

Edith Neville Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100013
Local Authority	Camden
Inspection number	307273
Inspection date	13 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Wendy Simmons

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	239
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	64
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Robin Nash
Headteacher	Mr Sean O'Regan
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	174 Ossulston Street London NW1 1DN
Telephone number	020 7387 7158
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- why pupils do so well in science
- how well pupils' English skills are developing
- how accurately leaders evaluate the work of the school, especially the quality of teaching, the curriculum and the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The inspector gained evidence from lessons and from the school's own evaluations of its work. Discussions were held with staff and pupils. A range of documentation was evaluated. A sample of pupils' work was seen and the views of parents were gathered from questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Edith Neville Primary is an average size school set in the middle of Somers Town. It is very close to Kings Cross, Euston and St Pancras stations and educates pupils from a very wide range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Very few pupils are from White British backgrounds. Over half of all pupils come from Asian Bangladeshi backgrounds. The next large group come from Black African Somali backgrounds. The school also has a large group of pupils from mixed heritages. Almost all pupils speak English as an additional language. Most pupils live in social housing and over half of the school receive free school meals. Many pupils live in overcrowded homes and experience traumatic lives. The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school at unusual times throughout the school year is very high. An above average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These largely link to moderate learning difficulties, emotional difficulties and problems with social skills, behaviour and speech and communication.

The school has two nursery classes, which, with its Reception class, forms the EYFS. The school runs two breakfast clubs, they are both free to pupils but one is especially for families of children in the EYFS. The school has gained many awards including Investors in People, Healthy Schools, Activemark and Artsmark. They have been recognised for high quality religious education (RE) and recently praised by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) for race equality education as part of a special inspection. The school has recently received local Children's Centre designation. Children attend the Children's Centre for a few sessions a week with their parents and carers.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Edith Neville Primary is an outstanding school, which makes a really positive difference to pupils' skills, aspirations and life chances. The outstanding leadership, teaching and learning and an exciting curriculum, contribute to pupils' success. Pupils agree that their school is, 'Really cool'. They commented, 'We are one big community and everyone is friendly'. Excellent pastoral care helps pupils to feel safe and well looked after. Staff value the pupils; they say, 'Pupils shine as our greatest asset'.

Leaders' understanding and evaluation of the work of the school is very accurate. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. He is dedicated, reflective and highly committed, which inspires his staff. He is very well supported by an outstanding deputy headteacher and an impressive group of senior managers and governors. Together, they show energy and determination and this positively affects pupils' achievement. As one parent put it, 'The headteacher and staff bring out the best in the children'. As a result, by the end of Year 6, pupils reach average standards in English, above average standards in mathematics and exceptionally high standards in science. From children's exceptionally low starting point, this represents outstanding achievement.

In 2007, the school performed in the top four per cent of schools nationally for adding value to pupils' attainment. The school's most recent information for 2008 indicates that pupils are continuing to do very well. In particular, pupils who speak English as an additional language, and those with learning difficulties, do outstandingly well. Pupils who have free school meals and those from Bangladeshi backgrounds do much better than is often the case in other primary schools.

In science, almost all pupils reach the higher Level 5 in national tests. Pupils do so well because of the combination of high quality investigation activities and the opportunities for pupils to think, talk about and record their own ideas. They do many experiments, understand, and use scientific vocabulary. Impressively strong links with science professionals, including workshops with doctors from St Bartholomew's Hospital and the provision of a special science club, help to deepen pupils' understanding of the subject. Visits widen pupils' knowledge still further.

The school works effectively to help pupils to develop their writing skills. Pupils do well because writing activities are exciting and meaningful. These often link to visits and practical activities. As pupils become more skilled, they write at greater length and they are carefully guided in how to extend and improve their work.

Leaders are now correctly focused on reading, as they are ambitious to get English standards to as high a level as that found in science. With this in mind, leaders have started work on increasing the time for pupils to talk about books. There is still more to do as pupils find it hard to get the exact meaning from different texts. Pupils' often find it hard to infer and deduce things from different texts. Leaders recognise that pupils need more opportunities for drama when reading texts aloud, so that they understand and deeply explore the meaning. Leaders have introduced more work on letters and sounds (phonics). They know that the youngest pupils still need further practical help with this. Over 50 adult volunteers, from local businesses, help older pupils with their reading. This is fantastic, but there are missed opportunities to include younger pupils in this project.

