

Vicarage Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102762
Local Authority	Newham
Inspection number	286485
Inspection dates	10–11 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Maria Coles

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	621
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Quintin Peppiatt
Headteacher	Mrs Yvonne Ward
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2002
School address	Vicarage Lane London E6 6AD
Telephone number	020 8472 0674
Fax number	020 8470 6684

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Vicarage is a larger than average school located in an area of significant social deprivation. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is much higher than the national average. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds including large numbers with Bangladeshi and British/Black African heritage. Most pupils speak English as an additional language with many at the early stages of English acquisition. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is high. High numbers of pupils leave or join the school mid term. The headteacher and senior leadership team have been in post for two and a half years. Problems with the recruitment and retention of permanent staff have presented the school with many challenges. The school has a full complement of permanent staff for the first time in a number of years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Vicarage is a satisfactory and improving school. Sound leadership from the headteacher, senior leadership team and the governing body has been successful in laying the foundations on which to build future improvements. The leadership skills of newly appointed middle managers have not yet been developed sufficiently to enable them to demonstrate improvement within their year groups and subjects. The school has been successful in working with the vast majority of parents, who give it their overwhelming support. One parent stated, 'Throughout the last few years, the school has improved in many different ways. The changes have been excellent.'

The school works well with parents, the community and external agencies and this contributes positively to pupils' good personal and social development. Pupils are happy, feel safe and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. They like their school and think it is a good place to work and play. They demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour has improved because teachers have high expectations of how pupils should conduct themselves. The result is that children now listen to adults, to each other and are ready to learn. The number of pupils attending school regularly, a key issue in the last inspection, has improved dramatically due to very effective strategies, so that attendance is now in line with national averages.

The levels of care, guidance and support for pupils are good overall. The school has worked with some success to establish effective support and pastoral care systems for all including those with profound learning needs. It has worked hard to establish good links with families and carers and, as a result, more parents are attending consultation evenings and workshops. Academic guidance at whole school level is good as senior leaders are now use data more effectively to track pupils' progress. Day-to-day assessment and marking still lack the consistency to improve learning over time.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are average overall. When children start school, their attainment is well below that of a typical three-year-old and many enter school with little or no English. Good teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes means that most children make good progress by the age of five. In Years 1 to 6, the school has been working hard to raise standards by monitoring pupils' progress closely and setting challenging targets, so that more pupils are now making satisfactory progress. Standards by Year 6 remain below average in English and in line with national averages for mathematics and science. Progress is not yet good overall because of the legacy of underachievement and inadequate teaching in the past.

Teaching is satisfactory. However, this has not been the case over time. Where teachers match work well to pupils' abilities, teaching is good and progress is accelerated. Teaching assistants work well with teachers to provide good levels of support for targeted groups of pupils in these lessons. However, teaching presents an inconsistent picture across the school. Support and mentoring for inexperienced or new teachers to the school are beginning to address this.

The curriculum is satisfactory overall with enrichment and extended schools activities being particularly strong features. The school has prioritised the development of the curriculum to meet pupils' needs. The emphasis on teaching phonics and literacy in Years 1 and 2 is, quite rightly, seen as the way forward to pupils' accessing the rest of the curriculum.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The children in the Nursery and the Reception classes have a very positive start to school life because of good, enthusiastic and committed teaching, and an exciting, relevant curriculum. The sessions are well planned, challenge the children and promote the enjoyment of learning. The children's achievements are meticulously recorded and well matched to national criteria. The children are well cared for. The leadership is good with an accurate understanding of areas to improve. Parents are very happy with their children's progress and feel that the Early Years classes in the school are a good place for their children to begin their learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching in order to raise standards in English for all learners.
- Develop the use and consistency of teachers' marking and assessments so that work is more closely matched to all pupils' needs.
- Develop the leadership and management roles of year and subject leaders.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children join the school in Nursery with skills which are well below average in all areas of learning. Their ability to communicate is particularly low. Many have little or no English. The consistently good and appropriate teaching and curriculum in Early Years ensure that most children make good progress. By the end of their Reception year, a growing number are reaching standards within the national expectations for five year olds. In Years 1 and 2, there has been underachievement in reading, writing and mathematics in the past. Nevertheless, this has begun to improve in the past year. All pupils are now making satisfactory progress because of improvements in teaching and provision and are beginning to reach standards in line with national averages. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are making satisfactory progress in line with their abilities. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make satisfactory progress but standards are below average in English because of their low starting points and poor teaching in the past. The large numbers of pupils for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress in their acquisition of English.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They demonstrate great respect for one another's faith. They work together well in class and play harmoniously together, with older children supporting the younger ones well. The behaviour of the pupils around the school and in classes is good. This is because of the good support the children receive from staff. There is an active school council who take their role and responsibilities very seriously. They feel that their suggestions are listened to and acted on by staff. For example, the pupils now have many playground games. The attendance of pupils has improved since the last inspection and is now in line with national averages. Pupils are enthusiastic, keen to come to school because

