

Chesterton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101003
Local Authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	307559
Inspection dates	10–11 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Sue Rogers

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	297
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Leonie Cooper
Headteacher	Mr Harry Cowd and Mr Mark Siswick
Date of previous school inspection	31 March 2003
School address	Dagnall Street Battersea London SW11 5DT
Telephone number	020 7622 1619
Fax number	020 7738 8184

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	10–11 March 2008
Inspection number	307559

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: 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 three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Chesterton is a large primary school, which serves an urban area that is economically deprived. This is evidenced by the fact that the number of pupils who take free school meals is well above average. Families move in and out of the area far more frequently than is usual. This is a diverse multicultural community and the number of pupils of minority ethnic origin is much higher than the national average. Over two thirds of the pupils require extra support in learning English as an additional language when they arrive. The school holds the Investors in People award. It is unusual in that it has two full-time headteachers.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that provides a very high quality of education for its pupils. Pupils reach exceptionally high standards in their academic work and their personal development is outstanding because of excellent care by staff who work extremely well together. Standards in reading, mathematics and science are exceptionally high. Improvement since the last inspection has been very impressive. The vast majority of parents agree that the school is a very good one and are happy that their children enjoy school so much.

Children enter the school with skills and knowledge that are more limited than would normally be expected of three- and four-year-olds. Their social, mathematical and language skills are especially weak, partly because so many cannot speak English. They make excellent progress because the school works so hard to overcome all these barriers to their learning. Staff quickly identify pupils in need of extra help and they receive well-designed individual and group support. The teaching throughout the school is consistently good and often outstanding.

Progress made in reading, mathematics and science is exceptionally good. Progress in English is also very good, but the school recognises that pupils' progress in writing is slower when compared with reading. Although pupils who do not speak English receive very good support and do very well, they still find it hard to master English grammar and punctuation, which slows their progress in writing. Standards in other curriculum subjects have improved substantially in recent years, although information communications technology (ICT) is less developed and pupils do not use it as often as they could in other lessons. For this reason, the curriculum is good rather than outstanding, as provision for ICT is also improving and is now well balanced.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and cannot find much that they want to improve. One parent confirmed this by writing, 'He (her son) loves school so much that he hates it if he is ill and therefore unable to attend'. Pupils like and respect the staff and find lessons interesting. Staff reinforce rules consistently and fairly. As a result the pupils make excellent and commendable progress in their social skills. They behave very well and are enthusiastic and sensible, working very hard. Outstanding provision in cultural education also contributes to their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' good social skills additionally help them to make a positive contribution to the community. Belonging to the school council helps them to represent the views of other pupils and they are proud of the changes they have made, such as improvements to dining arrangements. Novel projects, such as a link with New Covent Garden in which pupils are tracking the source of their 'five a day' fruit and vegetables helps them to learn a great deal about how to be healthy. Their understanding of how to be safe is also excellent. Pupils who have gone onto secondary school come back to the school to say how well they are doing, confirming that they have been thoroughly prepared for the next stages in their education. Pupils are exceptionally well looked after and supported. They also receive good academic guidance in providing helpful pointers for improvement, although this is not yet entirely consistent.

The two headteachers lead the school very well and work very effectively in an innovative partnership that has ensured continuity of leadership when one of the headteachers retires. They have built a very strong team of teachers, many of whom take on the role of 'leaders in learning' in different subjects. Their understanding of the schools' strengths and weaknesses and monitoring of actions taken is excellent. Consequently, the school has improved very rapidly over the last few years and has made excellent progress since its last inspection. Personal

development, especially behaviour, and standards in all areas have improved significantly. The school therefore has an excellent capacity to improve still further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The Foundation Stage has also improved recently. Excellent management and consistently good teaching ensure that the children get off to a very good start. They are making excellent progress, such that most children are working securely within the levels expected for their age in most areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Staff work well together, making effective use of assessment to plan a wide range of stimulating activities. These address the varied needs of the children and develop their language skills extremely well. For example, children were seen enthusiastically talking about the world we live in, the ocean and its habitats whilst exploring 'floating and sinking'. They enjoy learning in a well-organised, spacious and colourful environment. The warm, positive dialogue between staff and children and the staff's consistent, active involvement in the children's activities makes learning meaningful and pleasurable. On occasion, teachers' planning is not sufficiently precise and this can result in talk with children being less helpful in optimising and extending learning further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, so that they match the current high levels in science and mathematics, by improving the quality of pupils' writing.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

There has been a dramatic improvement in standards in all areas due to the school's hard work over recent years. Pupils make excellent progress from very low starting points, especially in mathematics and science. Leaders are not complacent and continue to focus on thinking skills and investigation in these subjects, to improve the number of pupils achieving higher levels in their tests even further. Teachers use assessment information extremely well to track the progress of all pupils. As a result, targets are very challenging and they are revised regularly. Pupils do slightly less well in English because many do not speak English when they start at school. Teachers do very well to enthuse pupils and build their vocabulary and pupils' blossom, producing expressive writing such as this, 'The icicle diving like a bird of prey, a witches' fingernail brushing your cheek'.

