

# Torridon Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100707
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lewisham
<b>Inspection number</b>	307451
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ian Wilson

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	359
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Sue Dearie
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Lee Robertson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 July 2005
<b>School address</b>	Hazelbank Road London SE6 1TG
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8697 2762
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8698 8675

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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Torridon Junior is a large junior school. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those having a home language other than English are very high, with Urdu, Turkish and Russian being the most common languages spoken. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which includes those with moderate and severe learning difficulties and dyslexia, is above average. The school has gained a number of awards for the quality of its work including the Activemark and Healthy School Status. A range of extended services are provided, such as workshops for parents.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Torridon Junior is a good school. It provides a good quality of education and level of care for its pupils. The comment made by one parent, 'My child has made excellent progress during his time here and feels secure and part of a wonderful school community', typified the very positive views of others about the school.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher and staff work very well as a team and share the common aim of providing the very best for pupils. The school has improved significantly since the last inspection. For example, teaching is better, the curriculum has been substantially improved and the management structure in the school has been revised. As a consequence pupils' progress has improved and standards have risen so that they are now above national averages by the end of Year 6. The school provides well for pupils' personal development. It has a happy, supportive and caring ethos in which relationships are very good and pupils behave well. Parents comment on how much their children enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in the rate of attendance which is above the national average. Pupils contribute well to the community, for example through supporting charities and events such as the annual Lewisham 'fun day'. They develop responsibility and self-confidence well and they have a good understanding about staying healthy and keeping safe. These good personal qualities, coupled with the good progress pupils make in their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

This quality of teaching is good overall and is one of the main reasons why pupils progress well. Teachers are good at managing and motivating pupils. They have good subject knowledge and plan interesting lessons. Although teaching has improved since the last inspection, some variation in the quality of lessons remains. In most lessons activities are well matched to the needs of all pupils, but there are occasions when work is not sufficiently challenging and the pace of learning is too slow. The curriculum in the school is good. A range of initiatives to improve standards in reading and writing, for example, have been successfully introduced. The curriculum is enhanced by the good links with the community, and the opportunities pupils have to participate in a wide range of trips and activities. These help to make learning more relevant. Pupils are very well looked after and good use is made of specialist support and outside agencies where needed. Pupils are given helpful guidance on how to improve their work, but this is not acted on sufficiently by pupils and targets are sometimes too general. As a consequence, the impact of marking and use of targets in helping pupils improve their work is reduced.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching, by improving the pace and level of challenge of work in some lessons.
- Make better use of targets and ensure pupils respond to marking in order to ensure that they contribute more effectively to helping pupils improve.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Standards are rising and the results of statutory assessments in 2008 were significantly higher than those in 2007. Pupils are currently on track to do equally well. From broadly average levels

of attainment when they start school, pupils attain standards at the end of Year 6 that exceed national averages in English, mathematics and science. This represents good overall achievement. All groups of pupils, including those speaking English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve well because of the well-planned and focused support provided for them.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils greatly enjoy school and say that 'teachers make lessons interesting and fun'. They feel safe and confident in approaching staff about any concerns they may have. They say that bullying, on the few occasions when it occurs, is dealt with effectively. They demonstrate good awareness of a healthy diet and the importance of adopting an active lifestyle, which is evident in high attendance at after school sports clubs. The school's Activemark award and Healthy School status are reflected in these positive outcomes. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This can be seen in the way they relate well to each other, work well in groups, and behave well throughout the school. They undertake responsibility well through, for example, membership of the School Council which has contributed to decisions about the purchase of equipment. They undertake fund-raising activities and demonstrate concern for those in less fortunate circumstances. They are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to outstanding, and it is good overall. Teachers are enthusiastic, have good relationships with their pupils and are good at motivating them. They manage their classes well. Lessons are interesting and well planned with good resources to support learning. Work is generally well matched to the needs of pupils. In the satisfactory lessons, however, the level of challenge in some of the work is not high enough and pace is a little slow. Classrooms have helpful displays and teachers make good use of resources such as electronic whiteboards. These contribute to providing a good environment for learning. Teaching assistants are generally used well, but in some lessons they could be deployed better to maximise the support that they can give to pupils. Pupils' positive attitude to learning contributes to their enthusiastic response in lessons.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

