



Walker Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102007
Local Authority Enfield
Inspection number 286242
Inspection date 22 February 2007
Reporting inspector Nicola Davies

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Waterfall Road
School category	Community		London
Age range of pupils	4-11		N14 7EG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8886 3904
Number on roll (school)	420	Fax number	020 8882 4406
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs June Keyte
		Headteacher	Mrs Liz Whincop
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This large, popular primary school in North London educates pupils from a very wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. Approximately one third of pupils are bilingual. Local levels of socio-economic deprivation are low and the percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is well below average. In recent years, the school has experienced an increase in the number of pupils at earlier stages of learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities has also increased although overall this remains below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Walker Primary is an outstanding school which has gone from strength to strength since the time of its last inspection. With the able support of her deputy, staff and governors, the outstanding headteacher has forged a range of excellent partnerships to continually evaluate and improve the quality of education the school provides. This outward-looking ethos is of great benefit to pupils. One example is the way the curriculum has been enhanced through links with a host of organisations so that all pupils experience what one parent described as 'a wonderfully rich curriculum'. Another is the way that this inclusive school searches out specialist resources and expertise to help meet the changing needs of its pupils.

Pupils are justifiably very proud of the school and the ways that they contribute to improvements, both at school and further afield. Pupils enthuse about their activities to promote healthy exercise and eating and their work with other schools and international charities. They are equally proud of their environmental activities, whether this be recycling paper, phones and shoes, sitting on the school's travel committee, monitoring litter or planting bulbs to enhance the school's attractive grounds. As one parent commented, 'Children are taught values and are imbued with a sense of responsibility and being part of a bigger picture from the outset'. This contributes to their excellent awareness of issues in the wider world, their growing maturity and their outstanding personal and social development.

Children enter the Foundation Stage with above expected skills for their age. These are developed well through good teaching and the stimulating environment, although independent opportunities for children to learn outdoors are limited. Across the school, pupils' excellent attitudes to learning combined with the consistently good teaching they receive mean that they make outstanding progress. By the time pupils leave for secondary school, standards are exceptionally high.

Pupils' achievement is outstanding and the school pays very careful attention to the individual needs of its pupils. Guidance for pupils on how to improve is excellent and the school's outstanding leadership and management keeps a careful watch on the achievement of individuals and different groups of pupils to identify any changes or differences. For example, the school identified that a few bilingual pupils showed good rather than very good progress in national tests in 2006. It identified that not all staff were fully aware of how they can best help pupils at various stages of learning English in the classroom. A wide ranging plan of action is already underway along with effective ways to measure its success. Such searching self evaluation followed by very effective action has been the hallmark of this school in recent years and explains both its sustained improvement and why it has an outstanding capacity to improve even further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all staff are fully aware of how to meet the particular needs of pupils at various stages of learning English as an additional language.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils make excellent progress throughout the school. Standards at the end of Year 2 are consistently above average and sometimes exceptionally so. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 have been exceptionally high in all subjects for the past five years. A slight dip in results in English in 2005 was traced back to pupils' writing and was quickly rectified by providing additional opportunities for pupils to write at length. In the following year, most pupils achieved at higher levels in English as well as in mathematics and science.

The school's very thorough tracking ensures that individual pupils and groups of pupils make at least good progress and most make excellent progress. Where pupils or groups of pupils appear to be making only good progress, the school intervenes very well to provide additional help or challenge for pupils and extra training or resources for staff. As a result, all pupils do equally well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well being, including the spiritual, social, moral and cultural aspects, is outstanding. As one parent commented, 'Children are very aware of the expectations of them and their role as citizens within the school community'. As a result, attendance is good, behaviour is exemplary and children work together exceptionally well to learn with, and from, each other. This means that even the youngest children develop a strong sense of responsibility and feel confident in explaining their ideas and opinions to others. For example, during the inspection, one four year old patiently explained to others in his class how everyone has the right to make their own choices which are not necessarily the same as other peoples.

These thoughtful attitudes are combined with high levels of commitment to healthy and safe lifestyles. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their sporting activities during and after school as well as the enjoyable ten minutes of daily physical exercise they help to lead. They demonstrate an outstanding regard for the well being and safety of others. They do not tolerate racism and bullying and considerate behaviour is the expectation and the norm.

