

Garfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102629
Local Authority	Merton
Inspection number	286444
Inspection dates	27–28 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Michael Pye

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	259
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Kevin Magee
Headteacher	Mrs Mary McKenna
Date of previous school inspection	19 November 2002
School address	Garfield Road London SW19 8SB
Telephone number	020 8540 1053
Fax number	020 8543 3263

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The pupils in this average sized primary school come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The number of pupils for whom English is an additional language is well above average. The number of pupils entering or leaving the school other than in Years 1 and 6 is above average. There are below average numbers of pupils with learning difficulties, and one pupil has a statement of special educational need. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above what is normally expected. Since the last inspection the school has expanded and it is currently being considered for a possible two-form entry. The school has the Healthy School's award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides pupils with a good standard of education. Parents correctly recognise this, and also comment on the extremely high quality of pupils' personal development and well-being. Working as an effective team the leadership and management of the school have overseen the maintenance of good academic achievement and standards. As one parent commented, 'the headteacher sets and achieves high standards for staff and pupils in terms of behaviour and education'.

Children get a positive start, and make good progress in the Foundation Stage. By the time they enter Year 1 the majority have achieved their early learning goals. Pupils make good progress and by Year 6 are attaining standards that are above the national average.

Consistently good teaching and very positive pupil attitudes are significant factors in explaining the good academic standards. Lessons challenge pupils well and in calm learning environments they are able to concentrate on their studies. Pupils talk about their targets; the school recognises the need for teachers to further encourage pupils to think harder about how to use them to improve their work.

Pupils enjoy school very much, behave extremely well, and react positively to the wide range of learning activities that the school provides. The good curriculum meets the different learning needs of pupils. For example, it makes learning more relevant through making some good links between subjects. Year 5 pupils learn well during the Greek Festival through reading about Greek gods, using probability methods in numeracy to identify the chance of teams winning the Olympics, performing Greek dancing and participating in a mock Olympics. Pupils have an outstanding knowledge about how to stay healthy and safe and contribute extremely well to their community. They are very well prepared for later life through some outstanding economic awareness opportunities, such as in the mini-enterprise project.

The good leadership and management have a clear vision for the school which has been effectively shared. It is an open school which has forged good links with a number of external partners. Whilst monitoring and evaluation systems are in place the information gathered is not collected and analysed systematically enough to maximise the benefit to the school. Governors and parents are very willing supporters of the school, and contribute well to school development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve on a day-to-day basis.
- Make greater use of the information collected by monitoring to ensure that all pupils can achieve as well as they can.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupil achievement is good, and standards are above average. Consistently good teaching and care contribute to children making good progress in the Foundation Stage. They enter with expected levels of skills and knowledge, although less secure in the areas of writing and communication. Pupils continue to make good progress, and by the end of Year 2 attain standards that are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This has been the case

for the past five years. High attainers did particularly well and attained well above the average standards in reading and mathematics in 2006. This includes many pupils for whom English is an additional language.

In the 2006 end of Year 6 assessments pupils in that cohort made satisfactory progress and attained average standards. This was a dip in the previous performance of the school where it had attained above average standards for the previous two years. The cohort had high numbers of pupils who joined the class in later years, together with large numbers of pupils with social, emotional and behavioural problems. In work seen, pupils are making good progress in Years 3 to 6 and are attaining above average standards in English, mathematics and science.

Effective use of assessment enables the early identification of pupils requiring additional support. Consequently those pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress towards their personal goals.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are outstanding and this underpins pupils' good achievement. They thoroughly enjoy school and really appreciate the efforts made to making lessons interesting. As one pupil said, 'The school sparkles with learning'. Relationships at all levels in the school are very strong. Consequently, pupils' behaviour is excellent and there is a strong ethos of caring for each other. Attendance is less good, being only average, though the school works hard to encourage parents to bring their children to school.

Pupils have very good opportunities to take exercise in and out of lessons. Their outstanding knowledge about health is demonstrated by their choice of food on 'Fruity Fridays'. They say that they feel very safe in school, know safety rules and feel that any rare cases of bullying are very quickly resolved. Spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good.

