

Wells Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102831
Local Authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	308132
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2009
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)	347
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	42
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Louise Van der Heiden
Headteacher	Mrs Diane Andrew
Date of previous school inspection	4 July 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Barclay Oval Woodford Green IG8 0PP
Telephone number	020 8708 0500
Fax number	020 8708 0501

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2009
Inspection number	308132

© Crown copyright 2009

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

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. More than half of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, although very few are at an early stage of learning English. Free school meal eligibility is low. The proportion of pupils who need additional support with their learning is well below average, while the number with a statement for their special educational needs is broadly average. Most of these pupils have specific learning difficulties. The school also has a small number of children in local authority care. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is through a part-time Nursery and two full-time Reception classes. The school has gained Healthy School and Activemark awards.

The After School Club on the school site was inspected at the same time as the school. However, as it is not managed by the school's governing body, the findings are reported separately.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Staff and governors are right when judging that Wells Primary is a good and improving school. Inspectors were immediately struck by the very harmonious atmosphere. This was aptly expressed by one parent when writing, 'All of the staff are terrific and there is a wonderful sense of community within the school.' The care and welfare of all pupils are at the heart of the school's work and ensure that the pupils feel safe and have someone to turn to if they have a problem.

The pupils are a great credit to themselves and the school. They thoroughly enjoy learning because of the many exciting activities provided in and outside the classroom and beyond the school day. This is reflected in the good attendance of the majority of pupils. They relish taking responsibility and have a growing voice in the development of the school. They work and play happily together and show great respect for others. The Healthy School and Activemark awards both reflect the school's success in helping the pupils to adopt healthy and safe lifestyles.

The headteacher has high expectations of what each pupil can achieve. She sets challenging targets and carefully checks the pupils' progress so that effective action can be put in place if anyone is in danger of underachieving. Considerable improvements in assessment and its use mean that no pupil misses out, and the next steps in individuals' development are carefully planned. This is particularly effective in supporting pupils who have specific learning or language needs, so that almost all reach the expected standards by the time they move on to secondary school.

The pupils' good achievement is based on effective teaching and their excellent attitudes to learning. There is a buzz of excitement and sense of purpose in classrooms because lessons are interesting and work is challenging. From skills above those expected for their age on entry to the school, pupils make good progress, so that standards are well above average in all key areas by the time they leave for secondary school. Reading is a major strength, but many pupils also exceed the standards expected of them in writing, mathematics and science. They also have well-developed information and communication technology (ICT) skills and apply these to extend learning in many areas.

The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. The school knows the community well, but has not reached the point of analysing its needs or putting in place a clear plan of action to help its cohesiveness. While parents are pleased with much that the school does for their children and particularly the progress they make, a small minority have concerns about the recent turnover of teachers and the extent to which their views are taken into account. Evidence shows that the school does not seek parents' views sufficiently frequently, or communicate with them clearly enough about changes in the school. The school has coped well with recent changes in personnel and maintained, and in some areas improved, the quality of the education provided. This is because there is a clear and shared vision for the school, a strong staff team and well established systems understood by all. Governors have supported the school well through this period while continuing to hold staff to account for the standards achieved. This and the record of improvement place the school in a strong position to meet its ambitious goals for the future.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children enter the Nursery with skills generally higher than those seen nationally. They make satisfactory progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage, although the quality of learning varies. Adults in all classes have clear expectations and encourage the children to try out new activities. This generates a sense of security and leads to much enjoyment. The focus on personal, social and emotional development considerably benefits the children's behaviour. Relationships are good and children learn happily alongside each other. Children get off to a good start in the Nursery where sessions are carefully focused on their individual needs. They settle in quickly in part because of close links with home. The current focus on improving literacy is effective. This was seen on the inspection, where the adults set activities with letters and sounds at different levels to challenge the children. Texts used with the children are relevant and good opportunities are given for children to listen to each other, enjoy their news and respond by asking questions.

The school is aware that the current arrangements for settling children into Reception and keeping parents informed about progress are not yet effective. The good start in the Nursery is not consistently built on in the Reception classes. This is recognised by the school, but actions taken have not had sufficient impact so far. Too much adult talk, insufficient challenge for children and the lack of a sharp focus on developing communication, language and literacy mean that the pace of learning can be slow at times. The outdoor area in the Nursery is used well to stimulate the children, but outdoor learning in Reception is not always meaningful.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of learning in Reception, both indoors and outside, particularly for the children's communication, language and literacy skills.
- Strengthen links with parents and the community by seeking views frequently, communicating changes more clearly and implementing a plan to support community cohesion.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