Nevertheless, leaders know that they have still more work to do on language structure and punctuation and they have taken effective steps by appointing a leader expressly to manage writing improvement. Pupils who are identified as being behind in their work, or who need additional support with reading, writing or mathematics, go on to make exceptionally good progress, because of excellent support, which is overseen by the interventions manager.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils enjoy school very much and mention drama, ICT and education games in particular, as areas that motivate them. Their excellent contribution to the community is shown as they undertake responsible roles through membership of the school and eco councils. The latter are actively involved in improving the quality of the school environment, such as ensuring sensible

waste disposal by using the recycle bins. They feel happy that they are consulted on the running of the school through effective systems such as the use of a suggestions box. Pupils' participation in fundraising activities further enhances the outstanding sense of community. Teachers take very good opportunities for pupils to learn about and reflect on citizenship and alienation from society, as one pupil maturely demonstrated when he wrote, 'Gangs these days have no heart or souls, gangs these days do not worship'.

Pupils say that they feel very safe and confidently approach staff to express concerns. They have an excellent awareness of the dangers of smoking, drugs and as well as having good knowledge about keeping themselves safe on the internet. Behaviour is excellent and pupils are polite and very considerate of each other, caring for those who are upset or less able to look after themselves. Attendance is satisfactory and the school has done as much as it can in challenging circumstances to improve attendance to this level.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching is consistently good because the teachers have excellent relationships with the pupils and manage behaviour very well. They make outstanding use of support staff to help pupils who are struggling with any work. They plan very effectively, making good use of assessment information to ensure that all pupils get work that is pitched at the right level for their needs and building in good levels of challenge. Generally, teachers are very adept at using examples and demonstrating exactly what is required. For example, Year 2 pupils were very clear about how to write captions because of the motivating use of plant pictures on the interactive whiteboard. However, on occasion, the criteria given to pupils so that they know how to be successful are a little too vague and consequently, in some lessons, the pupils do not produce work that is of good enough quality.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy their curriculum because it is lively and varied. English and mathematics receive appropriate prominence and are effectively incorporated into teaching in other lessons so that pupils get as much practice as possible. However, there are not yet enough opportunities provided for pupils to experience ICT in other subjects. The curriculum is flexible, so that it responds to changes in pupils' needs and backgrounds, such as the increase in pupils joining the school from Somalia. It is also adapted to build in one-off opportunities, such as a visit to the Royal Ballet School. Learning is promoted through particular themes such as science week when pupils observed owls and birds of prey flying in the hall. Pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is partly a result of excellent assemblies that provide them with excellent opportunities to reflect on spiritual and moral themes and to celebrate cultures and customs from around the world.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Parents and pupils very much appreciate the excellent care that pupils receive from staff. This is very well supported by a good social skills programme and learning mentors are proactive in addressing self-confidence and helping friendships to develop. As a result, pupils thrive and

make excellent progress. The interventions manager works very hard to ensure that all groups of pupils make equally good progress because they all have the right kind of support. The school has very effective procedures and policies aimed at safeguarding the pupils so they are safe from harm or harassment. Teachers use very robust systems to monitor the academic progress of pupils. They regularly discuss pupils' targets. Marking is good, but it is not entirely consistent in explaining what pupils need to do next to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The school's rapid improvement over recent years demonstrates clearly that leadership and management are outstanding. The headteachers have built a new senior leadership team, which has very clear vision and knows exactly what is needed. The team are utilising several pioneering approaches, as the headteacher partnership indicates. There are extremely good links with a number of other agencies and partnerships, such as the Battersea Power Station and Arts Centre projects. Leaders are also working hard on 'building schools for the future' initiatives with their adjacent secondary school. The team is sensibly organised so that leaders of learning shadow each other's jobs. This means that they can cover the work and ensure continuity if someone leaves. Monitoring and improvement planning are exemplary. The governing body has also improved. They too, know the school well and challenge effectively. However, their work could be still more effective, as not everything they do to challenge the school is systematically recorded and followed up in their meetings.

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.

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?	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	1
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	3
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?	2
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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

18 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chesterton Primary School, London, SW11 5DT

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school this week. You were very polite, very helpful, and very happy to tell us how much you like school. We especially enjoyed talking to the school council and the members of the Eco Council. We were pleased that you are working so hard to improve your environment.

We think that your school is an excellent school that gives you an exceptionally good education. We can understand why you are so keen to come. All of you, including those who need extra help, make excellent progress in your lessons. You do extremely well in your tests in Year 6, especially in mathematics and science. Your behaviour is excellent and we really liked the way that the staff look after you and you all look after each other. You learn a great deal about health and safety through interesting projects and your school council works hard to make sure you all help to improve your school. We agree with you that your headteachers and all the other staff are outstanding.

You do very well already, but we have asked your teachers to try to make sure that your results in English are as good as they are in science and mathematics, by helping you to improve your writing.

With very best wishes

Sue Rogers

Lead Inspector