



Maryland Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102730
Local Authority Newham
Inspection number 286474
Inspection dates 16–17 November 2006
Reporting inspector Vanessa Ward

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Gurney Road
School category	Community		London
Age range of pupils	3–11		E15 1SL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8534 8135
Number on roll (school)	498	Fax number	020 8534 4426
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Graham Plant
		Headteacher	Mrs Lorna Jackson
Date of previous school inspection	11 February 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	16–17 November 2006	286474

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Maryland Primary School is considerably larger than average. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being of Black African heritage. Other groups include pupils with White British, Black Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average. More pupils than usual are at the early stages of learning to speak English. Pupils come from a very wide range of social backgrounds. Substantially more pupils than average are entitled to free school meals. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. More pupils than usual join the school between Years 3 and 6. There has been a high turnover of staff in the past two years, plus several periods of long-term staff absence.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Maryland Primary School is a good school. It provides a good quality of education and has several outstanding features. High levels of care for the pupils and a focus on the individual are central to all that the school does. These qualities contribute to the pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. Pupils say they that 'the teachers make you feel special'. Parents appreciate all that the school provides, commenting that 'We are so happy to have found this school... our children enjoy school and are doing well'.

The headteacher and senior leadership team are well supported by the other staff and the governors. Together they work with tireless determination to improve learning for the pupils. The headteacher's very clear understanding of the changes needed to bring about improvement and raise standards is a key factor in the school's on-going improvement. An initiative to improve writing is proving successful and standards are beginning to rise, but more remains to be done. The school's process for evaluating its strengths and weaknesses, and in planning for school improvement is comprehensive. It successfully involves the staff and governors and seeks and values the views of parents and pupils.

Teaching and learning are good and contribute to the pupils' good achievement. However, there are some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching from class to class. These include differences in teachers' expectations of how much pupils can achieve in a lesson, and in their approaches to stimulate interest and promote good learning. Inevitably, these inconsistencies result in some uneven progress.

Children are given a good start in the Foundation Stage. The school builds well on this, and pupils' achievement is good. Although there have been some fluctuations, there has been a trend of improvement over the past five years. By Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are currently average.

The school makes excellent links with other agencies to promote the pupils' academic development and their well-being. Through participation in the wide range of sporting activities provided, and daily opportunities to eat healthily, the pupils gain excellent knowledge about healthy lifestyles. Their very comprehensive understanding of how to keep safe is constantly being increased, through both the school's curriculum and the very effective procedures for managing behaviour. Pupils thoroughly enjoy taking on extra responsibilities in school and welcome opportunities to help others, both in class and at playtimes. They speak very enthusiastically about community events, such as a Caribbean carnival and a children's parliament.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English throughout the school, with a focus on developing pupils' writing.
- Increase the proportion of good and better teaching, focusing on establishing greater consistency in teaching methods and in expectations of what pupils can achieve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are average. The skills of the children when they enter the Nursery are less well developed than is typical of most three-year-olds. However, in the last couple of years, children have entered the school with better developed skills and, by the end of the Reception year, most have reached the expected goals in all areas of learning. Although an initiative to improve writing has considerably improved standards in English at Year 2 and for more able pupils at Year 6, the school recognises the need to continue with this work. The school's tracking procedures have recently been revised and are being used very effectively to monitor pupils' progress, and to provide additional support where needed. This is currently helping to accelerate the progress of those pupils who fall behind their expected targets. Analysis of data indicates that all groups of pupils make good progress, including those who join the school during Years 3 to 6, and those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Pupils learning English as an additional language sometimes make very good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They care for and value each other and develop a strong sense of right and wrong. Their social skills develop excellently through paired and team work. Pupils are generous of spirit, supporting many local and national charities, and engaging in several recycling projects, including the export of surplus educational resources to a school in Gambia. They have very good understanding of western culture, and of the wide variety of cultures represented in the school.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and their attendance is above average. Most pupils behave very well. They take on responsibility very conscientiously, those in Years 5 and 6 assuming significant whole-school responsibilities. The school council successfully promotes pupils' views, and has been influential in changing lunchtime menus and in selecting playground equipment. However, the council does not have a regular budget, and members have no experience of agenda preparation or of circulating minutes. Pupils feel very safe in school and are confident that any bullying will be quickly resolved. Pupils enjoy a healthy diet in school, and take part very enthusiastically in the many opportunities for sport and exercise. The school's emphasis on computer and social skills and pupils' improving literacy and numeracy skills, prepare them well for life beyond school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Very good relationships boost pupils' confidence and promote self-esteem and successful learning. Discussion in pairs, for example, to re-tell the story of Romeo and Juliet, successfully encouraged discussion and enhanced social development. This style of teaching makes pupils into confident learners and contributes to their good progress. Support staff work well with small groups of pupils, including giving assistance to those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Throughout the school, teachers share the purpose of the lesson with their pupils very effectively. This helps them to know what they are expected to learn and to reflect on their progress at the end of the lesson. However, there are significant variations between classes in teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve, and in approaches to teaching. These include differences in the pace of lessons and the degree of motivation which the teachers provide. Assessment procedures are used to good effect to track pupils' progress and to help plan the next steps in learning for individual pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and is enhanced very effectively by a stimulating range of educational visits and by visitors to the school. Many of these greatly enhance pupils' cultural understanding. The promotion of safe practices and healthy living through the curriculum is outstanding. The curriculum effectively develops pupils' awareness of global and environmental issues. After-school clubs and musical activities enhance the curriculum, although provision is currently restricted by building works. Pupils of all abilities enjoy a full curriculum. In the Nursery, the stimulating curriculum and excellent resources support the children's good progress. The more formal approach currently employed in the Reception classes has been identified for review in order to provide more sparkle and enjoyment to the children's learning. The teachers successfully promote the use of literacy, numeracy and computer skills in different subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care, guidance and support provided by the school is outstanding. Systems for behaviour management have been revised recently and are very effective. Pupils understand what is expected and teachers apply the school's rewards and sanctions consistently well. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language are particularly well supported in both their personal and academic development. All pupils, whenever they are admitted, are enabled to settle quickly into school and to start making good progress. Support for pupils when they prepare to move on to the next stage of their education, is very effective. All aspects of health and safety are very successfully promoted and monitored. The school is working diligently to manage