Considerable improvements have been made to the curriculum over the past two years. In particular, the provision for developing pupils' reading, writing and numeracy skills, and their investigation skills in science, has significantly improved. Provision in ICT is good and enables pupils to develop good skills in this area. Links between subjects are carefully planned and these help make learning more relevant. For example, in a science activity studying the water cycle pupils wrote creatively about how it might feel to be a droplet of water. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good and contributes substantially to helping them make good progress. Regular theme weeks such as the international week, during which pupils explore different lifestyles, contribute well to their personal development. The curriculum is further enriched by the good range of outside visits made by pupils, such as to the theatre and museums

and by contributions from visitors to the school. There is a good range of after school clubs which are popular with pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Parents praise how well the school looks after their children, 'often going beyond the call of duty to help', as one parent commented. Safeguarding procedures in the school, such as first aid and arrangements for ensuring child protection, are secure and pupils are known and feel safe. The arrangements for monitoring pupils' progress are very good and the information is used very well to identify pupils needing support and to provide it for them. Their learning needs are met well through the extra help provided for them by teaching assistants, other adults and the range of specialists who visit the school. Pupils' work is marked regularly and pupils are given good guidance on how to improve. They also have targets which they say are helpful. However, the value of the guidance and targets is lessened because there is not a consistent approach to ensuring that pupils respond to the marking. The targets, in some cases, are not sufficiently linked to marking or focused on key priorities which the pupils need to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides very good leadership. He is experienced, caring and enthusiastic and is supported by a competent leadership team committed to continually improving the school. Teamwork in the school is very strong and the school makes good use of its resources. Staff are valued, work hard and are well supported in developing their skills and expertise. Managers at all levels have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses based on very effective systems for evaluation and planning. Arrangements to monitor the quality of teaching and the curriculum are thorough and judgements about strengths and weaknesses are accurate. This information is used to set challenging but realistic whole-school targets. All the issues raised in the last inspection have been fully addressed. This, combined with the continuing improvement in standards in the school, shows that the capacity for further improvement is good. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. It is an inclusive school; one parent praised the school for the way in which it 'shows its concern for and respects minority ethnic groups and their appreciation for all communities'. Links with parents are good and parents say that they are well informed and encouraged to be involved. The good range of information meetings and cultural events that involve the different communities represented in the school contribute very well to this. Governors are knowledgeable, able and involved in the school. They have a good knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses and are able to challenge and support the school effectively.



## 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?	2
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<sup>1</sup>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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

03 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Torridon Junior School, London, SE6 1TG

You may remember that three inspectors recently came to visit your school. Thank you for making us feel so welcome. You were all very polite and confident, and told us what you thought very clearly. We really enjoyed meeting you, your teachers and other people who work in the school, and I am writing to let you know what we found out.

Torridon Junior is a good school, which is led well by your headteacher. Teaching is good overall and the school organises lessons effectively so that they are interesting and meet your needs well. However, there is some variation in the quality of lessons. The school checks carefully on how well you are doing and provides good additional help when you need it. As a result, most of you achieve well. Both you and your parents said how much you enjoy school and get along with each other. You feel safe, cared for and work hard. The school helps you to develop good personal skills, such as self-confidence, being responsible and knowing how to stay safe and healthy. We were impressed with the way the school works with your parents and with the community and the good relationships throughout the school.

We have made two suggestions for improvement.

- Improve teaching even more so that all the lessons are as good as they possibly could be.
- Ensure that the targets set for you focus clearly on the really important things that you need to do to improve, and that you respond more to the suggestions made by teachers when they mark your work.

We are sure that your school will carry on getting better and better. You can help by keeping up the good behaviour and continuing to work hard.

Yours faithfully

Ian Wilson

Lead Inspector