



Nightingale Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 100254
Local Authority Hackney
Inspection number 295297
Inspection dates 14–15 February 2007
Reporting inspector Nick Butt

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Rendlesham Road
School category	Community		Hackney
Age range of pupils	3–11		London E5 8PH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8985 4259
Number on roll (school)	230	Fax number	020 8533 6449
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Ms Maria Bishop
		Headteacher	Mrs Catrina Tilbury
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2005		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–11	14–15 February 2007	295297

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average-sized primary school serves an inner city area where a substantial number of homes are severely disadvantaged. Almost two thirds of pupils are entitled to free school meals, a very high proportion. Nine out of ten pupils are from minority ethnic groups, the largest being Black African and Black Caribbean. One tenth of pupils are Travellers. A large number of pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is above average. Many pupils join and leave the school outside normal times. A new headteacher took up post in September 2006 following a long period during which the school was run by acting headteachers.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This improving school provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. Under the good leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy head, the staff are fully committed to raising standards and achievement. Achievement is now satisfactory overall, and pupils achieve well in reading and writing. This is because of an intensive programme that focuses on teaching the basic skills and very carefully tracks the progress of each child, so that no one slips through the net. Pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics and science, but do not always understand specialist vocabulary and have limited opportunities to investigate their ideas. Standards are rising, but are still exceptionally low. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, with some good teaching in the Reception class.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection, and there is now no inadequate teaching. About two thirds of lessons are good, but this is not consistent across the school. Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to learning. They really enjoy school, and appreciate the support of staff. One pupil commented, 'The teachers help us when we need help and they listen to whatever we say.' Pupils feel safe at school, and are confident about turning to adults if they have a problem. Pupils are well supported as they transfer to secondary school, and their improving basic skills mean they are now better equipped for a life of learning.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new headteacher has motivated the school community and raised morale. She has organised staff into teams, who are involved in evaluating the quality of the school's work and contribute to strategic plans. In this way, the leadership team has an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Monitoring of teaching takes place, but is not sufficiently rigorous or focused on bringing teaching up to a consistently good standard where it is currently satisfactory. Governors are more involved in school life and are more effective in checking its performance. However, they have not appointed an Educational Visits Coordinator or ensured that risk assessments are undertaken for all school trips. The school has made encouraging progress since its last inspection and is suitably placed to continue to improve. In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement in mathematics and science by ensuring that pupils understand key vocabulary and develop their investigative skills.
- Make teaching consistently good through rigorous monitoring and support where it is weaker.
- Appoint an Educational Visits Coordinator to make sure that risk assessments for trips are in place.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are exceptionally low. Children enter the Nursery with abilities that are very poor, and many of them speak little or no English. They make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage and achieve well in the Reception class because of the good provision there. Despite this, the vast majority of pupils do not reach the expected early learning goals for their age. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2, and in 2006 standards rose significantly in Year 2 national assessments. This gain was not reflected in the Year 6 national tests that year because of a group of pupils with many needs, who had not achieved in previous years as well as they should have done. Current achievement in Years 5 and 6 is good, and standards are rising, while still low. A downward trend in standards is thus being reversed. All other groups of pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning, including Travellers, those new to the school, those from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with learning difficulties. Pupils are now catching up some of the ground they lost when teaching was weaker. They do not do as well in mathematics and science as in reading and writing because they struggle with key vocabulary and do not have enough experience of investigations.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. They know about living healthy lifestyles and the school council run their own healthy tuck shop. At present, most pupils do not get the recommended two hours' of exercise per week, because they only have one timetabled physical education lesson. Pupils know about keeping safe and feel free from bullying and harassment. They enjoy coming to school and the vast majority attend well. Attendance has improved because of rigorous monitoring. Pupils are keen to get involved, and many help in the dining hall and playground. One pupil said, 'All of us are included in things.' The school council appreciates having a voice and influencing what goes on, for example in ordering new playground equipment. Pupils have many opportunities to work as a team and cooperate well together. Their behaviour is consistently good and they have positive attitudes to school. In an assembly a pupil summed this up by commenting, 'It's raining outside, but we're sunshine in here.' Pupils are now acquiring the basic skills they need to succeed at secondary school, as their achievement is improving. One said, 'When you learn more, you go far in life.'

