

Wellington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100927
Local Authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	307527
Inspection dates	26–27 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Martin Beale

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	356
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jill Cochrane
Headteacher	Deborah Keigwin
Date of previous school inspection	22 September 2003
School address	Wellington Way Bow London E3 4NE
Telephone number	020 8980 2413
Fax number	020 8980 6949

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This well above average sized school serves a culturally diverse community. Free school meal eligibility is high as is pupil turnover. The vast majority of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and over half are of Bangladeshi backgrounds. A large number of pupils have a home language other than English and over 10% are at an early stage of learning English. There are some large gender differences in each year group and two mixed-age classes.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Wellington Primary School is a good school that serves its community well. Through the determined leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by a strong and experienced senior team, the school has improved in recent years and provides a good education for its pupils. Parents are overwhelming in their support for all that members of staff do for their children. They are delighted with the school's efforts to involve them in their children's education. As one wrote, 'They really communicate well with us in every situation, and like to involve us in all kinds of activities that take place in school.'

Parents are pleased that the school takes the care and welfare of their children so seriously. Pupils are happy and say they feel safe in school because, 'We are one big family' and because any problems are dealt with quickly. They contribute much to the calm and purposeful atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils are keen to succeed, work hard and behave well at all times. They thoroughly enjoy lessons and participate enthusiastically in the wide range of after-school activities. They value the contribution music and drama make to their life in school. Attendance levels are rising. The 'Improving School Attendance' project and celebration of good attendance have resulted in a considerable reduction in the number of persistent absentees.

Pupils build a secure base for success in their future education and beyond. Their good achievement and rising standards are based on lessons that focus well on key skills and largely tackle their individual needs. Pupils make good progress from well below average attainment on entry and standards are average by Year 6. Standards are high in writing because teachers are very aware of the levels at which pupils are working, and how to move them on to the next level. Teachers also provide plenty of opportunity for pupils to develop their writing from first-hand experiences in a wide range of subjects. One area identified by the school as a priority for improvement is that teachers do not consistently challenge the more able pupils in mathematics and science. There are also inconsistencies in the impact of marking and the pupils' understanding of how to take the next steps to meet their targets for improvement.

Thorough assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress in English and mathematics enables the school to deal very well with any barriers that might hamper learning. New arrivals are helped to settle quickly and where necessary given effective support in acquiring English language skills so that they soon access all areas of school life.

The school deals well with the challenges of high staff turnover and high pupil mobility, as the senior team gives stability and a clear direction to its work. Incisive monitoring of the performance of staff and pupils gives the senior team and governors a sharp insight into the school's qualities. This is leading to well founded plans for the school's improvement. Priorities focus sharply on how to raise pupils' achievement and secure their well-being. From this secure platform, the school is well placed to meet its challenges and its goal of being even better in all that it does.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children start in the Nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding below that of typical three-year-olds, particularly in their language and mathematical skills. They make good progress during their time in the Foundation Stage so that most reach levels expected for their age in all areas of learning by the end of Reception, except in aspects of literacy and numeracy.

Children settle into school life well and make good progress in their personal and social development. The school makes good use of its accommodation and children respond well to the good range of indoor and outdoor learning opportunities provided for them, and to adults' expectations of them. Adults plan activities that successfully encourage investigation and exploration. Children work together well and, as a result, develop their self-confidence. The 'key adult' system employed in the Nursery is developing well, although adult support is not always used effectively to promote children's learning. Leadership and teamwork are developing well, although the Foundation Stage team is a very new one and the impact of recent initiatives has yet to be seen in any sustained way.

What the school should do to improve further

- Achieve greater consistency in the challenge teaching provides for the more able pupils in mathematics and science.
- Use targets and marking more effectively to help pupils understand the next steps to take in their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress during their time at the school, and some pupils who need extra help with their learning do even better than this. The results of assessments for Year 2 pupils have risen. Writing results were very high in 2007 and reading and mathematics in line with the national average, although relatively few reached higher levels in mathematics. Year 6 test results have also risen over the last three years. They were average in English and mathematics but below average in science in 2007. More pupils than nationally reached the expected level in English and mathematics, but few exceeded this in writing, mathematics and science. The school's action in response to this is showing signs of raising achievement in these areas with increasing numbers of pupils working above the levels expected for their age, particularly in writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. It develops well through the guidance of staff and their good relationships with the pupils. Pupils behave well, taking their responsibilities conscientiously and treating others with respect. They value the diversity of cultures they meet in school, and help newcomers settle quickly. They have very positive attitudes to their school and respond enthusiastically when asked to work in pairs and groups. Pupils' enjoyment of school is obvious. One said, 'My school is the best place I want to be.' The pupils understand what constitutes a healthy diet, and the Activemark award is recognition of the school's success in helping pupils to take regular physical exercise. Pupils are proud of their school, their achievements and their contribution to its improvement. Pupils contribute to the local community by taking part in fund-raising activities such as Jeans for Genes Day and Sport Relief. Their personal qualities and good progress in key skills place the pupils in a strong position for success in the next stage of their education and beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