There is no significant difference by gender or ethnicity in the pupils' good progress. The pupils generally meet and in many cases exceed their challenging targets. The focus on developing thinking skills means they develop enquiring minds. They research, solve problems and set up their own investigations using their refined ICT skills to extend learning and develop their writing. The pupils make particularly good progress in reading, so standards are very high by the end of Year 6, in part because of very effective guided reading sessions. Year 2 results fell slightly in 2008, but were still well above average in all subjects with many pupils exceeding standards expected for their age. Year 6 test results vary slightly with each different year group but are generally well above average. Virtually all pupils reach national expectations by the end of Year 6 in all subjects and in 2008 the majority exceeded this level. Current assessment data and the pupils' work show these standards remain well above average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Many factors contribute to the pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They take responsibilities seriously and show great pride in their achievements. The school

council is particularly pleased with its role in improving school dinners while the eco-council celebrates the way it monitors energy efficiency and recycling rates around the school. As one pupil said, 'We get heard in this school and we can make a difference.' Behaviour within lessons and around the school is outstanding. Pupils show much respect for different beliefs and for the many displays and resources around them. Pupils know how exercise contributes to a healthy lifestyle and many attend extra-curricular sporting activities. They make healthy choices at lunchtime and speak knowledgeably about the importance of eating a balanced diet. The persistent absence of a small number of pupils means that, despite the school's efforts, overall attendance remains broadly average. The pupils' ability to work as a member of a team, along with their very good basic skill development, prepares them well for the next stage of their education and beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Many lessons are taught well and some have outstanding features. Pupils are absorbed in learning because lessons are stimulating, challenge their thinking and are adapted well to meet individual needs. The open-ended tasks chosen develop the pupils' thinking very effectively. Pupils relish the opportunity to work together and to discuss their ideas before sharing them with the rest of the class. Teachers' questioning is often probing and challenging, but there are times in the less successful lessons when not enough is expected from the pupils' responses or teachers do not give them time to contribute properly. Teaching assistants are deployed carefully to have the maximum impact on the learning of the pupils they support. Teachers at the upper end of the school successfully involve pupils in evaluating their work and how it can be improved, but this strategy is not used often enough in other classes and is an area the school is seeking to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Learning is a series of interesting experiences for the pupils, promoting well both their academic and personal development. Art makes a major contribution and, along with the focus on diversity, helps considerably to develop the pupils' respect for and awareness of other cultures. Programmes are adapted carefully to meet the wide range of pupils' needs, whether this is to help them catch up if they have fallen behind or to stretch the more able. The use of ICT plays a major role in developing learning across many subjects, including the current focus on improving the pupils' writing. Events such as 'Challenge Week' or visiting poets and artists link learning well across subjects. Specialist members of staff from a local secondary school enable more sports activities to be provided than might otherwise be the case. Pupils with particular talents are catered for well in areas such as mathematics, science and art, although the school has identified scope for extending this into more subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides a very secure, safe and caring environment. Clear guidelines encourage positive relationships and behaviour and, as a result, bullying is extremely rare. Pupils express their confidence in the ability of the adults around them to deal with any issues of concern

swiftly and effectively. Procedures to safeguard their welfare meet statutory requirements. The school works well with outside agencies to remove barriers to learning for more vulnerable pupils so they can play a full part in school life. The much improved systems for checking pupils' progress enable the school to implement sharply focused and successful programmes to eliminate any potential underachievement. At its most effective, marking indicates the next steps for pupils to take to meet their targets and improve their work. It is clear at upper Key Stage 2 that pupils have been given time to respond to their teacher's suggestions and the questions they pose. This excellent practice is not consistently followed in other classes, a matter the school is seeking to address.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have complementary skills and make a strong team. Their sharp focus on improving learning means that new teachers develop rapidly into effective practitioners. Other teachers with leadership responsibilities make a significant contribution because systems are clearly established and their role understood by everyone. The school has an accurate view of its qualities and uses this to identify the key priorities to bring about further improvement, such as upgrading the computer suite or raising the number of pupils working at higher levels in writing and mathematics. Governors are fully involved in this process and balance support and challenge in equal measure. Equality is promoted well within the school community. The school's leadership is starting to reach out to others in the wider local community and beyond, but with inconsistent impact. Despite some strengths, leaders do not yet have a comprehensive plan for promoting community cohesion in a systematic way. The school has tried to strengthen its relationship with parents since the last inspection with some success, but there remains more to do. Parental involvement in the 'Change Team' reviewing key policies is a step in the right direction, but the school does not communicate its successes or important changes well enough to keep parents fully updated and alleviate any concerns they might have.

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?	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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?	2
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?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

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	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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 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

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 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	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

16 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wells Primary School, Woodford Green, IG8 0PP

Thank you for your help and cooperation when inspectors visited your school. We spoke with many of you in lessons, in groups or around the school. It was great to hear how much you enjoy school. It was also good to hear how safe you feel and that there is always someone to talk to if you are worried. You are right in thinking that yours is a good school. You make good progress during your time at Wells Primary School. Nearly all of you reach the standards expected by the time you move on to secondary school and very many of you do better than this. You work hard and behave very sensibly. Your teachers make learning interesting and you clearly enjoy extra activities such as those for art and sport. Your teachers and other staff are successful at helping those of you who find learning difficult to do well. All staff help to make sure you are safe and cared for very well. You have a good understanding of the importance of diet and exercise for a healthy lifestyle.

Your headteacher, other staff and governors are trying hard to make the school even better. Two things would help to improve the school. We have asked them to improve the way the young children learn in the Reception classes. We have also asked staff and governors to involve parents and the local community more in the work of the school.

We are sure that you and your teachers will work hard to make this improvement. You can play your part in helping the school to get even better by continuing to show such pride and enthusiasm for learning. Some of you could also attend more often.

We wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Martin Beale

Lead Inspector