



South Park Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 131930
Local Authority Redbridge
Inspection number 295459
Inspection dates 27–28 February 2007
Reporting inspector David Marshall

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Water Lane
School category	Community		Seven Kings
Age range of pupils	3–11		Ilford IG3 9HF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8590 1496
Number on roll (school)	795	Fax number	020 8503 8311
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs C Carter
		Headteacher	Mr Douglas Rae
Date of previous school inspection	16 January 2006		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 27–28 February 2007	Inspection number 295459
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

South Park Primary school is a very large school, serving a diverse community. 94% of learners are from minority ethnic groups. The majority of learners have English as an additional language. Around a quarter of learners have learning difficulties and approximately 8% of learners have refugee/asylum-seeker status. A large number of pupils join the school during each academic year - many of whom have little or no previous education in the United Kingdom. 40% of Year 6 pupils in 2005/2006 were not on roll for the whole of Key Stage 2. A growing number of pupils join the school with no formal educational background. At its last inspection, just over a year ago, the school was given a notice to improve.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspection evidence shows that South Park is a good, and improving, school. In accordance with Section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer needs significant improvement. This represents an impressive move forward since the inspection a year ago particularly with regard to standards in Key Stage 2 and teachers' expectations of pupils' achievement in all lessons. As one parent wrote, 'I love the way South Park Primary is working now. I think it's a team effort, with the headteacher and hard working teachers.'

As the last inspection noted, there had been reduced leadership capacity due to the previous secondment of the headteacher and maternity absence of the assistant headteacher. Although actions had been taken, they had not had time to improve achievement and standards. Over the last year the rigour and enthusiasm noted then have turned the school around. The outstanding headteacher, with substantial support from the local authority, has been able to establish and make secure the systems that had been planned. Pupils' progress is now very good. Standards attained at the end of Year 6, in the 2006 national tests in English, mathematics and science, were well above average. The school has rightly identified that writing still develops at a slower rate. The quality of pupils' handwriting is also inconsistent."

The organisation of the Foundation Stage is excellent, and these young children make an outstanding start to their education. Teaching and learning are good throughout the rest of the school and contribute to good achievement. The very careful use of tracking in English, mathematics and science has successfully raised pupils' achievement. The great majority of lessons are challenging and exciting making sure that all pupils enjoy learning.

Pupils are cared for exceptionally well and all of them, including the most vulnerable, feel safe and secure. Their personal development is outstanding. By the time they leave the school, they have developed into well-rounded individuals because of their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Behaviour is exemplary. They are excellently equipped for the future to cope with academic and social challenges.

The curriculum covers all subjects well and is enhanced by a very good range of additional activities. However, there is still room for improvement, particularly in Key Stage 1, in making the range of activities more interesting and relevant so that all pupils make good use of their basic skills in all subjects. The staff provide outstanding support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities who, like those in the early stages of learning English, make excellent progress as a result.

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The headteacher provides first-rate leadership and he is exceptionally well supported by all staff. Strengths and weaknesses are speedily identified because the school has excellent systems for monitoring its work. Teamwork is excellent and developments are being driven forward at a very good pace. The school's capacity to improve is excellent.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide further opportunities for pupils to write at length and in a consistent, neat, joined, handwriting style.
- Modify the curriculum to extend opportunities for all pupils to use and apply their English and mathematical skills in other subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Most pupils enter the school with below average attainment. In 2006 in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils reached standards that were well above average in English, mathematics and science. Their targets were challenging and the pupils rose to them, with a good proportion attaining above average levels.

The school is now exceptionally good at assessing how well its pupils are doing so that gaps and weaknesses are identified straight away and tackled speedily. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well across the whole curriculum and pupils are achieving well. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties is excellent, as is the provision for those pupils with special gifts or talents. Both of these groups achieve highly and make excellent progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils are confident and mature. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Assemblies and personal, social and health education lessons provide very good opportunities for pupils to learn about and discuss issues that help them become good citizens. The school encourages pupils to take responsibility for their actions and their behaviour is at least very good and often exemplary. Relationships are excellent and there is a high level of racial harmony. The school places great store on pupils' development of healthy lifestyles and they all know how to look after themselves well. Pupils soon learn that the school is a safe place and know that they can talk to staff if they have any personal concerns. Pupils are involved well in the school and local community. The school council regularly undertakes surveys of pupils' opinions, analyses responses and plans accordingly. Such activities mean pupils have a very good understanding of citizenship. Their independence and above average standards in literacy, numeracy and ICT prepare pupils exceptionally well for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are outstanding because the stimulating range of experiences results in a real sense of enjoyment in learning. Furthermore the very good support the children receive meets their individual needs very well enabling them to thrive.