In spite of the turnover of staff, the quality of teaching has been maintained because the headteacher's high expectations are shared by the leadership team. Classrooms are interesting and exciting places in which to learn. The skilled team of teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the achievement of pupils who need extra support with their learning. Pupils are confident that their contributions are valued and so are keen to participate in class discussions or when sharing ideas with their 'talk partner'. They work well together in pairs or small groups, happily sharing ideas and tasks. Teachers' skills in the use of new technology such as interactive whiteboards are improving and learning is made interesting by the use of different methods and resources. Teaching is based on what pupils can do, so their progress is generally secure in the mixed-age classes. However, this is not always the case for the more able pupils in mathematics and science.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The rich curriculum reflects the school's commitment to make learning meaningful and enjoyable. Consequently, pupils thrive and achieve well both academically and personally. The sharp focus on the core subjects is leading to rising standards. The school is starting to explore how linking subjects more closely might make learning even more interesting. A key strength is the wide range of after-school clubs and sporting activities in which the school particularly excels. Visits and trips to museums, galleries, cultural events and other places of interest considerably enrich the pupils' experiences and enjoyment. Creative arts activities such as learning to play the violin make a major contribution to school life. School journeys to outdoor adventure centres give pupils a sense of independence, personal responsibility and self-awareness. The school's close links with local secondary schools benefit the pupils in several ways such the use of specialist teachers for the creative arts and science revision.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The commitment of all staff to ensuring the care and welfare of all pupils is visible in all areas of the school. Child protection and other safeguarding procedures are robust and secure. The school works very closely with parents and strives to involve them in every aspect of school life by holding weekly meetings on topics such as 'Helping children with mathematics' and 'Health and well-being'. The school's close links with outside agencies help pupils make progress including specific speech and language support. Highly effective systems are in place to track pupils' progress, identify underachievement and take focused action to help pupils to catch up. However, pupils are not always involved in assessing their own progress. They do not consistently know their targets, and marking does not always help them to know how to extend their learning further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has high expectations of staff and pupils, sets challenging targets for their improvement and provides support and guidance for these to be achieved. With senior leaders, she sets a very clear direction for improvement and promotes high quality care for pupils. This commitment is shared by all members of staff, who work well as a team. The leadership team carefully monitors and supports the quality of provision and places a strong emphasis on improving the quality of teaching and learning in order to raise standards. The roles of subject and phase leaders are less well developed because many are relatively new in post. However, the school has good structures in place for their support, including the regular involvement of an external consultant. Governors have supported the school through their recent developments but do not have secure ways of obtaining first-hand evidence of how well the school is doing.

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
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

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?	2

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?	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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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	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

21 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wellington Primary School, London, E3 4NE

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave to us when we visited your school. You were all very helpful. We enjoyed talking to you and your teachers and watching you learn. You showed us how proud you are of your school. You and your parents are right in thinking that you go to a good school.

The youngest of you have a sound start in Nursery and Reception. The rest of you make good progress during your time at school. You enjoy school, attend regularly, work hard and behave sensibly. Your teachers provide many interesting tasks to help you learn and you clearly enjoy the clubs, trips and visits provided for you. All members of staff help to make sure you are safe and cared for well. Those of you who find learning difficult are given good support, particularly if English is a new language to you. You have a good understanding of the importance of diet and exercise for a healthy lifestyle, and make a valuable contribution to school life.

Your headteacher, teachers and governors are trying hard to make the school better. We think that there are things that can be even better so we have asked your teachers to:

- make sure they consistently challenge those of you who are capable of high standards in mathematics and science
- use targets and marking more effectively to help you understand the next steps to take in your learning.

You can play your part in this by continuing to attend regularly and trying hard to do your best. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale

Lead Inspector