

Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102736
Local Authority	Newham
Inspection number	308105
Inspection date	3 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Nick Butt

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	433
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	32
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Adrian Holme
Headteacher	Mrs Ann Buckingham
Date of previous school inspection	6 July 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Mathews Park Avenue London E15 4AE
Telephone number	020 8534 5216
Fax number	020 8555 6962

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. They evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
- Pupils' achievement in English.
- The impact new leadership is having on the school.

The inspectors gathered evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and parents' questionnaires. Discussions with staff, a governor and pupils also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors 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

This larger-than-average school has Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision in the Reception classes. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average. More pupils than usual join and leave the school outside normal times. Over nine tenths of pupils come from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being Bangladeshi. Almost three quarters of the pupils speak English as an additional language, many being at the early stages of language acquisition. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. These include speech and language difficulties. It has the Activemark and Healthy Schools award. The headteacher has been in post since September 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Park Primary is an outstanding school that provides an excellent education for all its pupils. The new headteacher is building on its many existing strengths to take the school forward into a new phase of its development. Her vision is embraced and supported by a highly effective and committed staff team. Parents value the outstanding teaching and learning and the very rapid progress their children make. One commented, 'My children have developed a love of learning and enquiring minds due to the hard work and dedication of the excellent staff'.

From exceptionally low starting points, pupils achieve outstandingly well as a result of excellent teaching and a rich and vibrant curriculum that fully includes the many different groups the school serves. By the end of Year 6 standards are broadly average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Pupils do better in science because teachers give them plenty of practical experience and teach them key vocabulary so that they can use and apply their skills successfully. The many pupils who are learning English as an additional language do particularly well because of the way the activities are tailored to meet their needs, with an emphasis on speaking and listening. The school excels in the visual and performing arts because of its regular use of specialist teachers and because of the superb facilities it enjoys, including a drama studio, a dance studio and an art studio. All pupils spend a day a fortnight studying drama, dance and art whilst their teachers and support assistants are released to plan and prepare lessons. The school is an exceptionally rich learning environment, as corridors and classrooms overflow with high quality colourful displays of pupils' work, including large sculptures and mobiles. Visitors are greeted by two papier mache giraffes and masks used in the school's production of 'The Lion King'.

Pupils' personal development and well-being and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Behaviour is excellent, and pupils are considerate and caring towards one another, values that are reinforced through assemblies. They celebrate one another's cultures and learn about their faiths, visiting different places of worship. Pupils have an extremely good understanding of how to make healthy choices. The school council gives feedback about school dinners and promotes cycling. Pupils support new children as language buddies to help them settle in quickly. They say they feel safe at school and free from bullying. They really like coming and appreciate all the staff do for them. One pupil said, 'The teachers don't come here just to work, they come here because they enjoy it'. This ethos of enjoyment underpins all that the school does, combining academic rigour with exciting and invigorating teaching.

Consequently, pupils have excellent attitudes to learning and are very keen to participate in lessons. The vast majority of pupils attend well and the school places great emphasis on punctuality. The social inclusion coordinator works closely with families who may be experiencing difficulties so that their children do not miss out on school. Pupils reach out to their local community, singing to the elderly and raising money for charity. They also have links with a school in South Africa, helping them to understand how pupils learn in a different environment. The school gives pupils confidence and equips them well for the next stage of their education.

There is a very high proportion of outstanding teaching because teachers have excellent subject knowledge and a real enthusiasm for their work. They generate excitement and interest through planning tasks that are relevant to pupils and take full account of their abilities. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace with searching questions that make pupils think. Teachers use good quality resources, much of their own making, to support pupils' learning. In a Year 3 class the teacher had tried to put a gold border around the whiteboard but the roll had run out before

she could complete it. This led to an excellent discussion about how much extra she would need and how she could measure the difference.