The pupils have good basic skills and their participation in exciting schemes such as the 'micro-society' and mini-enterprise projects enable them to learn about economics and teamwork. This prepares them exceptionally well for their future lives. They have many other very good opportunities to learn how to make a positive contribution to society, and take meaningful decisions in their school and class councils.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are consistently good, and sometimes outstanding. The very positive relationships help build trust and in this environment pupils are willing and eager to become involved and offer their views. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and this is evident in some good questioning techniques that challenge pupils during lessons. Pupils, including those in the early years area, are encouraged to discuss what they are learning with their 'talk partners'. Pace is maintained through the good use of interactive whiteboards. On occasions there are missed opportunities in marking and in discussions to reinforce pupils' understanding and use of targets. The pupils for whom English is an additional language progress well. This results from the good planning of appropriate activities by teachers and the effective use of additional support programmes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good, and the academic standards and achievement of pupils indicates that it meets their academic and pastoral needs from the Foundation Stage onwards. The school is successfully promoting challenge with enjoyment. The pupils said that, 'There are a great variety of subjects and loads of interesting things to do'. Pupils enjoy the many opportunities they have to investigate and solve problems, although the school is acting to further develop this area of its work. The curriculum makes good use of the available time. The theme days and weeks include very good opportunities for the personal development and well-being of pupils, such as the anti-bullying week. The curriculum supports well the messages about staying safe and keeping healthy. The Toothpaste Trial in Year 3 links healthy living to investigation. Pupils also benefit from other very good opportunities such as when they learn French, or when those pupils identified as having gifts and talents attend specialised courses. A good mix of clubs is offered to older pupils, but parents are correct when they say that there are insufficient opportunities for Year 1 and 2 pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good, although the pastoral care of pupils is outstanding. The school places a very strong emphasis on the welfare of pupils and consequently pupils feel safe, enjoy school and get along with each other very well, both in and out of lessons. A pupil commented, 'Teachers are friendly and helpful'. Garfield is a happy and caring school and pupils know who they can turn to if they need help and advice. An example of the care for pupils is the highly effective road safety presentation that benefits well their knowledge and understanding, but also increases their enthusiasm. Induction programmes for pupils are firmly in place. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties receive the support they require. Similarly pupils entering the school other than in Year 1 are carefully assessed and their progress tracked in order that their particular needs are met. Child protection arrangements, risk assessments and health and safety arrangements are fully in place, and staff are given appropriate training. However, some pupils do not clearly understand their academic targets and consequently are unsure about how to use them to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership team has been established very effectively as the school has grown. Together, they drive the school forward, focussing on the attainment of high standards. Middle managers are especially conscientious in identifying areas for improvement and implementing action. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because intervention strategies are very well targeted and managed.

Parents are appreciative of the information that they receive about what their children are learning. School newsletters are informative, but a significant minority of parents felt that communication about whole-school issues could be improved.

The school continues to improve well. There is a good capacity to improve further because the adults work very well as a team and informal communication is very good. Improvement planning

highlights appropriate areas for development and all leaders monitor teaching and pupils' work. However, monitoring information is not collected and analysed systematically enough. As a result school evaluation is a little over generous at times. The school is well supported and challenged by a knowledgeable governing body.

One parent summed up the good overall impact of leadership and management by stating, 'we are extremely happy with our children's experiences and education. They have been well taught and given many good opportunities to grow, mature and develop'.

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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
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	3
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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
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	1

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?	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.

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 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	2
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

16 April 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Garfield Primary School, Garfield Road, London, SW19 8SB

You will remember our visit to your school. We listened carefully to what you told us. We agree with you that your school is good, and feel that the way that it helps you to develop as individuals is very good indeed. You behave extremely well, are polite and get along together really well. As a result, you do well and learn quickly. We agree with you about the teaching you receive. You said that the lessons are fun, because, 'the teachers are good, they get everyone involved and always have a smile on their face.' We liked the way that you have learning targets. We have asked the school to make sure that you all understand them, and use them to improve your work.

The school is well organised by the adults and the school runs smoothly - you feel safe and know that the adults are there to help you. The adults regularly check to make sure that things are happening as well as they could. We have asked that the results of these checks are recorded in a way that makes it easier for the adults to plan for future developments.

You have a very good understanding about how to stay healthy and keep safe, and we particularly liked the way you are prepared for later life. For example, the mini-enterprise activity and Magdalen projects are very good. We also were very pleased at how much you enjoy your schooling. You could help the school even more by making sure that you come to school as much as possible and this would improve the attendance. We liked the good and exciting things that you are asked to do in lessons. You told us how you have to work hard when presented with problems to solve and investigations to carry out. You are keen to help out and accept responsibility. Well done!

I wish you all well for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Michael PyeLead inspector