



# Cambell Infants' School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 101186  
**Local Authority** Barking and Dagenham  
**Inspection number** 285990  
**Inspection dates** 28 February –1 March 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Charalambos Loizou

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Langley Crescent
<b>School category</b>	Community		Dagenham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7		RM9 6TD
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8270 4602
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	340	<b>Fax number</b>	020 8270 4603
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr R Wake
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Kerry Thomas
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 November 2002		

<b>Age group</b> 3–7	<b>Inspection dates</b> 28 February –1 March 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 285990
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a large infant school serving an area of social and economic disadvantage. The large majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds. Other pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds, the largest group being of Black African heritage. A small but increasing proportion of pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is average, although the proportion that has a statement of special educational need is larger than that of most schools. The school has a part-time Nursery for three-year-olds. The large majority of pupils who leave the school go to the neighbouring junior school. Both schools were inspected at the same time. The headteacher joined the school in September 2006.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Cambell Infant School provides a satisfactory education. Pupils are well behaved and enjoy school. One rightly commented that she 'likes school because everyone is friendly'. There is satisfactory leadership and management. The headteacher has made a good start in identifying key areas for improvement, and recognises that there is still more to do to raise standards. The school has made satisfactory improvements since its last inspection, particularly in raising standards in reading and mathematics but writing standards have not improved.

Achievement is satisfactory. Children start school with low standards. Standards are below average by the end of Year 2 in reading and mathematics but are very low in writing. Too few average and higher ability pupils reach the standards they should in writing. In some lessons there are opportunities for pupils to write independently but this is not consistent and leads to uneven progress.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They learn to accept responsibilities and, as one school councillor said, 'It gives us an opportunity to make the school even better'. Cambell Committee members care for others at break times. There is a good focus on health and fitness with daily fruit eating sessions and a good range of well-attended sports clubs. Pupils learn to respect the environment and their community. Special 'energy watchers' are more than willing to show staff the 'red card' if they leave the lights on in vacant classrooms. Pupils learn about a range of cultures and customs from around the world. There is good racial harmony and pupils show respect for other pupils.

The teaching and curriculum in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory. Good, stimulating teaching in the Foundation Stage enables children in both the Nursery and Reception classes to achieve well. The school's assessment of its effectiveness is mainly accurate although some inaccurate evaluations reflect inconsistencies in monitoring. The headteacher has introduced a cycle of monitoring that has helped to identify the right priorities for improvement, particularly teachers' planning. This has yet to have enough impact as there remain inconsistencies in the way teachers plan tasks for pupils of average and higher ability.

Overall, the care, guidance and support provided for pupils are satisfactory. Pupils are well cared for so they feel safe and trust that adults are there to help them. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. There is very effective help for those who have emotional and communication difficulties or autism. Although the teaching is satisfactory overall, a significant amount is good and enables pupils to develop and improve their reading and mathematics skills. However, assessment is unsatisfactory. The headteacher has introduced new assessment systems but teachers are not using information about the pupils' performance sufficiently to plan work for pupils of different abilities.

Staff and governors know the school's strengths and what needs to be improved. However, monitoring is not sharp enough to ensure consistency in the teaching. Governors provide satisfactory support but have not been fully involved in checking

the performance of the school. The school has satisfactory and improving links with its neighbouring junior school and some governors are common to both schools. The staff work hard to involve and inform parents and this accounts for the high level of satisfaction expressed by parents. The school's capacity to keep on improving is satisfactory.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the teaching of writing to raise standards by the end of Year 2.
- Improve assessment to help teachers plan tasks in lessons that are better matched to the needs of average and higher ability pupils.
- Sharpen the monitoring of teaching, pupils' performance and standards to sustain improvements, and involve governors more in this process.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards by the end of Year 2 are below average and achievement is satisfactory. The large majority of pupils start school with low attainment. Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points. Foundation Stage children do well because they are provided with a stimulating range of activities, including role play, that rapidly develops their speaking, listening and personal skills. By the time they start Year 1, although their standards are still below average, children have made good progress. Throughout the school, writing standards are low and should be higher. There is consistency in the way letter sounds, reading and number skills are taught so pupils make satisfactory progress in reading and mathematics. They make slower progress in writing because early writing skills are not being taught consistently. Consequently, national test results show that too few reach or exceed the standards expected in writing.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well-being are good. Attendance is satisfactory and improving. Pupils are enthusiastic and like their lessons, although some state that lessons are too easy. One child said, 'I like everything about this school, it gives you good brains'. The Cambell Committee members ensure that all pupils have play-pals in the playground. Pupils respect school rules and each other. Behaviour in lessons and in the playground is good and pupils of all abilities and backgrounds work and play co-operatively. They feel safe and secure, 'Teachers look after you'. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of exercise. One commented, 'There are many healthy clubs and in the playground there is lots to do'. Pupils undertake responsibilities that contribute to their future well-being such as the school council executive who lead meetings and take minutes. Pupils write letters to local retailers and receive goods that improve their school environment. This helps to develop a good understanding of how they can contribute to their community.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