Staff are knowledgeable and skilfully unlock pupils' potential. They place an outstandingly effective emphasis on promoting pupils' English speaking skills. Teachers have very high

expectations and pupils quickly become enthusiastic and hard working because teachers motivate them very well. Staff ensure that pupils gain basic skills well, develop self-esteem and confidence. Pupils noted that, 'We do lots of things that we have not had the chance to do before'. The school offers many visits, clubs and extra activities to widen pupils' knowledge and skills.

Pupils' personal development and behaviour are outstanding and contribute greatly to their all-round achievement. Pupils respect different religious beliefs and cultures. They are helped to explore their feelings and emotions so that they build effective relationships with others. Pupils thoroughly enjoy sports, physical activities and just playing in the school garden. They have a clear understanding of what it means to be healthy. Links with the school nurse contribute much to the care given to pupils. Pupils actively take on responsibilities and make an impressive contribution to the community. For example, pupils are working with local street wardens, making a video on local issues including how to be safe from gangs and drugs. Recently, pupils won the local Bangladeshi Language Day public speaking competition.

Pupils enjoy working with local artists. However, opportunities for the arts, including music, are hampered by restricted space. Leaders are well underway with their plans to improve the site. It is important that this is done so that pupils have the best possible chances to excel in the arts and music. Leaders also want more space to extend group work activities, especially the highly successful community reading programme. Classrooms are very cramped for the numbers attending the school.

Attendance has improved well although better overall attendance figures are hampered by pupils' religious observance and long leave overseas, especially for religious pilgrimages.

This is an inclusive school, where relationships, racial harmony and community cohesion are excellent. Parents gain a great deal from the school, which helps them to support their children's learning. Through the work of the Children's Centre, which is managed outstandingly well, parents and pupils benefit from many exciting and supportive activities. For example, families do science, French and information and communication technology (ICT) together, and for fun. Not least, everyone enjoys the special 'Cook and Eat' events.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The EFYS is well led and aspects of leadership are impressive. Leaders are working well to improve problem solving skills, reading and writing, in their drive to raise standards further; there is still more to do on this. From an exceptionally low starting point, children make good progress. Standards are lower than average by the end of the EYFS.

Children are treated as individuals and this starts early on when they are visited in their own homes. Welfare provision is outstanding and the exemplary practice results in children settling in quickly and happily. Staff provide endless reassurance for children and the environment is very happy, calm and has a nurturing atmosphere. Relationships with parents and carers are excellent. Children do best in learning how to work and play successfully with others. As a result, they quickly learn to behave well and confidently choose activities, which show their growing independence.

Children work well in groups with an adult and they thoroughly enjoy learning, as activities are great fun. Adults are especially successful in helping children to increase their speaking skills. Physical development is very well promoted and this is important as many children live in flats where there is limited opportunity for outside play. Basic counting skills are also well developed.

Overall, learning activities are good and within this, they are outstanding for helping children to explore their senses and engage in role-play. The exciting outside area aids learning very well.

What the school should do to improve further

As an outstanding school, leaders are well on the way with the following improvements.

- Work on further raising standards in English, especially by further developing reading skills from the EYFS through to the end of Year 6.
- Pursue the plans for site development.
- Maintain the thrust for development of problem solving, reading and writing in the EYFS.

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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?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	1
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**

23 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Edith Neville Primary School, London, NW1 1DN

You may remember that two inspectors came to your school recently. Thank you for being so friendly. I am writing to let you know what we found out.

You go to an outstanding school. This means that many things are wonderful and very little needs improving. You agree with this. Your headteacher and all of the other adults are working very hard to make the school as special as possible for you. Your teachers give you many exciting activities, which make learning fun. All of the adults help you a great deal and in return, you work hard, behave very well and make very good progress in learning new things. Congratulations for this. Clearly, you enjoy coming to school and you value the many clubs, activities and visits. You show very good respect for others and are developing fit and healthy lifestyles. Well done for working so hard on your writing and mathematics. We also know that you enjoy reading. We are especially impressed by the way that you try to help others and work with your local community, please keep this up! The adults care for you very well and help you to learn many important skills for the future. Your school is working well to help as many of you as possible to get to the level that we expect in English. Many of you do even better than this in mathematics. We are extremely impressed by your science work.

To make the school even better for you I would like the adults to continue with the exciting plans to:

- work on developing reading, so that you can all reach even higher levels in English
- develop the plans to make the building better, which we know you would like
- help the youngest children in the Nursery and Reception classes to do as well as possible in their reading, writing and problem solving activities.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Simmons

Lead Inspector