

Sir William Burrough Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100921
Local Authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	307524
Inspection date	5 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Judith Dawson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	331
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Dennis Twomey
Headteacher	Mrs Avril Newman
Date of previous school inspection	19 January 2004
School address	Salmon Lane Limehouse London E14 7PQ
Telephone number	020 7987 2147
Fax number	020 7515 1858

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector, who evaluated the effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and learning, and attendance.

Evidence was gathered from visits to lessons, pupils' books, discussions with pupils, school monitoring and tracking data, and recent attendance figures. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Sir William Burrough Primary School serves a diverse community with 85% of pupils coming from minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being Bangladeshi. Over 80% of the pupils have home languages other than English and about 20% are in the early stages of learning English. Over 60% of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is very high. More than 20% of pupils join or leave the school at other than the usual times during the year. Fewer pupils than average have learning difficulties or disabilities and the school is dedicated to promoting high achievement, holding several achievement awards. The school specialises in providing a culturally diverse curriculum and is a winner of the International Schools' Award. It holds several awards for music and the arts and is part of a primary specialist schools' pilot for the arts. There are very strong links with local industry as well as links with schools across the world.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Sir William Burrough is an outstanding primary school. The headteacher is dedicated to providing pupils with rich and challenging experiences. Her excellent leadership has resulted in a united and dedicated team of leaders and managers, teachers and support staff. The mantra 'I can do it' is at the heart of the school's ethos and is adopted by pupils and adults alike. Leaders and teachers are constantly seeking ways to enrich pupils' learning and often visit schools in other countries to both support and to learn from them. Parents and pupils are delighted and proud of their school. Comments such as 'The headteacher is inspirational', 'It is a wonderful school' reflect this. Governors support and challenge the school extremely well and bring a high quality range of expertise to their work. The finance committee, for example, makes sure that the budget is used very creatively for the benefit of the pupils. Very strong business and local partnerships generate additional funds and support.

Achievement is excellent. Many children start school with very little or no knowledge of the English language and limited pre-school experiences. By the end of Year 2, they attain average standards in reading and mathematics. In the 2007 national tests, standards in writing were above average although, because they have not had time to develop their language skills fully, few pupils in Year 2 attained the higher levels in all three subjects. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English and mathematics. Standards in science are high. In all subjects, more pupils than average attain the higher levels. In 2007, over half achieved the higher Level 5 in mathematics, while three quarters of the pupils reached Level 5 for science, significantly above average. This equates to high achievement, and is a tribute to pupils' excellent attitudes to work, their teachers' skills and the very effective curriculum. Pupils excel in all other subjects, including information and communication technology (ICT).

Pupils love their school. They enter into as many activities as they can with commitment and gusto. The excellent 60 strong choir, for example, is a tribute to the pupils' hard work; their smiles a testament to the fun they are having. Pupils respect and care for each other and delight in each other's achievements. They have won many sports and arts awards and taken part in competitions as diverse as debating, public speaking and the BBC Radio 3 Choir of the Year competition. These skills and their achievements in the basic skills and ICT equip pupils extremely well for adulthood. Pupils take their responsibilities very seriously and are well aware of their place in the community. All pupils know how to keep healthy and safe, which is very useful knowledge for older pupils in their fencing lessons! Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' below average attendance was the only issue for improvement. Attendance is greatly improved, and is now outstanding when compared with schools that are similar to Sir William Burrough. As one parent commented, 'My little girl can't wait to get to school every day.'

Teaching and learning are outstanding because pupils' needs are at the heart of the school's work. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and provide them with very well planned activities to meet their needs. For example, the tracking of pupils' progress revealed a dip in progress in mathematics in Years 3 and 4. Therefore, in September the school introduced a new scheme of work to promote rapid learning of number skills, including the use of ICT to enable pupils to measure their progress. This is already having a positive impact on learning. All adults use high quality questioning techniques to both measure and extend learning, and oral guidance in lessons is exemplary. However, teachers' marking sometimes does not give advice about exactly what pupils need to do to improve their work. This misses opportunities for enabling

pupils to use their excellent attitudes to learning to take personal responsibility for extending their skills.

