



Suffolks Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102005
Local Authority Enfield
Inspection number 286241
Inspection dates 11–12 October 2006
Reporting inspector Nick Butt

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Brick Lane
School category	Community		Enfield
Age range of pupils	3–11		EN1 3PU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02088041534
Number on roll (school)	226	Fax number	02088041534
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Peter Drinkwater
		Headteacher	Ms Frances Thompson
Date of previous school inspection	10 March 2003		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	11–12 October 2006	286241

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average-sized school serves an area of socio-economic deprivation. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (41%) is more than double the national average. A higher than usual number of pupils have learning difficulties and statements of special educational need. There are two speech and language resource bases on site. More than a quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language and this proportion is increasing. Around a third of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, the largest being Black African and Caribbean. A growing number of pupils are leaving and joining the school outside normal admissions, almost double the normal pattern.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This rapidly improving school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The headteacher and deputy head are clearly focused on raising standards and achievement, and provide strong leadership. They have taken an innovative and dynamic approach to the challenges the school faces from an increasingly mobile population, and the low standards of children on entry to the Nursery. The well-enriched curriculum means pupils enjoy school and supports their good personal development. One parent commented, 'The children can't wait to get there every morning'.

From very low starting points, pupils reach standards that are well below average, which represents a satisfactory level of achievement. Teaching is satisfactory and ensures that pupils make sound progress. Standards in reading and writing are better than they were because of changes in the way English is taught, with a curriculum more focused on basic skills. As a result, pupils now achieve well in this key area. Similar changes are beginning to make a difference to standards in mathematics and science but this is not yet as pronounced as in English because pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to apply their knowledge in practical ways. The school is adapting to the increasing numbers of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English, but planning does not fully take into account their specific needs.

Children are given a good start in the Nursery and Reception class, enjoying a wide range of exciting and fun experiences to whet their appetites for learning. They achieve well, but do not yet meet the expected learning goals when they enter Year 1. Across the school, pupils are well cared for. The speech and language resource bases provide good support for pupils with statements of special educational need. The school has an inclusive and nurturing ethos that gives pupils confidence and makes them feel secure. Pupils say how much they enjoy school and that they feel safe. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and take plenty of exercise. They are confident and well prepared for lifelong learning.

The leadership team has a good and realistic view of the school's performance, and all staff work very hard to improve it. Effective systems are in place to track and monitor pupils' progress, and identify those who may be falling behind. The governors are very supportive of the school and are beginning to hold it to account more. The determination of senior managers to maintain the momentum of change, supported by the enthusiasm of staff and the encouragement of recent progress in English, make the school well-placed to get even better.

What the school should do to improve further

- * Raise standards in mathematics and science by focusing on pupils' applying their knowledge and understanding in practical ways.
- * Ensure that planning takes into account the needs of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

By the time pupils leave Year 6 standards are below average in English and well below in mathematics and science. More than half of the pupils who left in 2006 joined the school during Years 3 to 6. The achievement of pupils who had spent longer in the school was markedly better and English results rose considerably. Achievement is satisfactory, but in English it is good, because of the highly-structured approach. Pupils generally meet challenging targets. Children make good progress in the Nursery and the Reception classes as a result of a stimulating curriculum and effective teaching. In Year 2 standards are well below average, but improving in reading and writing. The pupils in the speech and language resource bases achieve well because of the good quality support they receive. Pupils do not have enough hands-on experience in science to develop their investigative skills. While problem-solving has been a focus in mathematics, pupils still find it difficult to apply their knowledge. The school has restructured teaching groups in a similar way to English and there are signs that standards are beginning to improve. Pupils at the early stages of learning English achieve less well because lessons are not suitably adapted for their needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