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

In many lessons, a brisk pace captures the pupils' interest and gives them a hunger for knowledge. Pupils have good opportunities to listen to one another. 'In this class we do active listening and do it with a smile' said one teacher. In most classes, teachers keep a close eye on how well pupils understand their work and know what they need to learn next. Staff enjoy positive relationships with the pupils and use rewards such as house points effectively to build up pupils' confidence. Reading and writing are taught well, and pupils are encouraged to practise their skills together. In the Foundation Stage, the learning environment is not as exciting as it could be. The quality of marking is inconsistent, especially in teachers' expectations of the care pupils should put into presenting their work. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the learning of those pupils who need additional support, either because of learning difficulties, or because English is a new language to them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. The school has begun to make it more flexible and creative, with subject leaders increasingly taking responsibility for its development. This work is however at an early stage. An example is the introduction of a new scheme and mixed-age ability groups in English, which has helped achievement to accelerate in reading and writing. Curriculum teams, comprising of staff from three year groups, work together to ensure that pupils are receiving a broad and balanced mix of subjects. This also helps when pupils move from the Reception class into Year 1, and from Year 2 into Year 3, because the teachers of these classes belong to the same teams. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning in classes. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of clubs, including African drum-and-dance, visits to places of interest, and visitors like theatre groups who work with the pupils. There are also booster classes in literacy and numeracy and a breakfast club before school. These activities all increase pupils' enjoyment of school and support their good personal development and favourable attitudes to learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. There is good pastoral care and support for all pupils, including Travellers and those at the earliest stages of learning English. The youngest children, and the many pupils who enter the school at other times, settle quickly into the routines of school life because of the good systems in place to welcome them and to assess their abilities. Child protection procedures and health and safety checks around the school site are well established and thorough. However, there is no Educational Visits Coordinator and risk assessments for visits out of school are not

kept. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils' progress is now tracked closely and they are becoming more aware of how they are getting on through the setting of targets to improve their work. Older pupils have individual tutorials in writing and mathematics. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties are identified promptly and the right care and support is put in place. Detailed and thorough records of these pupils are kept. There are good links with outside agencies, and parents are involved well in discussing their children's progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership team and middle managers are enthusiastic and energetic and focused on raising standards and achievement. Since the last inspection much has already been achieved, with improvements in teaching, in pupils' progress and in their personal development. The headteacher has involved teachers more in monitoring what goes on, and reflecting upon their practice. Effective training has made teachers more confident in the use of data to identify pupils who need additional support. Regular lesson observations take place by leaders, but there is not enough rigorous follow-up where teaching is seen to be weaker to ensure that it becomes consistently good. Parents are supportive of the school. One said, 'All children seem to be doing well, and there seems to be a great team spirit.' Governors visit the school more often, and are closely linked with middle managers in monitoring their work. They take their responsibilities seriously, but are not currently safeguarding pupils by ensuring that risk assessments for school visits are undertaken and approved.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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 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	3
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?	3

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?	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 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	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?	No
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 very much for making us so welcome when we visited. We enjoyed meeting you and finding out what you like about your school. It is a satisfactory school and is getting better all the time. Here are some of the things that are good.

- You are making good progress in reading and writing because of the small groups you go to that have work that is just right for you.
- You behave well around the school and are helpful to one another.
- You know all about keeping safe and know you can turn to an adult if you have a problem.
- You enjoy school and are keen to learn.
- There are good links with the secondary school and with other people who come in to help you.
- The headteacher and deputy head lead the school well.

We know some of you find the words difficult that people use in science and mathematics and we have asked for you to have extra help in understanding what they mean. We also think you should do more investigations to find about ideas in those subjects. There is more good teaching in your school now, but we have asked the headteacher to check that as much of it as possible is good so that you learn as quickly as you can. We are pleased you go out on lots of trips. We have reminded the governors that they need to make sure teachers have written down what's involved and have thought ahead so that you can all enjoy your visits without any worries.

Thank you once again for your help. My best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Butt, Lead Inspector