

Calverton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102758
Local Authority	Newham
Inspection number	308110
Inspection dates	12–13 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Martin Beale

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	332
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	71
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Steve Norris
Headteacher	Miss Shabana Hamid
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2003
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	King George Avenue London E16 3ET
Telephone number	020 7476 3076
Fax number	020 7511 4287

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

A large number of pupils leave or join during the year in this well above average sized school. The community it serves is very diverse and free school meal eligibility is well above average. Three quarters of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with the largest group representing pupils of Black African heritages. Half of the pupils have a mother tongue other than English, although relatively few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils needing extra help with their learning is similar to that in most other primary schools, although the number with a statement of special educational needs is high because the school has an additional resource provision for 14 pupils with autism spectrum disorder. A major change this term is that these pupils are now taught within mainstream classes in the mornings. Provision for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is through Nursery and Reception classes. The school offers additional before- and after-school care for children from Nursery age and upwards. The effectiveness of the school's work in sport has been recognised by the Activemark award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Staff and governors are accurate when they judge the school's effectiveness as satisfactory but improving. The decline in the pupils' achievement following the last inspection has been reversed in the last five terms. The school is particularly successful at meeting the needs of its diverse community. The school has developed several good features under the headteacher's highly effective leadership, as recognised by one parent, who wrote, 'I have seen a huge improvement and look forward to more success in the future.'

One key to the school's improvement is the identification of the needs of all pupils so that carefully planned steps are taken to support their development. All staff show how much they care for the pupils and go the extra mile to ensure they feel safe and secure. This is reflected in the warm relationships between support staff and pupils in the additional resource provision. Being taught in mainstream classes helps them to be included more, and their progress is improving as a result.

Pupils are happy in school, behave well and have a positive approach to learning. They greatly enjoy extra activities during and beyond the school day. Through the emphasis on sport and nutrition, the pupils have a good understanding of the need for healthy lifestyles and are knowledgeable about the effects of lack of exercise and poor diet. The pupils keenly take on responsibility for the welfare of others as peer mediators or 'buddies' for the newly arrived. The school has rigorous procedures to reduce absence, which has risen in recent years but shows signs of falling again.

Teamwork is developing and teachers are keen to improve their practice and share ideas with each other. Within an overall pattern of satisfactory teaching, there are many good lessons where teachers engage the interest of the pupils and move their learning forward briskly. By contrast, there are times when they do not question skilfully or challenge the more able pupils sufficiently. From their below average starting points, pupils make satisfactory progress, although standards are below average by the time they move on to secondary school. Reading has improved considerably through the focus on basic skills but the pupils' extended writing has not seen the same degree of improvement. The slow development of number skills and their application holds back achievement in mathematics.

The headteacher has made a huge difference in many areas. She has almost eliminated the large budget deficit that she faced on arrival, and has not let this get in the way of improving provision for the pupils. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher, the increasingly effective middle leaders and the governors. This school knows itself well, and accurately identifies the key priorities for improvement. The foundations are now in place for achieving the headteacher's high aspirations for everyone associated with the school.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children in the EYFS are happy at school. They are sympathetically supported by all adults, who encourage independence, confidence and respect for others. Teaching is carefully planned to develop learning through adult-led activities as well as those initiated by the children themselves. Careful planning to utilise the outdoor space attached to the Nursery encourages this independence but the restricted space outside for Reception children limits their experiences, particularly given the small size of their classroom. Links with parents are growing in strength.

Parents are encouraged to come into school, and Friday afternoons are open for all parents to visit EYFS classes. There have been meetings for new parents, and home visits will become a feature for the next intake. The EYFS leader is new to the post and is in the process of developing the team, in which most members are also new. Many children have a mother tongue other than English and most children have skills below those expected for their age on entry to the Nursery. They make satisfactory progress while in the EYFS. By the end of Reception, the majority meet their expected goals but several do not, notably in language and communication. Following concerns about the accuracy of data, EYFS staff have received additional training and have sharpened their assessment of the children's progress. As a result, procedures to monitor the children's progress are increasingly rigorous, and planning is more closely linked to individual and group needs.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide effective opportunities for extended writing, the development of basic number skills and mathematical investigations.
- Bring greater consistency to learning by developing teachers' questioning skills and ensuring consistent challenge for the more able pupils.
- Provide better learning opportunities for Reception children in a suitable outdoor classroom.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, but which have areas of underperformance, will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Assessment results fluctuate because the number of pupils who move in and out of the school varies from year to year. Results in both Year 2 and Year 6 are generally below average, although Year 2 results rose sharply in 2008, bringing them in line with the national average and making them significantly better than in similar schools. The school's records show that pupils make satisfactory progress overall. They make good progress in reading because of the recent emphasis on developing basic skills. By contrast, pupils do not have consistent opportunities to undertake extended pieces of writing in a range of styles and contexts. Number skills are not secure, and the more able pupils do not have the opportunity to apply these sufficiently to solve problems and undertake investigations. Pupils who need extra help with their learning make satisfactory progress, as do those learning English as an additional language, particularly once they have developed confidence in their new language.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' enjoyment of school shows in their positive attitudes and good behaviour, but not always in regular attendance. Their personal skills and satisfactory basic skill development give a sound platform for success in the future. Pupils say behaviour has improved and they know what happens if anyone behaves inappropriately. They feel secure and know how to stay safe, for example when working on the internet. Pupils talk proudly of their contribution to school life. This sense of responsibility is seen in their relationships with pupils in the additional resource provision. One boy said of his friend, 'Sometimes he cries and it's sad because he can't tell us how he feels, but he is one of us.' Their pupil council takes on current issues and they are involved considerably in the local community. Pupils participate in the local carnival, the