All pupils spend ten minutes each day in rigorous exercise over and above normal lessons. They understand how this contributes to living a healthy lifestyle. Pupils enjoy the new arrangements for smaller English and mathematics groups. One said, 'It helps us learn faster when there's not a lot of people with us'. The enriched curriculum supports pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils show one another respect and cooperate together, having no fear for their safety. New children are made welcome in class, but sometimes cannot participate because planning fails to take into account their developing English language needs. Behaviour is good. Playground buddies are proud of their training and responsibilities, even if demand for their support is sometimes limited. One former buddy commented, 'When no one had problems it used to get boring!' Pupils on the school council have good ideas for improvements, such as thinking of ways to stop balls going over the fence. The school gives pupils a love of learning and fills them with confidence, so that they are ready to move on to their next school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory but with some good features. Good teaching in English has resulted in improved standards, with a positive impact on the progress that the children make and on their good personal development. Teachers break down

the learning into manageable steps and involve pupils well in lessons. One child commented, 'the teachers teach us so we understand'. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils were using notes they had previously made to write a piece about the life of Anne Frank. They knew the characteristics of good biographical writing and were able to apply these to their own work. Lack of pace sometimes causes progress to slow in mathematics and science lessons, and there are few opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge and understanding in practical ways. Teaching assistants provide good support for those pupils with learning difficulties. Lesson planning does not take into account sufficiently the requirements of pupils who are learning English as an additional language.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and is now more innovative and creative. For example, pupils enjoy flexible activity afternoons in small mixed-aged groups, where they learn a wide range of new skills. The English curriculum has been altered radically to suit the needs of pupils and this has resulted in good progress. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well across subjects. In mathematics and science there are too few opportunities for investigative work. There is a good range of visits and visitors. During the inspection, Year 5 and 6 pupils experienced an Ancient Greek day, entering with gusto into the many activities. As one pupil said, 'it makes coming to school fun and exciting because we don't know what we will learn next'.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are supported well in an attractive and inclusive environment. The learning mentor plays an active role in supporting both parents and pupils. Parents greatly appreciate this help. As one said, 'I have found the staff to be very approachable and understanding'. The outstanding level of pastoral care raises pupils' self-esteem, pride and confidence as learners. Staff assess the pupils academic and social progress well, but not all teachers make use of the information sufficiently to target individual needs, especially in the case of those pupils at the early stages of learning English. Although parents are kept well informed about their child's academic and personal development, the individual targets identified are not sharp enough for them to know what to do to help their child at home.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good because of the positive impact leaders have on provision, especially in raising standards in English, and in fostering pupils' good personal development. This is done through an outstanding level of pastoral care, working very closely with parents and devising an effective curriculum that will engage and interest pupils. Whilst the headteacher and deputy head set a very clear lead for

the school, middle managers are also effective in bringing about improvement. Examples are the good provision in the Foundation Stage and in the speech and language resource bases, and the contribution of individual subject leaders in raising achievement in English and in ICT. There is a well-focused plan for future development based on a good understanding of the school's present position. The chairman of governors said, 'there's no complacency here'. Governors understand the challenges the school faces and the steps to secure improvement, but do not always ask the searching questions necessary to be an effective critical friend.

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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?	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	2
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	3

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	2

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?	2
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?	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 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	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

We enjoyed visiting your school and found it to be a satisfactory school that is getting better all the time. The good things about your school are:

- * Your good behaviour and your care and consideration for one another
- * Your English groups, which are helping you to improve your reading and writing
- * The good mix of exciting things you do in school, such as the flexible activity afternoon
- * The way adults look after you so well and make sure you are safe and happy
- * The work of the speech and language resource bases
- * The school is well run by the headteacher and the staff - they have a clear idea about what needs to be done next to improve things even more.

There are more pupils attending your school who are only just learning English. At the moment it is difficult for these pupils to understand what is going on in lessons, and we believe something can be done to make it easier for them. I am sure you make them feel at home and help them whenever you can. So that you can get better results, we also think you should be doing more experiments yourselves in science, and discussing real life problems more in mathematics. You know about these subjects, but you sometimes find it hard to make use of this knowledge, for example in new situations.

Thank you for making us welcome at your school. You and all the staff work together very hard. I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. N. Butt,

Lead Inspector.