

Edwin Lambert School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102276
Local Authority	Havering
Inspection number	307955
Inspection dates	15–16 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Peter Sudworth

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	327
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alan Gopal
Headteacher	Mr Graham Player
Date of previous school inspection	17 November 2003
School address	Malvern Road Hornchurch RM11 1BQ
Telephone number	01708 743704
Fax number	01708 730812

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Children begin the Nursery in the September following their third birthday in this larger than average primary school. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is higher than in most schools. The proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals and from an ethnic minority are below average. The headteacher was unavoidably absent during the inspection and the deputy headteacher was leading the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Edwin Lambert is a good school. It has made good progress since the last inspection. Pupils achieve well by the end of Year 6 in reaching above average standards. The progress pupils make from Year 2 to Year 6 has been increasing consistently over the past three years and has been good in the last two years. National test results show that in 2007 the school was in the top ten per cent of schools in the country for the progress that Year 6 pupils made since Year 2.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school, feel their children are making good progress and, as one commented, have 'fantastic opportunities'. Comments such as, 'My son welcomes each day,' 'A happy school which boosts pupils' confidence,' and, 'The teachers make each day fun,' support the school's own correct evaluation of itself. One parent's comments sum up the views of many. 'The teachers provide a safe, nurturing environment in which all children can learn and grow.'

Overall, the teaching is good. It is strongest and more consistently good in Years 3 to 6, though there are also examples of good teaching elsewhere. Children in the Foundation Stage get off to a flying start because of the well organised provision and so make good progress. Teachers work hard, are committed and want to do the best for the children. They largely succeed. However, writing is a weaker area of work in Years 1 and 2 because it is taught too formally. Over reliance on using worksheets adversely affects opportunities for pupils to write creatively and slows their progress in developing independent writing skills. Overall standards in Year 2 in reading and mathematics are broadly average, but they are below expectations in writing.

Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy school and develop very well as young people, making an outstanding contribution to the community. They are prepared well for their futures and the next stage of their education through their studies and the very good development of their social skills. They fulfil their wide range of responsibilities in the school most conscientiously. Pupils get on very well together and have very positive attitudes to their work. They understand and practise healthy living, engage regularly in physical exercise and eat healthily. Pupils are well cared for and have much confidence in all the adults.

The curriculum is developing well with good provision for extra-curricular activities. Pupils who find learning difficult are supported effectively and so they also make good progress towards their individual learning targets.

The school's good leadership is effective in creating a team ethos where everyone plays their part. The governing body is developing well and takes a keen interest in the school's affairs. It has a good perception of the school's strengths and its areas for development. Its views, together with those of staff, parents and pupils, contribute to the correct priorities for development. The school has good systems to ensure provision is monitored regularly and so aspects for improvement in different subjects are known, understood and acted upon. Staff meetings and team meetings are planned well in advance and staff have good opportunities for continuing professional development. The good teamwork, the hard work of staff and the continuing successful focus on school improvement indicate that it has a good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Overall, the children start in the Nursery with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age, especially in language and social development. Children settle well into school. Good teaching in the Foundation Stage, supported by effective teamwork, enables the children to progress well. Most children currently are reaching expectations for the end of Reception in the areas of learning, but the proportions doing so vary from year to year dependent on the relative starting points of the children. Activities are well planned with good opportunities for children to experiment with different equipment and initiate their own activities. In some of these, however, adults do not interact with children well enough to move the learning forward by extending and building on previous experiences. Staff are innovative in trying out new strategies both indoors and outdoors, despite the constraints of the accommodation. Leadership of the provision is good with a clear vision of how to move forward.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing by the end of Year 2 and provide more opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to write creatively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make consistently good progress in Years 3 to 6 and rates of progress have been increasing year-on-year. Good teaching, high expectations and very helpful marking in these year groups have contributed to the significant improvement in standards in recent years. Test results show that an above average percentage of pupils have been reaching the higher levels in the core subjects. Current data suggest that the pattern could be repeated this year. Pupils who find learning difficult make good progress by the end of Year 6 because of the effective extra support that they receive in small groups and individually. High percentages of pupils with learning difficulties have meant that results have recently been falling in Year 2. While pupils reach a broadly average standard overall, a significant number of Year 2 pupils do not reach a high enough standard in writing. In the main, however, pupils make good progress by the end of Year 2 given their capabilities, although few reach the higher levels, particularly in writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils develop a good level of respect for themselves and others and are very polite, well behaved and enthusiastic about their learning. Their attendance is above average. They keenly participate in the wide range of opportunities available to take on class and whole-school responsibilities, such as membership of the school council, whose suggestions have helped enliven playtimes. Pupils' involvement in the school and local communities is outstanding. Pupils make a very good contribution to enjoyable playtimes as play organisers and 'buddies' to those who are lonely. They raise large sums of money for a range of charities, for example, the local children's hospice. Pupils eagerly participate in local sporting and musical events and practise re-cycling in their responsibility towards the environment. They have a genuine understanding of how they can help. 'We care about helping people-like young carers,' they say. Pupils leave school as confident and well-rounded individuals and are well prepared for