The teaching is mainly satisfactory and it is good in the Foundation Stage. However, assessment is not being used to ensure that all pupils reach their targets, particularly in writing. In the Foundation Stage, and in some classes in Years 1 and 2, lessons are stimulating and challenging, and across the school teachers maintain good behaviour. However, some lessons have over-long class discussions and tasks are either too easy or too difficult, which slow pupils' progress. These reflect inconsistencies in teachers' planning. Good teaching has better pace and variety with appropriately challenging tasks for all pupils. This was evident in a Year 1 English lesson where the pupils quickly grasped letter blends and sounds in words to help them spell accurately. In Year 2, good use was made of a traditional story to improve pupils' reading skills, although in many lessons in Years 1 and 2, opportunities are missed to extend pupils' writing skills.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that enables pupils to make adequate progress. Enrichment through a wide range of clubs is good, but there is a lack of educational visits to extend learning beyond the classroom. The curriculum is mainly presented in a manner that is relevant and interesting with a good focus on literature. The provision for literacy and numeracy is satisfactory but there is a lack of focus on the development of basic skills, particularly early writing. In its drive to raise standards the school has trialled new programmes but the planning for these has not been sufficiently adapted to the ability of all pupils. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and design technology is now satisfactory and this represents sound improvement since the last inspection. The curriculum provides a good range of physical education and sports that promotes a healthy lifestyle well.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

Care and personal guidance are good, and academic guidance is satisfactory. Adults in the school have a good knowledge of pupils' personal development, and they respond thoughtfully and sensitively to individual needs. The system for behaviour management is very good, and is applied consistently by all teachers. Child protection arrangements conform fully with legal requirements. Good health and safety routines ensure that pupils are safe and secure in a clean and carefully maintained environment.

The school's new system for tracking pupils' progress, assessing attainment and setting realistic targets, is beginning to raise standards. However, identified strengths and weaknesses are not always used to adapt lesson planning to the needs of all pupils. Teachers' marking is inconsistent, and does not always show pupils how to improve

their work. The progress of higher-attaining pupils is limited because the work provided for them does not always extend their learning. Teaching assistants provide good, focused, support for pupils with learning difficulties, disabilities or vulnerabilities.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has made a good start and developed a sense of shared responsibility and teamwork among the staff. Monitoring has been patchy and has led to inconsistencies in the teaching and in pupils' performance across the school. The headteacher and leadership team have introduced a systematic programme of lesson visits which have led to accurate evaluations of the teaching. They have identified inconsistencies in teachers' planning, and this has helped to identify areas for improvement. Governors are supportive but their monitoring has not been regular or robust enough to fully hold the school to account. New assessment and tracking systems are beginning to identify pupils who are falling behind and this has helped to accelerate their progress in reading and mathematics. Satisfactory links and induction arrangements agreed with the neighbouring junior school help Year 2 pupils when they move to their new school. Surveys of parents' and pupils' views are undertaken and inform development planning priorities. The large majority of parents think well of the school because they feel involved in their children's education.

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## 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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
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	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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 very much for welcoming the inspectors to your school. You were all very friendly and helpful.

Your school is satisfactory.

There are some good things about your school and these are what the inspectors were pleased with most:-

- you are well behaved, polite and try hard and you told us that you enjoy school
- your parents are very pleased with you and your teachers
- the staff take good care of you and make sure you are all safe and happy
- you like to help other children and we were very pleased with the work the school council and the Cambell Committee do. Well done and keep it up
- your headteacher, staff and governors work hard to give you extra things to do after school like sports and games.

I have asked your teachers and governors to:

- help you improve your writing
- make sure that in all lessons your teachers check how well you are doing and give you work that is just right for all of you
- keep checking lessons and your work more often so that your school carries on improving and helps you to do even better.

Thank you all again and I wish you all the very best.

Yours faithfully

Charalambos LoizouLead Inspector