Teachers have impressive subject knowledge and skills to make learning relevant and interesting. The exciting, relevant and innovative curriculum ensures that pupils use and extend the basic skills acquired in the mornings to the International Primary Curriculum in the afternoons. The school fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum while extending and deepening pupils' knowledge of their own and other cultures. There is excellent provision for science and ICT, very effective use of visits and visitors to extend learning in the humanities, and outstanding specialist teaching for the arts. There is a wide range of additional activities, as diverse as Bangladeshi language club and chess, dance and boys' and girls' football. Many older pupils attend at least four clubs. Pupils are cared for extremely well, have excellent oral and pastoral guidance and are supported and encouraged in all that they undertake. The school meets government requirements for safeguarding pupils. The school has the 'Healthy Schools' award and encourages environmental awareness. This is a school where everyone is valued and cherished, and that generates high self-esteem through the satisfaction of high achievement in personal skills and across the curriculum.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children have a flying start to their education in the Nursery class and they make rapid progress throughout the Foundation Stage. When they start school, many children have low levels of knowledge and skills in communication, language and literacy, and in personal and social development. They have exemplary care and support to help them settle into school and, if necessary, to begin to understand and then speak English. The excellent curriculum, with plenty of practical activities, builds on and extends children's experiences. One girl in the Nursery, for example, had not seen a runner bean before. She was helped to learn the name of the vegetable as she did her 'shopping' and then tasted it. Older children in the Reception class ran a pizza shop and designed and packed their pizzas. The inside and outside environments are exciting and encourage experimentation, the development of skills and cooperative play. In both classes, teachers are good at teaching basic reading, writing and mathematical skills. Activities generate many occasions that require children to write or count. They make shopping lists, menus and write invitations. Adults track children's progress carefully, writing notes and taking photographs to form each child's portfolio of achievement. They use these assessments to identify and respond to specific needs as well as planning the child's next steps across the areas of learning. Children behave very well, have excellent relationships with the adults who teach them, and thoroughly enjoy themselves.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make the most of pupils' eagerness to learn by ensuring teachers' marking gives them advice about how to improve the work they have completed and what they need to learn next.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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 the 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

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.

Annex A

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 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	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**

18 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sir William Burrough Primary School, London, E14 7PQ

Thank you all very much indeed for helping to make my visit to your school so enjoyable. You are so friendly and helpful that I felt very welcome. I really enjoyed talking to you all. A special thanks to the school council and the many of you who chatted to me during the day. I will remember your beautiful singing, lively Rock and Roll and excellent artwork for a long time.

You told me how much you enjoy school and appreciate all that it has to offer. I am not surprised that the school council found it difficult to think of ways it could be improved! You work very hard and are very successful in what you do. From the time you join the school until you leave, you make excellent progress. This is not only because of your hard work but also because you have excellent teachers and fantastic opportunities to learn about many things. I know you and your parents feel very privileged to belong to your school. You all have every right to feel extremely proud of yourselves and your outstanding school. You have an excellent headteacher who, with other leaders and the governors, makes sure that your school continues to provide you with plenty of new things to learn and lots of fun. Above all, she makes sure that each one of you remembers that 'I can do it'. And indeed you can!

I know how ambitious you all are to do the best that you can. Teachers give you lots of wise advice in lessons. I have asked them to make sure that they write down what you need to do to make your work even better when they mark it. This will help you to be responsible for improving it yourselves. It will also help you see how much your work improves as you take their advice. That will be even more for you to celebrate.

I am very impressed with your excellent behaviour and the way everyone in your school cares for each other. Your school is indeed a very happy place to be. It is no wonder that now everybody does their very best not to miss school. I was sorry to leave you all. Keep up the excellent work and enjoy all your school has to offer.

Best wishes

Judy Dawson

Lead Inspector