

# Ivydale Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100796
<b>Local Authority</b>	Southwark
<b>Inspection number</b>	307486
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Margaret Coussins

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	347
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Sarah McKimm
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Ray O'Neill
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 November 2003
<b>School address</b>	Ivydale Road Nunhead London SE15 3BU
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7639 2702
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7635 8218

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Ivydale is a large primary school which serves a mixed community. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above average. The proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language is higher than average, as is the proportion with learning difficulties or disabilities. These largely relate to behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, speech, language and communication difficulties, moderate learning difficulties and autism. The number of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need is higher than in most schools. Many more pupils than found nationally start and leave the school at different times. Fifty children attend the Nursery part time. The school has the Healthy School and Active Mark awards. The school is currently developing a Children's Centre. The headteacher was appointed in September 2005 and was joined by the deputy and an advanced skills teacher to lead English in Key Stage 2 in September 2007.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Ivydale Primary is a satisfactory school. It is improving rapidly because of the good leadership and management of the headteacher who has recently been joined by a new deputy. Together they make a strong team, which is driving forward school improvement and which is committed to raising standards. From its effective monitoring and tracking systems the school has a clear idea of its strengths and areas for further improvement.

The school successfully includes pupils from many backgrounds and this has resulted in a happy working community. One parent wrote, 'My children are happy and thriving at Ivydale Primary. The school has a very good ethos in which all the children feel valued and included.' Inspectors agree with the many parents who commented on the school's successful work in developing the whole child, particularly through the arts, as well as its emphasis on academic achievement. A result of this is that pupils develop good personal skills and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils enjoy school, behave well and feel very safe. The school council is active and has a strong voice in the school. Pupils welcome the responsibilities they are given and take their roles very seriously. They make an excellent contribution to the school and wider communities. Pupils, like their parents, are proud of their school. One parent wrote, 'I am very proud to say that Ivydale is my child's school. It embraces the community.'

Standards were exceptionally low for two years following the last inspection. Standards are improving but remain below average in English, mathematics and science. Improvements in leadership and the quality of teaching have contributed in raising pupils' achievement to a satisfactory level. Senior leaders provide effective guidance and support and are good role models for their colleagues. Their work has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning which are now good. Increasingly effective teaching is making up for gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding which resulted from previous weaknesses in the teaching. Children in the Foundation Stage start with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age. They now make good gains in their learning because of good teaching and reach expected levels by the time they move into Year 1. There has not yet been time for this good work in the Foundation Stage to have carried forward into the results in Key Stage 1. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 does not consistently move pupils on at a fast enough pace, particularly in literacy, given their achievement by the end of the Foundation Stage, and results remain below average at the end of Year 2.

In Key Stage 2, the impact of the work of senior leaders has had a marked impact on the quality of teaching, leading to improved rates of progress. Despite below average standards, pupils' work and school data show that pupils are on track to meet the school's ambitious targets. The whole school rightly is focused on improving standards in writing and mathematics for all pupils and has correctly identified and planned to focus on investigative and problem solving work in science. The school is beginning to develop ways to support pupils who start school at different times so that they benefit as much as possible from their time in the school and achieve as well as they can. Work is not always challenging enough for higher attaining pupils and the school has correctly identified the need to improve standards, particularly in writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and those learning English as an additional language make similar and sometimes better progress than others because they are supported well by the school's inclusive ethos and the extra help provided for them. A very careful check is kept on how well pupils are doing over time and support is provided at an early stage for those who need additional support the most. Increasingly, many more pupils in all year groups are making

the expected rates of progress, but leaders recognise that even better progress is needed if they are to raise standards more rapidly. Given its recent track record in improving standards and the quality of teaching, the school has a good capacity to improve further because of the strengths of the headteacher and deputy.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make a good start to their schooling. When they start at school their attainment is below that expected for their ages. They settle very quickly into routines and make friends easily because they feel safe and welcome. By the time they enter Year 1, they have reached standards that are at least matching those normally seen and often are above, especially in their personal, social and emotional development and in their communication, language and literacy skills, which have been a focus for improvement. Children make good progress in their early reading and writing development because there are many fun and practical opportunities to practice these independently and teachers are skilled in teaching children how to link sounds and letters. The classrooms and outdoor learning area are well organised and provide stimulating learning environments. There is strong teamwork, a good level of expertise and successful, effective leadership, which has brought about significant improvements over time.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve pupils' standards in writing and their investigative and problem solving skills in mathematics and science.
- Ensure that gains made in the Foundation Stage are built on at a faster pace as pupils move into Key Stage 1.
- Help more able pupils to reach higher standards by ensuring that activities and work provide more challenge.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards are improving although they are currently below average by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Standards, which were exceptionally low, improved significantly between 2005 and 2006. In 2007 there was continued improvement in Key Stage 2. More pupils reached the expected level in English, most notably in writing, although this remains the weakest area. The focus on providing a wider range of stimulating and meaningful experiences with real purposes for writing help pupils to make better progress. Pupils' enjoyment of writing has increased although punctuation, sentence structure and skills in organising their thoughts and ideas remain weaker areas. Improvements were less marked in mathematics and science where pupils' investigative and problem solving skills and a lack of understanding of technical terms hold them back. By the end of Year 2 standards dipped slightly from 2006 to 2007, especially in reading which the school attributes to it receiving less attention because of the focus on writing. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points and over the last two terms there has been some good catch up, for example, in writing, although standards are still too low. The school's data and current work show that many pupils are now making better

