

Coston Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101879
Local Authority	Ealing
Inspection number	286204
Inspection dates	29–30 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Susan Thomas-Pounce

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	453
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Prebendary Neil Richardson
Headteacher	Dr John Loftus
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2002
School address	Oldfield Lane South Greenford UB6 9JU
Telephone number	020 8578 1515
Fax number	020 8813 1103

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Coston Primary is a large community school in an area of high social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is twice the national average. Of the 453 pupils on roll, there are a high and an increasing number of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) at an early stage of speaking English. Pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic groups with 34 different spoken languages represented in the school. Over 16% of pupils are refugees and asylum seekers, and mobility of pupils is high and continuous as a higher than average proportion, enter or leave the school other than at the usual times. There are more pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and pupils with a statement than average. The school has a very good Primary Support Base for statemented pupils aged four to seven who find it difficult to cope with normal classes. The school has the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Healthy Schools accreditation, ICT (information and communication technology) Quality Mark, the Active Mark (Sports Mark) and the Inclusion Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Coston Primary School is a good school where pupils achieve well. Outstanding leadership by the experienced, enthusiastic and well-respected headteacher is a key factor contributing to the school's success. He is well supported by senior staff and subject leaders, who all make a valuable contribution to the school's performance. Very good assessment and tracking of where pupils are in their learning means that the school has a clear overview of individual pupil progress. Outstanding care, guidance and support contribute significantly to pupils' academic and personal development. The school's focus on basic skills and support for pupils who have English as an additional language has a very positive impact on pupils' progress.

Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception but standards are below those typically expected when they start in Year 1 because of their very low starting points. In Years 1 to 6, pupils make good progress because of good teaching and a well-planned curriculum. Effective monitoring of teaching and learning through rigorous performance management for teachers and support staff is improving the consistency of teaching and learning across the school. However, as the school acknowledges, on a very few occasions teachers' planning does not provide adequately for pupils to learn how to be independent in their learning. Also, opportunities for pupils to be involved in assessing their own progress towards meeting their well understood targets are not consistently provided. An innovative approach through the Family Learning project is impacting well on the progress and self esteem of pupils with English as an additional language. Somalian and Polish key workers are contributing a deeper understanding of cultural needs of individual groups, which is helping parents and pupils to be more successful.

Pupils respond to the high expectations of all staff and the very good relationships created lead to consistently good behaviour. The school works well with a range of external agencies to provide well-targeted support for pupils who need extra help, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English.

In this extremely positive school community, all pupils are valued. Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their eager participation in activities and improving attendance. Pupils show a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and how to keep safe. They willingly take on additional responsibilities to help the school and the wider community. Parents hold very positive views about the school and are pleased with the care and the education provided. Typical comments include, 'The children enjoy school, have made significant progress and are reaching their full potential, being safe and secure with very caring and supportive staff'.

The school has focused on raising achievement and standards through the Intensive Support Programmes during the past two years. This action has been successful in improving progress for most pupils. However, the school is not complacent and is aware that there is still more to do because not enough pupils reach the higher levels in English, mathematics and science. The headteacher leads with conviction to raise standards and promote well-being, and has devised very secure management systems to achieve this. As a result of careful self-evaluation, followed by rigorous, but realistic planning the commitment and capacity to continue this progress is good.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Most children enter the Nursery with spoken English, knowledge and skills well below expectations for their age. Although they leave with below expected skills, particularly in writing, achievement for all children is good. Children are well nurtured and cared for in a safe environment. As a result, they behave well and are keen to learn. Pupils with additional needs receive good support, as they are fully included in the activities, use of resources and equipment. Leadership and management are good, staff track children's progress rigorously to ensure that activities are consistently well matched to meet all the children's learning needs.