choir sings to the elderly at the Ascension Church, and contributions are raised for children in the local hospice. The pupils welcome diversity and are keen to learn about the customs and values of others. This gives them a good picture of their place in the wider world. These factors contribute to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The pupils enjoy lessons when teachers make learning interesting through lively teaching and stimulating activities. Resources are deployed well and teachers use the whiteboards with increasing confidence and skill. Assessment information is being used when planning lessons, but not always to ensure that there is sufficient challenge for the more able pupils. All pupils enjoy sharing their ideas with others and rehearsing their answers to questions posed, although this has limited impact when teachers do not plan these carefully. Furthermore, there are times when their questions do not require pupils to think deeply and provide detailed answers. Members of the large team of support staff make a very valuable contribution to learning, particularly those who work with pupils within the additional resource provision. They have formed close relationships, are patient, and are fully involved in all aspects of the lesson, understanding clearly the specific needs of those they support.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum gives a balance of experiences to the pupils, but is not yet sufficiently effective in ensuring good progress throughout the school. Themed activities, such as last summer's cross-curricular study of countries participating in the Olympics and culminating in a carnival, bring learning to life and create opportunities for pupils to widen their interests and share their work. The school has identified the potential for activities such as this, and establishing more effective links between subjects, to become the next step in making the curriculum more exciting. Pupils enjoy the wide range of clubs, educational visits and trips, such as the Year 5 annual team-building residential. Participants develop their personal skills successfully, but the school does not sufficiently monitor the uptake and impact of the after-school activities to ensure that more pupils benefit from these opportunities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents are pleased with the school's efforts to ensure their children's welfare. Pupils say they feel safe and have an adult to turn to with any concerns that they may have. Assessment is used well to monitor the pupils' progress and identify where extra help is needed. Learning mentors make a valuable contribution to the support for individual pupils and their families, by having a clear understanding of their circumstances and building constructive relationships with their homes. Additional expertise from outside agencies helps to provide valuable support, particularly for those with a statement of special educational needs, and those in the additional resource provision. Academic guidance is developing well. The school has done much to improve the feedback that pupils receive about their work, and their involvement in understanding how well they are doing. Marking usually identifies success and at its best gives clear guidance about how work can be improved.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The exemplary drive, commitment and enthusiasm of the headteacher, supported by an informed and effective leadership team, have contributed much to recent improvements. Governors understand their role and have provided the school with challenge and support during this time. The school's approach to dealing with underachievement by monitoring teaching and learning is improving provision and the accountability of teachers. The effectiveness of this is reflected in much improved achievement in reading at all ages. The role and impact of middle leaders is developing well, and in a short time much is already in place. Similarly, systems for checking the pupils' progress and setting challenging targets are now well established. Accurate self-evaluation and systematic monitoring are beginning to feed through into sustained improvement in the pupils' achievement throughout the school. Staff and governors take their responsibility to the community seriously. Before- and after-school care is acting as a springboard to the introduction of other services to support pupils and their families.

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
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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?	3
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

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

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?	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

26 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Calverton Primary School, London, E16 3ET

You will probably remember that inspectors visited your school not too long ago and I am now writing to let you know what we found out. Before I do, I would like to say 'thank you' for making us feel welcome and for being so ready to share your thoughts about your school. We had a chance to talk with many of you, and I have told your teachers how very helpful and polite you were. In our discussions with you, it was great to hear how much you enjoy school. It was also good to hear that there is always someone to talk to if you are worried.

Everyone cares for you well and makes learning fun through the clubs and other activities. You take your responsibilities very seriously. We were particularly impressed with the way you care for each other, particularly the autistic children in your classes. You make satisfactory progress during your time at school. Those of you who join during the year are given good support to help you settle.

There are three things we think would help to improve the school. First, we want your teachers to help you make faster progress in writing and mathematics. We have also asked your teachers to plan more carefully the questions they ask you and to provide greater challenge in lessons for some of the pupils who find learning easy. Finally, Reception children would benefit from an outdoor learning area immediately next to the classroom, just like the one in the Nursery.

All of the staff and governors want the school to improve, and we know you will play your part by continuing to behave well, attending regularly and working hard. We wish you every success in your future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale

Lead Inspector