

# Townsend Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100814
<b>Local Authority</b>	Southwark
<b>Inspection number</b>	307494
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lily Evans

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.

---

<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 (total)	249
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	56
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Kathryn Scherer
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sally Reeves
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 January 2004
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Townsend Street London SE17 1HJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7703 2672
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7252 5885

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 October 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	307494

---

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is situated in an area of regeneration close to the centre of London. It serves an area where high numbers of people from different ethnic backgrounds live. There are higher than usual numbers of pupils who have moderate learning difficulties and/or disabilities and behavioural difficulties. The governing body has overall responsibility for the management of the aftercare school child care provision for children aged 4 to 11.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

This is a welcoming school, where pupils are happy, well cared for and safe. They learn good social skills, know about the importance of healthy living and understand right from wrong. As Junior Street leaders, for example, they care for members of their community outside of school. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds integrate seamlessly in preparation for their roles as citizens. The school celebrates festivals within the local and wider community and takes an effective part in local events, for example, through choir performances.

However, standards are exceptionally low and pupils have been underachieving for several years, particularly in Key Stage 2. Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with levels of skills and knowledge well below those expected of most three year-olds. Accurate use of assessment enables teachers to plan learning and target the areas of weakness well so that children make good progress. They enter Year 1 having caught up to expected levels in some areas of learning but with some weaknesses in reading, writing and calculating. In the past pupils have made satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, reaching broadly average standards by the end of Year 2, but in 2008 standards were exceptionally low including the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels. Pupils' progress during Key Stage 2 is inadequate and has been since 2005. Pupils leave the school in Year 6 with well below expected standards of attainment. Standards and achievement are exceptionally low in mathematics.

The quality of teaching is inadequate overall, particularly in Years 3 to 6. This is partly due to frequent changes of staff, staff absence and the lack of continuity in teaching because of the considerable input from supply teachers, for example. Over the last year, Year 6 has had nine changes of teachers. Supply teachers are not provided with accurate information on the pupils' levels of ability so that they can plan lessons effectively. Although the school has procedures for assessing pupils at the end of each year, their validity is questionable since the actual test results have been so far adrift from those predicted. Teachers' use of assessment information to plan learning has been inconsistent and evidence indicates that many lack the necessary skills and expertise. The result is that the pupils have had insufficient challenge in their work. This is now beginning to get better but the improvements are inconsistent across the school. The monitoring of teaching and learning in subjects has been inadequate partly due to underdeveloped systems. The school has a new senior management team and they are supporting the headteacher in developing the monitoring and evaluation of achievement and standards. This is at a very early stage. The newly augmented governing body is poised to improve its challenge to the school but acknowledges that it needs further training in order to feel more secure in judging standards and achievement, in evaluating the work of the school and in identifying priorities.

Improvement since the last inspection is inadequate because some significant issues identified have not been resolved. However, improvements have been made in the EYFS provision and in attendance. Other important issues, such as the well below average standards in English in Years 3 to 6 and the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or with English as an additional language, are only just beginning to be tackled effectively. The

headteacher and recently appointed leadership team have a clear vision for the school, however, they cannot yet show that their actions have had any significant impact in raising pupils' standards.

The school failed to meet the challenging targets set for 2008. As a result, the local authority is supporting it with an action plan to raise standards, support the headteacher and provide two additional local authority governors.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children are happy and enjoy school because learning is fun. They enter the EYFS with skills well below the expected levels for their age, particularly in communication and social and emotional development, and improve quickly due to well-focused activities on those areas of learning. More emphasis is now being placed on reading, writing and calculating skills in the Reception class to boost pupils' skills. Children who spend only one or two terms in Reception make less progress in developing their basic skills and because they have had several temporary teachers their rate of progress is not rapid.

Children make good progress in the areas of learning because the well-planned curriculum has a good balance of teacher directed and pupil initiated activities. There is good emphasis on enquiry skills. The children enjoy learning both outdoors and in class because they have well-structured activities. Relationships with parents are mutually supportive and parents appreciate home visits. One parent commented that 'the nursery cares well about my child. They are like a second mother.' Good leadership and management help to ensure that children's welfare needs are given a high priority. Staff measure thoroughly and record systematically children's individual progress towards the expected goals. They take early action to identify and support any pupils who are making less progress than expected.

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

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science, particularly in Key Stage 2 and make sure that pupils of all abilities reach their potential.
- Improve teaching, particularly at Key Stage 2, ensuring that all teachers know how to use assessment information to plan learning and guide pupils to their next steps to be achieved.
- Develop the skills of the leadership team to monitor the work of the school with rigour, aiming for consistency of practice and utilising the good practice already in place.
- Strengthen governance, particularly in monitoring the school's work more systematically so that governors can hold the school to account.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