What the school should do to improve further

- Secure consistently good teaching, particularly by providing the appropriate opportunities to help pupils to become more independent learners, and enable them to assess their own work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Although standards in Year 2 are below average, pupils' achievement is good overall. Pupils build on the good start they receive in the Foundation Stage as they move through Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, achievement and standards have steadily improved. As a result, pupils are now achieving well and standards are broadly average by Year 6 for those who have been in the school from Year 1. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the effective care and support provided. Those at an early stage of learning English are very well provided for. They make good progress in English language acquisition and have full access to the curriculum. The overall trend in improvement is because of rigorous tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress and attainment and the use of challenging targets, good teaching and highly effective leadership. It is particularly noteworthy given the very high percentage of pupils whose first language is not English and the large number of pupils who join the school throughout the year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Attendance is broadly average and the Breakfast Club encourages them to arrive early. Behaviour is good, reflecting the school's regular provision of purposeful activities. Assemblies and discussions enhance pupils' development of positive moral values. Relationships between pupils and staff are very positive, and pupils respond enthusiastically to the caring and friendly atmosphere which makes school an enjoyable experience. Their positive views, and commitment to making the school an even better place for everyone, are reflected in pupils' involvement in the school activities. Pupils feel safe and confident to approach staff to express their concerns such as their views on the quality of school lunches. The school actively promotes healthy lifestyles and pupils fully cooperate. Their participation in a wide range of cultural activities provides valuable opportunities to develop their knowledge of living in a culturally diverse society. Opportunities to contribute to the Blue Peter appeal and Brentside High School's Able Pupil's Project assist the development of pupil's enterprise skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good across the school because rigorous monitoring and intervention actions are challenging learners thinking skills and confidence. Teachers are well supported by good data collection and analysis to inform their future planning. The most successful lessons plan for pupils to respond to a wide range of teaching styles; talking partners, puppets, mind mapping and thinking skills. Pupils have good opportunities to work in teams, which helps to enrich their communication and negotiation skills and influences their future economic well-being. However, occasional lack of suitable opportunities means that some pupils struggle with independent learning. Also the time given for pupils to have responsibility for assessing their work is inconsistent. The materials available to help teachers standardise their work are beginning to have an impact on learning. Classroom support assistants provide very good support to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The school has a good number of assessment strategies in place that are underpinning improvement because teachers, pupils and parents are more engaged in the processes. Reports are clear and helpful and keep parents well informed. 'Working walls' in classrooms celebrate the diversity of cultures in the school community and enable pupils' responses, through post-it messages, to important issues, such as healthy lifestyles, to be valued.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is diverse and encourages good personal development, being carefully adapted for pupils with special educational and language needs. Good monitoring of literacy and mathematics is improving pupils' basic skills as reflected in the school's acquisition of the Basic Skills Award. Teachers are now exploring ways to teach these skills more imaginatively across all subjects. This approach is helping to boost progress by providing opportunities for pupils to write at length and carry out investigations, focusing on their thinking, planning and research skills. This, in turn is planned to lead to more opportunities for pupils to work independently. There has been an increased use of computers and interactive technology to challenge more able pupils and support special educational needs. There are good opportunities for pupils to make lively and creative responses through writing, music, the arts and sport emphasised through effective and well attended extra curricular sport, art and drama. There has been an overwhelming improvement in the quality of the internal and external environment. The new colourful and informative displays of pupils' work, a wildlife area, interesting play spaces and very productive gardening club have had a dramatic impact on pupils' learning and self esteem.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding, significantly impacting on pupils' personal development. Pupils' academic and personal development is monitored thoroughly, resulting in the needs of all pupils being addressed very successfully. Effective action is taken to deal with bullying and pupils know where to go for help. Procedures to ensure pupils' protection and safety are very effective and safeguarding procedures are rigorous; files are secure and well maintained. Excellent developments within the EAL team have launched a Family Learning project, which is having an outstanding impact on pupils and parents from

diverse cultural backgrounds. Pupils at risk are monitored and well supported. As a result, these pupils thrive and make good progress. This is a caring community; one pupil explained 'this is a kind of happy place to be'. Systems for assessing and tracking pupils' attainment and progress are very good. The information gained is used well to plan teaching and to set challenging individual learning targets. Induction arrangements for new pupils are very good. Staff identify quickly, and put in place appropriate support for the growing number of pupils for whom English is an additional language.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management successfully promote effective educational provision and care, which results in positive outcomes for pupils. The headteacher has provided outstanding direction in this school, which was in serious decline. Other responsibilities are effectively shared among the teaching staff who make a good contribution to the leadership of the school. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation by the team has led to accurate identification of the school's needs. Subsequent action has already had a significant impact on raising pupils' standards, enhancing their personal development and improving teaching. Good self-evaluation means that the school knows what it does well and takes effective action to bring about improvements. Leaders are aware that there is more to do to raise achievement and standards and continue to improve the quality of teaching so that it is all consistently as good as the best and meets the needs of individual pupils as well as possible. Good use is made of the local authority's expertise in school improvement issues. Improved achievement and standards, better attendance and pupils' outstanding personal development demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve. The governors have a good understanding of the school's challenging circumstances and its performance. Resources are well managed and are directed towards improvement.

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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	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	2
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	3
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?	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.

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	1
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

12 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Coston Primary School, Greenford, UB6 9JU

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you for making us so welcome in your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and were very impressed by how friendly you are, not only towards us but also towards each other and your teachers. We really enjoyed looking at the beautiful displays of your work in the building. We were impressed with how keen you were to talk to us, telling us how much you enjoy school. We saw how well behaved you are and that pupils in all classes make good progress.

We judge that your school is a good school and that it is improving because of the work the headteacher and other adults in school are doing to improve your learning and to raise standards. You know what your targets are and what you need to do to improve your work. We looked at other parts of school life, including how teachers help you to understand about being healthy. When we asked you about this you knew the importance of the right food and exercise. We agree with you that your headteacher and teachers help you feel safe and secure in school and help you when you have problems.

Most of you attend school regularly and arrive on time so that you do not miss any lessons. This is important as teachers are working hard to improve learning in school so that standards can improve, and they can only do this if you are there.

Even though Coston is a good school, it can do some things better. We have asked your school to try to make sure that all the teaching in your school is as good as the best that we saw. We would also like teachers and the school's leaders to check that the work planned for you helps you all to get good results.

I hope you enjoy the rest of this term as you prepare for all your end of term celebrations.

Susan Thomas-Pounce

Lead Inspector