pupils' safety in the junior playground, which is in urgent need of resurfacing. The academic guidance that the school provides for pupils is outstanding. The school sets targets for pupils, ensures that they understand them and involves them very successfully in reviewing their progress towards them. Pupils work diligently to achieve their targets, often guided by teachers' thoughtful marking.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good and contribute significantly to the good progress made by the pupils. The headteacher has a very clear vision to promote school improvement. Her drive and motivation establish a strong sense of commitment among staff and governors and this is proving successful in promoting improvement. Leadership at all levels is effective in supporting school improvement. Careful consideration has been given to the recently reorganised management structure and the school is rightly evaluating its effectiveness, especially in relation to the management of different subjects. The school acknowledges that more has to be done to improve the quality of teaching in order to raise standards.

Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They provide the headteacher with a good balance of support and challenge.

The school's effectiveness in tackling discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity is good and reflects the high priority it is given. Several of the key issues from the previous inspection are becoming strengths. These, combined with successful initiatives, such as the promotion of healthy lifestyles, indicate that the school is in a strong position to continue its improvement.

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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?	2
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	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?	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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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?	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.

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	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

Thank you for making us feel welcome when we visited Maryland recently. It was very useful to listen to what you had to say about what you enjoy doing.

Your parents and carers think that your school is a good place to be and we agree with them. All of the grown-ups look after you very well indeed. You told us that you enjoy being in school, feel safe there and know that an adult will always help you if you have a problem.

Your teachers give you lots of interesting things to do and you told us how much you enjoy visits and special events. Your results in national tests in English, mathematics and science are getting better and are now similar to those of other children. Your teachers know that you could do even better, especially in writing. We have asked them to continue helping you to improve your writing. All of your teachers continually try to find ways to help you learn better. We have asked them to keep working together so that all of you get the best chance to do really well.

You eat lots of fruit and vegetables in school and are involved in many sports. These things help you to be healthy. You show that you care for each other, and this helps to make your school a happy place. Your playground jobs as 'caps' and 'buddies' are really important and we hope that you will keep doing these jobs well to make sure that everyone has a happy playtime.

Your headteacher, teachers and governors are good at finding ways to improve your school. We know that you will help them as much as you can.

We hope that you will carry on enjoying school and working hard.

Yours sincerely

Vanessa Ward

Lead inspector