Pupils wholeheartedly embrace a wide range of opportunities for taking responsibility at school and in the wider world which fosters their excellent understanding of both local and global citizenship. For example, younger pupils campaign about local litter and older pupils regularly organise their own fund raising events for the school's linked charity in Romania. Pupils are well prepared for their future lives, although more opportunities could be provided to enhance their financial and economic understanding.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Consistently good teaching makes a significant contribution to the outstanding progress which pupils make. Pupils and parents comment positively on how well teachers adapt activities and tasks to give individual pupils the right blend of support or challenge from their earliest days in the school. Teachers jointly plan a wide range of stimulating topics and activities which are well matched to pupils' interests and needs. In the Foundation Stage, exciting role play takes place in corners transformed into a vet's surgery or a jungle whilst other children focus on early spelling or finding out about the world. Pupils' attitudes are excellent. In one lesson observed, older pupils couldn't wait to get started on their poems about making the world a better place, enthusiastically suggesting lines such as 'Throw poverty in the bin, destroy the darkness and the sin'.

Good relationships between pupils, class teachers and adults who provide support for particular groups of pupils ensure that the needs of individuals are well met, both within classes and through extra programmes. However, the school has identified that not all staff are fully aware of classroom strategies to help pupils at various stages of learning English as an additional language, for example, by encouraging pupils to work bilingually on occasions.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

As one pupil put it 'Walker School is good because we are always learning new things'. This is because English, mathematics, and information and communication technology are well planned, as are the links between pupils' learning across subjects. Popular themed events such as the recent 'Geography week' excite pupils and stimulate them to produce very good work which is proudly displayed around the school. Pupils benefit greatly from educational trips and visitors such as choirs, opera companies and specialist teachers. The impact of this broad curriculum can be seen in pupils' academic work, in their progress and enthusiasm for creative activities and in their confidence in tackling new tasks. Parents and pupils comment positively on the excellent range of opportunities that pupils have to develop new skills and talents through 'extra' activities which nearly all pupils join.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. The school takes exceptionally good care to protect pupils and caters well for their increasingly diverse needs. This includes extremely good support for pupils who are more vulnerable as well as pupils who are particularly able or talented. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make very good progress due to the high quality of teaching and support

they receive. All pupils have individual targets which they know and understand and the school provides excellent academic guidance and advice to both pupils and parents. As parents note, teachers are 'patient, understanding and genuinely interested' in helping individual children, including those with more complex needs or difficulties. For example, excellent links with a specialist school have helped teachers to provide increasingly well for pupils on the autistic spectrum. Similarly, staff show careful concern for children's emotional well being. The impact of this is illustrated by one parent's tale of how the school has helped her 'very sensitive child' become one 'who looks forward to going to school every day with a bounce in her walk'.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The quality of the school's outstanding leadership and management can be seen in its lack of complacency and genuine enthusiasm for further improvement. As one senior teacher put it 'We always seem to be doing something'. All those involved in the leadership and management of the school have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses because the school has extremely robust procedures for evaluating and improving its work. External partners are used very well to ensure that the school maintains its very high expectations and outcomes. Co-ordinators routinely evaluate and improve the school's work in specific subjects or areas. They link well with the highly professional and experienced governors who frequently and very robustly challenge the school to perform even better.

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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	1
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	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?	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

I really enjoyed meeting and talking to some of you when I inspected your school recently. It was a real pleasure to see your school and to watch you at work. I think I was able to see all of your classes, if only for a short time. I was sorry that I couldn't stay longer to see all of the things you do but I could always look at your great website. I think I must be the only one of your many visitors who doesn't have their picture there doing something interesting!

Your website says that 'there is always something happening at Walker'. After visiting your school I could see that this was true and is one of the reasons why you why you enjoy your school so much and do exceptionally well. Some of the things you told me helped me to make my decision that the activities you do, the way that the school takes care of you and all the people who run the school are outstanding. Your headteacher told me that you are outstanding pupils and I was particularly impressed with how you make things better for other children, not just in your school but in other places too. So well done! You should be just as proud of yourselves as you are of your school as you and your parents play a big part in making the school so successful.

One reason I judged that you go to an outstanding school is that 'there is always something happening' to make the school even better. Your teachers told me that at the moment they are thinking about how they can make the most of all the different languages you speak and how they can best help you if you need to learn even more English when you join the school. I have asked them to carry on with that.

Thank you again for welcoming me and congratulations on your success

With very best wishes

Nicola Davies Lead inspector