'lessons are fun and we have lots of after-school clubs'. The pupils make a good contribution to their community through sporting activities and raising funds for charities. They are fully aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles and try their best to act on the guidance given. Pupils' are increasingly acquiring the basic skills they need for a life of learning as their achievement is improving.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The school is realistic in its judgement that teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, enabling pupils to make satisfactory progress. Some good and better teaching was observed in all year groups. Teaching is improving, but good teaching is not sufficiently widespread to support more rapid progress. A good variety of activities caters for different pupil learning styles and abilities. Teachers structure the learning well to make tasks relevant to pupils' real lives and capture their interest such as in a Year 5 mathematics lesson involved calculating depreciation of car values over time. Pupils in these lessons remain focused, behave well and their progress is accelerated. Where teaching has not matched work well to pupils' abilities, they lose interest in the lesson and become restless. Teachers' day-to-day use of assessment for learning is improving but is not yet consistent and therefore is not having sufficient impact on pupils' progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is still being developed to match the range of pupils' needs in the school. There is a strong and appropriate emphasis for developing literacy and numeracy skills, which is making a difference to pupils' learning but has not yet demonstrated sustained benefits over time. A comprehensive programme of personal health and social activities contributes well to pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles, as does the wide range of after-school sporting activities in the school's new sports hall. The school provides many opportunities to enrich pupils' learning through instrumental tuition, visits and visitors.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Staff are vigilant in ensuring pupils' safety and this contributes to their feelings of security and their readiness to learn. The school works well with parents as well as a variety of external agencies to support all children including those most at risk. The learning mentor and behaviour support assistant's pastoral guidance and support are outstanding. Systems for tracking pupils' achievements are improving and are particularly effective at whole-school level. Assessment on a day-to-day level in terms of teachers' marking is still undeveloped across the whole school. It does not inform pupils about their current achievements and does not tell them what they have to do next to improve. The school has worked successfully with pupils and their families in conveying the importance of regular attendance and punctuality as a life skill.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership of the headteacher and senior leadership team (SLT) is strong. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the school very well. Under their leadership, much has been undertaken to improve learning opportunities for pupils including improvements in the use of pupil data extensive improvements to playgrounds and a new computer suite.

Performance data is now being used more effectively to track the progress of pupils over time. This information is used well at a school level to set challenging targets for improvement for year and class groups. The inspection team and SLT agree that although most initiatives have been implemented successfully, they have not yet demonstrated sustained impact on pupils' outcomes over time. The role of other leaders is still at the early stages of development and has not yet had an impact on raising standards. Governors demonstrate a great deal of commitment and range of expertise in their support for the school but do not yet hold school leaders sufficiently to account for its standards and achievements. The school therefore has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

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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?	3
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	3

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 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	3

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?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

19 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Vicarage Primary School, London, E6 6AD

Thank you for making us all feel so welcome during our recent visit. We were pleased to see and hear how proud you were of your school. We thought that you were all very polite and friendly and we were impressed with how well you behaved and listened to your teachers in lessons. We are glad that so many of you are now coming to school every day. We think that your school is a happy, calm and safe place to be. We agree with many of your parents that the school is well led and managed by your headteacher. We know that some of you have not always had the same teacher for a whole year and that has made your learning difficult. However, the headteacher at last has a permanent team of teachers to help you. We think that the school is providing you with a satisfactory education and that it is improving.

There are some things we think could be better, so we have asked staff:

- to do more to raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics
- to use their assessments and marking to check your progress and help you to improve your work
- to make sure that their teaching gives you work that is not too hard and not too easy and helps you to learn more quickly.

We think that you can play your part in helping your school to improve by continuing to work well with your classmates, listening to your teachers and trying as hard as you can in all your lessons.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Maria Coles Lead Inspector