. This is reflected in the good school improvement plan which focuses clearly on raising standards. She has managed a period of rapid change well and developed a strong team ethic that has stood firm despite significant staff turnover.

Good use of a range of data has enabled the school to accurately evaluate how well it is doing. Good monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning has brought improvement in for example, planning and assessment and in helping to improve overall standards. However, more needs to be done to raise standards further, particularly in writing and ICT. There is still not enough good teaching and some of the more able pupils should be attaining higher standards. The new deputy and many of the subject leaders are relatively new to their post. Whilst at an early stage, they are beginning to take a more influential part in school development and have a good overview of the strengths and areas for improvement in their subjects.

Under the good leadership of the chair, the governing body has developed its role significantly since the last inspection. It is well organised and supports and challenges the senior leaders. It has a much higher profile in the school. As one pupil commented of the chair, 'he makes sure the headteacher is doing her job'.

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?	3
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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
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

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. It was great to see you in lessons and at playtimes. We enjoyed talking with the school council members and hearing about all the good things you do. We found that your school provides a satisfactory education that is improving. We think that there are lots of good things happening in the school but also there are some important things that could be better.

Your headteacher and all the teachers and classroom helpers care about you and want you to do your best. You tell us that you feel safe in school and you know all about how to stay healthy. We enjoyed the healthy dinners we shared with you. We know that you enjoy all the exciting things that happen in school and many of you say how much you enjoy the after school clubs and special music and sports lessons. You behaved well and were very polite. You all try hard with your work and get on well together. This will help you when you leave school.

Most of you are doing well in most of your school work. We have asked your headteacher to make sure the work is harder for some of you and that all the lessons help you to make good progress. We think your writing could be better and have asked your teachers to help you to improve this. You are now using computers more in the suite and this is helping you reach better standards. We have asked the teachers to let you use the classroom computers more to help you get even better.

Thank you once again for your friendly welcome. We are sure that you can help make your school improve further. We wish you every success for the future.

Malcolm Johnstone

Lead Inspector