Pupils' outstanding progress is promoted by a high quality curriculum rich in variety and interest. The work in drama, dance and art complements what pupils are learning in other subjects, for example Year 2 pupils devising a gardening dance as part of their environmental studies topic. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 have their own laptop computers, which give them ample opportunity to practise their skills in information and communication technology. It also means they can research topics independently and apply their skills across the curriculum, growing in confidence. The curriculum is enriched by a wide variety of clubs, visits and visitors, with a high participation rate. These include nature club, choir and basketball. Pupils have visited the Tower of London, the Imperial War Museum, taken part in the Olympic Torch ceremony and performed at the Royal Festival Hall.

The impact of leadership and management on the provision and the achievement of pupils is outstanding. The new headteacher is supported very ably by the deputy headteacher and has increased the monitoring roles and responsibilities of phase leaders, who now meet regularly to ensure consistency of approach and to share ideas. Very effective continuous professional development ensures staff are especially well equipped to fulfil their duties. A system of teachers observing lessons in pairs helps to keep judgements consistent. Staff know the children very well and track their individual progress closely, putting in place a wide range of support for any who are struggling. The present tracking system does not clearly show how well year groups are doing over the longer term, and the school recognises that this could be refined further. Leaders have an excellent knowledge of the school's strengths and areas to develop, and this is reflected in high quality strategic plans. The school is extremely effective at reaching and unifying its local community in support of its aims and in practical ways such as through cultural and artistic endeavours.

There is outstanding care, guidance and support for pupils flowing from a caring ethos where every child matters. All safeguarding arrangements are met fully. Excellent provision for pupils with learning difficulties and those with speech and language concerns ensures they make outstanding progress. The school's multi-sensory room supports pupils with complex needs very well. The work of the inclusion manager, social inclusion coordinator and learning mentor dovetail together very effectively to tackle the full range of pupils' needs. Pupils receive extremely good academic guidance because teachers have an excellent understanding of their progress, so that they know what they need to do next to improve.

The school has made very good progress since its last inspection. Standards have been rising much faster than the national trend. New leadership in the governing body involves all governors in the strategic direction of the school, and offers excellent challenge and support. The school has outstanding capacity to continue to go from strength to strength.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children start Reception with skills and abilities that are exceptionally low, especially in language and communication. Children settle quickly because staff make them feel welcome and establish smooth-running routines. The level of care is extremely high. The headteacher and the new EYFS leader have worked very hard this term to implement a child-centred curriculum that encourages children's natural curiosity and offers a good range of interesting and exciting activities to stimulate learning. Children have direct access to the school playground, and staff

ensure that they have regular opportunities to explore different aspects of their learning outside. However, there is no dedicated outdoor play area for children in the EYFS and the present temporary arrangements are not ideal. The school has plans to put this right. There are good assessment systems in place, which build up a comprehensive picture of each child's progress. Effective leadership and management have created an enthusiastic staff team who work together well to ensure that successful teaching helps children to make good progress. Even so, many do not reach the expected early learning goals by the end of the year, because their starting points are so low.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve outdoor provision in the EYFS by establishing a secure designated area where children can work and play freely.
- Refine data systems to enable staff to access more easily assessment information about the progress year groups make.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

16 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Park Primary School, London, E15 4AE

Thank you for making us so welcome at your school. We enjoyed meeting you and think that Park Primary is an outstanding school. Here are some of its particular strengths.

- You make excellent progress in your learning.
- Your achievement in science is particularly good.
- Teachers make lessons really interesting so that you find them exciting and want to learn.
- Your behaviour is outstanding and you look after one another extremely well, especially pupils who are new to the school.
- The curriculum is especially rich, with many opportunities to develop your skills through performance and the visual arts.
- The school cares for you exceptionally well and helps you to do your best.
- There is outstanding leadership from the headteacher and deputy headteacher, which makes sure that the school gets even better.

We think the youngest children get off to a good start, but they need their own outdoor play area. Staff keep a careful track of how well each of you are doing, and we have asked them to show this more clearly over a longer period of time so that they can see how different year groups are progressing as they move through the school.

Thank you once again for your help. Our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr N Butt

Lead Inspector