progress towards reaching the school's challenging targets because expectations are higher, teaching and learning have improved and the curriculum is good.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils say they enjoy learning and that there are lots of extra things for them to do. Consequently, attendance has improved with the majority of pupils coming to school regularly. Behaviour is good. The school ethos promotes pupils' heightened sense of responsibility and care for each other and an excellent sense of fair play and co-operation. They are thoughtful, polite and considerate and accepting of differences in others' social and cultural backgrounds. As a result of these attributes, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils develop a good understanding of keeping healthy by eating a balanced diet and keeping fit. They participate enthusiastically in the wide range of physical activities offered. Their excellent awareness of keeping safe, in and out of school, extends further than their personal safety as they have a keen awareness of their responsibilities in looking after each other. They are confident that if any untoward behaviour occurs, staff deal with it quickly and fairly. One child said that any racist or bullying incidents were taken 'super seriously.' Pupils have an excellent understanding about working in a community and the school council takes a leading role in making decisions in the school. Pupils enthusiastically and skilfully take on responsibilities including peer mentoring, buddies, litter patrols and as 'Young Leaders'. Improving standards in basic skills are helping to prepare the pupils adequately for the next stage of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. For instance, effective use is made of electronic whiteboards to present information clearly using diagrams and pictures that reinforce understanding in an enjoyable way. Recent tracking data and assessment systems have helped teachers to raise expectations of what pupils can do and how they can learn. As a result, pupils have developed more effective learning skills and are beginning to make better progress, particularly in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, teachers generally plan lessons well to engage the interest of all pupils but do not always ensure that work is well matched to the needs and interests of all pupils. In Key Stage 2, teachers usually set challenging tasks which stimulate and motivate pupils. In a Year 4 lesson, where the task was to create a database to classify fruit, a pupil commented, 'I like a challenge, it makes you use your mind more.' However, work does not consistently provide challenges for some more able pupils. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, particularly in English.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

There is a good range of extra activities. Pupils talk excitedly about trips they have been on, such as a visit to the zoo, which linked in with their mathematics work during Maths Week. The school is planning to extend the curriculum further to enable pupils to pursue their own interests. The use of information and communication technology to help pupils learn in many different subjects is good. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' outstanding spiritual,

moral, social and cultural development. Music, dance, art and drama are strengths. Intervention programmes, which provide extra support for pupils in their basic skills, are established as part of the curriculum. Pupils appreciate the wide range of after-school clubs that help them keep fit and healthy and those where they can learn other skills such as learning to speak Chinese.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Pastoral care is good and the many links with outside agencies help to ensure that pupils with particular needs are given appropriate support. Initiatives have contributed well to pupils' good behaviour and increased rates of attendance. Pupils raise any concerns quickly and the school responds well. Child protection procedures are in line with government guidelines. The school is recognised for its capacity to successfully reintegrate pupils who have been excluded from other schools. The school checks how well pupils are doing and makes sure that those who have made slower progress are put into target groups for extra support. This strategy has a positive impact on the achievement of many. The school has acknowledged that there is room for better support for higher attaining pupils and has already put systems in place to work on this. Most pupils know their targets and the next levels to achieve, but the marking of work in some classes does not always give them a clear indication of what they need to do to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The school is well led and managed by the headteacher and deputy. Since the headteacher's appointment two years ago, standards have improved from an exceptionally low level. There have been improvements in the progress that pupils make, even though standards remain below average and achievement is satisfactory. The school still receives support from the local authority and London Challenge. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching and learning. External support is reducing and the school is now well placed to function independently. There have been some recent, carefully considered appointments to strengthen the senior and middle management teams and many initiatives have been established which have begun to help improve standards and enable pupils to progress at a faster rate. All leaders and managers share the same vision for improving standards. Governance is satisfactory. Governors support the school well, particularly in their strategic planning to develop a Children's Centre. Changes of personnel mean that the governing body is developing its work particularly in relation to standards. The school recognises that work needs to continue to accelerate the progress of many pupils in order to eradicate a legacy of underachievement and meet the higher expectations and challenging targets that it has set.

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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?	3
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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	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?	3

<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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
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 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?	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

14 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ivydale Primary School, London, SE15 3BU

I am writing to let you know how much my colleagues and I enjoyed our visit to your school and what we found out. Thank you for making us welcome, for talking to us about your work and telling us what you think about your school. Congratulations for coming to school more regularly, keep this up. Your school is satisfactory which means you learn new things steadily, but there is still more to do to make the school even better.

These are the things we think are best about your school.

- The school is excellent at developing your spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, which is outstanding. You are thoughtful and caring and you respect those who have different backgrounds and beliefs. This means you get on well together, you feel safe and secure and your behaviour is good.
- You are proud of your school and enjoy being part of a friendly, caring community. You take your responsibilities very seriously and like the fact that the school council makes decisions on everyone's behalf.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get a good start to their education.
- Teachers make your lessons exciting and help you learn well. You enjoy all the extra things they provide for you including the visits and clubs.
- Your headteacher and deputy do a good job in running the school.

We want the school to work on the following important things.

- Help more of you get to a good level in writing, mathematics and science work by the time you leave Year 6, so that you have the best possible chance to do well in the future.
- Help those of you who find learning easier to have plenty of activities and support that enable you to reach high levels in your work.
- Make sure that in Years 1 and 2, children carry on learning as well as they do in the Nursery and Reception classes.

Thank you again for all your help and for being so friendly, polite and interesting to talk to.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Coussins

Lead Inspector