



The New North Community School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 134413
Local Authority Islington
Inspection number 294132
Inspection dates 6–7 February 2007
Reporting inspector Margaret Coussins

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

The inspection of the day care was carried out under Children Act 1989: Part XA (as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000) and, where (funded) nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Ecclesbourne Road
School category	Community		Islington
Age range of pupils	3–11		London N1 3AG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 7226 6696
Number on roll (school)	397	Fax number	020 7359 8106
Number on roll (day care)	32	Chair	Mr David Hankins
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Headteacher	Ms Mary McStay
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected		
Date of previous day care inspection	1 January 1970		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	6–7 February 2007	294132

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school was established in September 2004 as a result of the closure of two local schools. It serves an area of very high social and economic disadvantage. The proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals, those from ethnic minority groups and those who speak English as an additional language are much higher than average. Around one quarter of all the pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The percentages of pupils who are refugees and asylum seekers and those with learning difficulties or disabilities are much higher than found nationally. The school is temporarily housed in one of the former school sites and will shortly be moving into a new building. The school provides out-of-school day care for its pupils and when in the new building will be a full service extended school with an integrated children's centre

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The New North Community Primary is a good school with some outstanding features. The headteacher and the senior leaders, who form a dedicated and talented team, drive the school forward through their highly effective leadership. The outstanding care, guidance and support provided by the school very successfully develop pupils' confidence and self-esteem and raise their often very low expectations of themselves. This contributes very effectively to their good personal development. Pupils want to do well and are proud of their good achievements. Attendance is a little below the national average. The school is working well to promote regular attendance and it is improving, but needs to be better. The school is a safe and welcoming place for children and their families and provides good support to ensure that everyone is included in the life of the school whatever their background or needs.

Central to the success of the school is the rapid pace of improvement driven by the headteacher. The school has established its own identity, a united and hard working team of staff and a shared vision for the future. Pupils feel part of a community and know they have a part to play. One Year 6 boy said, 'We know we have to work harder, but now we know we can.'

Children start at the school with attainment which is well below that expected for their age. They get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage because of good provision from an enthusiastic and knowledgeable team. Standards in English, mathematics and science are below average. However, standards are improving and pupils' achievement is good given their starting points. The work seen by the inspectors shows that most are making good progress and overcoming a previous history of underachievement. This is as a result of good teaching and a good, imaginative curriculum, which meets the needs of pupils of all abilities well including those who are learning English as an additional language. Progress is slower when teaching is not as confident or challenging, particularly in Years 3 and 4 and for some more able pupils.

The school has outstanding procedures to find out what it is doing well and where improvement is needed and takes very effective action to deal with any weaknesses. This has been shown, for example, in the successful steps taken to improve behaviour, achievement, teaching and learning. These positive results demonstrate that the school has an outstanding capacity for further improvement. The school is at an exciting stage of transition and is carefully and sensitively preparing the school community for the move to its new building whilst maintaining its drive to improve standards.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by ensuring that the quality of all teaching and learning is in line with the best.
- Ensure consistently high expectations amongst all staff for the achievement of more able pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children begin school with skills that are well below the early learning goals for children of their age, particularly in language and personal and social skills. Good provision and a strong focus on speaking and listening and personal skills result in satisfactory progress although standards are below average by the time children start in Year 1. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 standards remain below average, but pupils' progress is good. In this comparatively new school it is not possible to track pupils' progress over the long term. However, the very thorough analysis of assessment data and pupils' current work confirms their good achievement. The level of challenge for some of the more able pupils is not always high enough and as a result they do not consistently make as much progress as they could. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who are learning English as an additional language are well supported to enable them to achieve as well as others.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and reinforced by staff, who provide positive role models. This contributes well to the children's developing confidence, independence and positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils enjoy all aspects of school and behaviour is good. Many pupils said, 'The school is great because the teachers help us and it's fun.' Attendance is improving because of the rigorous and imaginative methods the school uses to encourage punctuality and regular attendance such as providing all pupils with alarm clocks and daily reward stickers. Pupils feel secure and safe in school and confident that there is someone to talk to should the need arise. Pupils have a good understanding of the need for healthy lifestyles including healthy eating. One child said, 'Chocolate is nice but it's not as nice as broccoli which keeps you fit and gives you lots of energy.' Pupils enjoy their responsibilities as support officers and school councillors and feel that their voice is heard and that they can make a difference. Pupils participate in many local community events and are involved in the development of the Dibden Triangle green space on the site of their new school. Pupils' basic skills are a satisfactory preparation for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers work hard to pitch work at different levels to ensure that they challenge pupils of all abilities. On occasion the level of challenge is not high enough for more able pupils. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. Pupils meet teachers' high expectations of behaviour and are developing a