Elsewhere in the school teaching is good and at times outstanding. Teachers manage pupils well and relationships are excellent facilitating a good use of time in lessons. As one pupil said, 'Teachers help us to get better and never make us feel stupid if we need more help'. Teachers prepare lessons very well and use their good subject knowledge to enhance pupils' understanding of new work. Good questioning draws out pupils' knowledge and helps teachers to appreciate how well the pupils understand. Teachers use their excellent knowledge of individuals to group pupils so that the work they are given is well matched to their needs. Although marking of pupils' work is good and frequently supports their learning, it is not always followed up. As a result, pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to respond to the teachers' written suggestions and comments. Staff provide extremely well for pupils who have learning, emotional or language difficulties so that they make similar rates of progress to other pupils. Support staff are deployed effectively with groups of pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage curriculum is outstanding. It provides stimulating and challenging activities that make learning fun. Meticulous planning focuses these activities towards the children's next stages in learning so that they rapidly acquire the skills they need to enable them to achieve well.

There is a good curriculum throughout the rest of the school. High quality provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship result in a harmonious environment where pupils know how to respect and care for themselves and others. The core subjects of English, mathematics, science and ICT are planned rigorously and adapted to meet pupils' needs. However, there is insufficient planning to apply these core subject skills in other subjects to make learning more relevant. The same style of planning is used in Years 1 and 2. But a few pupils, especially those new to the school, are not yet ready to move from the Foundation Stage planning onto the more formal curriculum and struggle to achieve well.

There is a very good range of extra curricular activities, visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum. Theme weeks and months, such as 'Multilingual Month', add interest and relevance to learning. Good curricular links with local secondary schools prepare pupils well for the next stage in their education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school takes extremely good care of its pupils. The staff's very good understanding of child protection procedures, through regular training, enables them to identify and report any concerns quickly. Health and safety procedures are managed rigorously. The regular checking of the premises ensures that any defects are dealt with swiftly. The school has a good number of qualified first-aiders. Risk assessments for school activities are thorough. Links with local services such as the fire brigade and police, together with the good provision for personal, social and health education, ensure that pupils are well informed about specific dangers and how they can keep themselves safe. This very good provision fosters their social and emotional development very well. Teachers keep very accurate records of pupils' progress and use these effectively to intervene swiftly and provide extra support if pupils fall behind with their work. Very good attention is given to vulnerable pupils. The school's own expertise, together with its good links with local special schools and very good use of their specialised help, supports pupils with emotional and learning difficulties extremely well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding, because they have made substantial improvements in a short time. The outstanding headteacher has established a team of highly-skilled managers. He has used their expertise to identify areas for improvement and empowered them to evaluate and support other leaders and teachers. As a result there has been outstanding improvement since the last inspection, especially in pupils' achievements. The rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning and pupils' progress enables leaders to set teachers challenging targets rooted in improving pupils' progress. Year group leaders ensure that there is continuity in the provision across the age group.

The accommodation and resources, including the deployment of teaching and support staff, secure the best possible provision for the pupils. The management of the provision for special educational needs and for pupils with English as an additional language is exemplary. Pupils of all abilities are fully included in all aspects of school life.

Governance is good. Some governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and needs. They challenge and evaluate initiatives effectively. All governors support the school well and carry out their duties effectively. The opinions of parents and pupils are valued and frequently acted upon. As one parent wrote, 'South Park is a good school because of the leadership of the headteacher and the dedication of all staff. I do not agree with all the decisions but they are made in the best interest of all concerned.'

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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?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
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	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	1

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	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	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?	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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
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	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

I am writing to thank you all for making us so welcome when we came to the school recently. We really enjoyed our time with you and you all helped by being so friendly and sensible. I thought you would like to know what we found out.

I agree with what so many of you told us. South Park is a good school. When you arrive at the school in the Nursery or Reception classes you have lots of interesting things to do and adults help you to settle in really well. You develop your reading, writing and number skills in the infants and do particularly well in the junior classes. By the time you go to secondary school you are very well prepared. Those of you who do not find work easy do very well because of all the help you get. We were pleased that you like school and come regularly. You all really enjoy your lessons, work hard and behave very well. There are many interesting things for you to do in the school, in the clubs and on the visits that you make.

Your teachers work hard to help you to do as well as you can. We have asked them to make sure that you get as many opportunities as possible to improve your writing, both the handwriting and the range of opportunities you have for writing. We have also asked them to make sure that you get more opportunities to use what you have learnt in English and mathematics in other subjects. Then you will all continue to make really good progress in your learning.

Finally, we would like to thank you once again for all your help, and wish you well in the future.

With kind regards

David Marshall Lead inspector