By the end of Year 2 pupils make satisfactory progress and reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics but too few reach the higher levels. The recently introduced phonics and writing programme, along with better use of assessment by teachers, are beginning to accelerate pupils' progress in reading and the quality of writing. In Key Stage 2, however, progress is inadequate and standards are well below the national average and well below those predicted by the school. Although a few more pupils reached higher levels in writing in 2008, the proportion reaching the expected Level 4 is too low. Standards and achievement are particularly low in mathematics although booster classes are having a beneficial effect on

learners. Many changes of teachers in year 6, inadequate use of assessment and a legacy of underachievement through the key stage have led to the low standards. Until very recently, teaching has also failed to ensure that pupils with moderate learning difficulties and those who are learning English for the first time make adequate progress.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They learn to be responsible citizens as Junior Street Leaders, cleaning graffiti and planting trees. Events such as Black History Month contribute to their knowledge and understanding of a range of ethnic groups. Pupils from all backgrounds interact and work well together and have a sound understanding of the importance of living in a cohesive community. Many pupils talk of how much they enjoy lessons. Behaviour is good in lessons where teaching motivates pupils. It is more variable in less stimulating lessons; however, poor behaviour is generally managed well. Pupils say they feel safe and bullying is dealt with effectively. The school has worked hard to encourage better attendance and punctuality and attendance is now broadly average. The recently formed school council has resulted in pupils having more opportunities to express their ideas and take action to bring about changes. They have raised funds for playground equipment and have had a strong influence on the improvement of the school grounds. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating and making the right choices in leading a healthy lifestyle. As pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy are inadequate, the school is not contributing effectively to their future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 4**

Relationships are good in classes and pupils cooperate well in pairs and groups. When lessons have good pace and provide stimulus and challenge, pupils enjoy learning and are eager to learn. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory. In Years 3 to 6 they are unsatisfactory, because pupils' progress over time is inadequate. Teachers plan work to different levels of difficulty, but often the work is too easy for pupils. This is because teachers are failing to use assessment information to make sure pupils reach the next challenge in their learning. This is particularly the case in mathematics. In English it is less so, because teachers are working more effectively to help pupils accelerate their progress in reading and writing and are keeping better records of achievements. In English they are beginning to use a common marking scheme and to set pupils' individual targets but this is new and its use is inconsistent. In mathematics, targets were not in evidence, the challenge of the work was often inappropriate and assessment records poor. Teaching assistants give good support when they have clear direction. Teachers have good resources such as interactive whiteboards but they are not always used well.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum meets statutory requirements. The information and communication technology (ICT) suite and interactive whiteboards in classrooms have improved opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in the use of new technology. The strengths of the curriculum lie in the

educational activities within the local area and residential visits that provide first hand learning experiences. Other enrichment activities, including specialist visitors and after school activities, are received with great enthusiasm. Physical education lessons and some sporting clubs contribute well to pupils taking exercise and being healthy. Opportunities for pupils to develop creativity, enterprise skills and business understanding are held back by their insecure basic skills. The intervention programmes, including booster groups and individual support sessions, are beginning to meet effectively the needs of pupils with moderate learning difficulties. This is because staff have had training in the use of the programmes and in measuring their impact on learning.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 4**

Although the school works hard to promote equality of opportunity, there are inconsistencies in the achievement of different groups of pupils and guidance to help them improve in their learning is inadequate. The academic progress made by individual pupils and each class is tracked effectively but the use of this information by teachers in their planning varies widely. Too often, pupils are not clear about the progress they have made, what they have to do next and their targets are not challenging enough. Pupils say they feel safe and secure during their time at school and adults listen to their views and take care of them. Child protection and welfare procedures are robust and a strength of the school. The restorative justice system gives clear guidelines and procedures for ensuring resolution of differences.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 4**

The school lacks the capacity to improve. This is because the procedures set up by the headteacher and senior managers to monitor and evaluate the school's work are new and lack rigour. Subject leadership is variable but inadequate overall. Initiated by the English subject leader and the inclusion manager, teachers have had training to increase their skills and expertise in teaching phonic and writing skills. This is beginning to show improved progress of pupils but this is uneven across the school. Science has had some support from the Local Authority but results remained low in 2008. There is a new a manager for ICT and they have not had time to have had an impact on standards. Because of long-term absence, the leadership of mathematics is unsatisfactory. Although teachers have had training in using the new Numeracy Strategy, they lack clear guidance on implementing the work, resulting in poor progress made by pupils in Years 3 to 6. Governors recognise that they have failed to challenge the standards of the school sufficiently. The school plays a good part in local events and is working effectively to improve parent teacher links and to address their concerns.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4

### 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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	4

---

<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>	3
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	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	4
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?	4

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	4
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

21 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Townsend Primary School, London, SE17 1HJ

Thank you all for welcoming the inspection team to your school. We found you all to be very friendly and helpful. We enjoyed seeing you working in class, looking at your books and seeing you at play. By now, you have probably heard that we think your school needs some extra help - this is called Special Measures. This means that there are some important things that your school needs to improve and it needs help to put them right as quickly as possible. Your teachers will have help to make the improvements and more inspectors will be visiting you regularly to check on how well the school is making progress.

These are some of the things we liked best about your school:

- your understanding of right and wrong and how to put things right when you disagree
- your work as Junior Citizens, on the school council and as Junior Street Leaders
- your understanding of healthy eating and exercise
- the teachers take good care of you and help you to be safe
- the younger children achieve well.

These are the things we would like your school to improve:

- your progress and attainment in English, mathematics and science especially in Years 3 to 6, so that you reach higher levels
- teachers' knowledge of where you are in your learning so that they can plan lessons that give you the right amount of challenge
- checking the work of the school so that all the teachers are working in the same way
- how governors operate in questioning the headteacher and managers about the standards you are reaching in your work.

You can help your teachers by working hard and behaving well.

Yours sincerely

Lily Evans

Lead Inspector