good work ethic and positive attitudes to their learning. These qualities help them do well. Resources, including support given by teaching assistants, are used well to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils' ability to work well together supports their good achievement. One child said, 'If I don't know, I can ask my friend and she tells me.' Teachers are skilled in asking good questions which encourage pupils to think for themselves. A careful check is kept on the progress pupils make.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides a range of interesting learning opportunities that motivate and interest the pupils. The school has a good personal, social and health education programme, which contributes well to pupils' personal development and well-being. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is good and pupils benefit from the skills of a specialist teacher. Teachers are beginning to develop links between subjects but this is at an early stage of development. There is a good range of clubs which broaden pupils' personal experiences and learning. As one child said, 'The clubs are great and we go on super visits too.' The curriculum is enriched with many visits and visitors to school. Good links with outside agencies such as the Sadler's Wells Boys' Dance Club and Arsenal Football Club also encourage an interest in a healthy and active lifestyle.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Arrangements for safeguarding children are very effective. Risk assessments are robust and child protection procedures are well established and rigorous. The care is extended beyond the school day for pupils and includes support for their families. Systems for identifying and supporting pupils who are at risk of underachieving, those who have learning difficulties or disabilities or other specific needs are comprehensive and well thought out. Support is carefully targeted to meet individual needs. Support officers help ensure harmonious playtimes. Tracking pupils' progress enables teachers to know exactly how well both individuals and groups of pupils are doing and this information is used to provide excellent guidance. Pupils know their own targets for learning and develop skills to evaluate their progress towards achieving them. The school makes very good links with outside agencies to provide the necessary support for pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. All aspects of the school are evaluated regularly including the many intervention programmes and initiatives to raise standards, which are managed very well and embedded into the curriculum. The views and needs of staff, parents and pupils are taken into account. The recently established curriculum and leadership teams are working effectively to improve progress but the impact on standards has yet to be seen. Challenging whole school targets are set, tracked and

monitored and, if necessary, early intervention or other support is quickly and effectively provided. As a result, pupils who start the school with attainment that is well below average achieve well in their work and make good gains in their personal development. The governing body supports the school well and fulfils all its statutory responsibilities. The school has good partnerships with other schools and agencies, the local community and the local authority, which contribute well to pupils' achievement.

Effectiveness of registered day care

Grade: 2

The quality and effectiveness of out-of-school day care at New North Community School are good, with a number of excellent features. It meets all national standards. Procedures and routines are well established and effective and clearly understood by the children who attend. Children are cared for in a safe and caring environment.

Staff create a welcoming, relaxed atmosphere that means children settle quickly and interact well. Children of different ages mix well and are caring towards each other, for example an older child serving fruit to younger children. The integration of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is excellent and all children are fully involved in the interesting activities which are on offer.

Children are very well behaved and relationships are excellent. Children care for each other, form strong friendships and play happily together. They really enjoy their time in the 'after smarter club.' Resources are excellent and thoroughly enjoyed by the children. As one boy commented, 'I love coming to after smarter club because I can play with the lego.' The children are aware of healthy eating and snack times provide good opportunities for them to learn about healthy eating choices. An excellent touch is the way children select their own cutlery for their hot snacks, and clear away after themselves. This gives them independent choice and the ability for all cultures and disabilities to be fully integrated and catered for.

Parents and carers are kept informed of what is happening and are regularly consulted about what they would like for their children in the out-of-school care. Children's views are also sought and this is very good practice. The management team is fully aware and vigilant about health and safety. Accident forms are shared with parents or carers; however, parents do not sign to acknowledge they have seen them. Registration forms contain all relevant details but parental consent for emergency medical advice or treatment if necessary is not sought.

Risk assessments are rigorous to ensure that the children learn and play in safe and secure environment. All child protection arrangements are fully in place. There is a robust and secure system of registration and collection of children. Fire drills are established.

Recommendations or actions to improve the registered day care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take into account the following recommendations:

- ensure that accident forms when seen are signed by parents/carers
- obtain written parental consent for emergency medical advice or treatment if necessary.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA

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?	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	3

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	1
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

The effectiveness of the registered day care

The quality and standards of the registered day care	2
How effective is the day care in helping children to be healthy?	2
How effective is the day care in protecting children and helping them to stay safe?	1
How effective is the day care in helping children to achieve and enjoy their learning?	1
How effective is the day care in helping children to make a positive contribution?	1
How effectively is the day care organised?	2
Does the day care meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides?	Yes
Has the day care improved since the last inspection?	NA
Does the day care require enforcement action?	No
Does the day care require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to let you know how much my colleagues and I enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you all for making us so welcome and for helping us by talking about your work and telling us what you like about your school.

We think that yours is a good school and these are the reasons why.

- Everyone in the school takes excellent care of you and helps you develop your confidence and the belief that you can succeed in whatever you do.
- You enjoy coming to school. Teachers make sure you learn exciting things in your lessons and you told us that you think your lessons are fun.
- Your teachers help you achieve well even though some of you find learning quite difficult.
- Your headteacher is doing an excellent job in making your school even better than it is.

These are the things we think could be improved.

- The standards of your work in English, mathematics and science could be higher.
- You are doing well but some of you could do even better if your teachers gave you more challenging work.

Thank you again for all your help. I hope the move to the new school goes well and you enjoy being in such an exciting new building.

Yours sincerely

Margaret CoussinsLead inspector