secondary school. They know how to live healthily and safely and many take part in the very good range of extra activities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Classrooms are neat and well ordered. Classes are well managed. Teachers prepare the lessons well and have good subject knowledge of what they teach. Respectful relationships foster a good atmosphere in lessons and so pupils are confident to contribute. Teachers manage the mixed-age classes very effectively by re-arranging pupils so that they work with their same age group for the core subjects. Marking is good overall and particularly helpful in Years 3 to 6 but, throughout the school, staff do not always give enough time for pupils to finish some pieces of work nor enable them to benefit sufficiently from their mistakes. Teaching is at its strongest in Years 3 to 6 because approaches engage the pupils more creatively, for example in writing and challenge the more able pupils more effectively. Staff make good use of visual and practical methods, which keep pupils interested in their work and help make learning fun. Good planning for pupils who are gifted and talented ensures that many reach the higher levels by Year 6.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school meets requirements with a good emphasis on religious education and personal, social and health education. Together with the wide range of extra-curricular activities, including sport and music, the curriculum supports pupils' good personal development. Staff make effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) in different subjects and links between subjects are increasingly being developed. Staff use the school's own 'learning garden' effectively to add interest to pupils' work, as in science. Visits, for example to Colchester Castle, add a liveliness to learning through first-hand experiences that extend pupils' learning and understanding. Volunteer parents make a good contribution to pupils' reading fluency by working one to one with pupils. The use of too many worksheets in English in Years 1 and 2 inhibits pupils' progress in writing. Furthermore, these are not matched well enough to pupils' individual needs. Specific focus weeks, such as the creative arts week, add a good variety to the curriculum. The recent higher profile being given to intervention work for pupils who find learning difficult is benefiting pupils' learning well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school has secure arrangements for child protection and pupils' health and safety and good arrangements for internet safety. Staff know pupils well. Any vulnerable children are identified early. Pupils' individual home-school books provide an effective means of communication. Provision at playtimes is good and a pleasant environment is created for pupils' leisure times. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 play an effective part in these arrangements and support well the social skills of the younger children. Induction arrangements for new children are good. The school has effective links with other professional agencies. There are sufficient qualified first-aiders and good medical facilities.

Most pupils know what they need to do to improve their work through their individual targets, although there is more to do to ensure that this is consistent in all classes. Consequently, the

school is working to make these even more effective and to develop manageable records for foundation subjects (subjects other than English, mathematics and science).

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good systems and teamwork are enabling the school to continue to work smoothly through the enforced absence of its headteacher. For example, the headteacher's guidance to subject leaders for monitoring teaching and learning in different subjects has led to thorough subject audit reports. These detail strengths and areas for development clearly and are based on a secure range of evidence.

Staff enjoy working at the school because it is supportive and appreciative of their efforts. Everyone pulls together. This has resulted in the good improvements since the last inspection and improving standards. The good atmosphere enables staff to develop initiative, trial new ideas and take responsibility. Lesson observations are regular in gauging the quality of learning and teaching, but are sometimes too descriptive and do not pick up enough on pointers for improvements. The school has a good structure of responsibilities.

The governing body is intelligently led and developing very effectively as the critical friend. The school has a plan, in conjunction with the Local Authority, to balance a deficit budget in an agreed time scale. A good range of opinion is taken into account when deciding the priorities for the school development plan, although currently this contains too many routine matters. Nevertheless, it focuses well on improving the pupils' academic and personal development and is one of the main reasons for the school's all round improvement.

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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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	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	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

29 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Edwin Lambert School, Hornchurch, RM11 1BQ

We enjoyed our visit to your school and we thank you for your warm welcome and all the help that you gave us. You attend a good school. We were impressed with your courtesy and enthusiasm for your work and the good progress that you make. Your personal development, including pupils' behaviour, is good. You are developing well as young people with much thought for others and for the environment. You raise a lot of money for those who are less fortunate than yourselves. You engage very well in school and local events and your overall contribution to the community is outstanding. You reach above average standards in your work by Year 6 and make good progress in doing so. However, pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not make as much progress as they might in writing and we have asked the teachers to rely less on worksheets and to give pupils in these year groups more opportunities to write in their own words.

Teaching is good. The teachers work hard and make your lessons interesting. The staff take much care of you. The senior staff have worked very hard along with your headteacher so that the school has made good progress since it was last inspected. The staff work very well as a team. This has enabled them to keep the school running effectively while Mr Player has not been able to attend school. The school is well organised and the staff display your work attractively and with your help keep your classrooms neat and tidy.

We hope that you will continue to work hard and support the staff as they continue to develop the school. Thank you once again for your help.

Yours sincerely

Peter Sudworth

Lead Inspector