

# Amy Johnson Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102988
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sutton
<b>Inspection number</b>	308185
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ian Wilson

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	275
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Joan Carroll
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Melanie Elsey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 September 2003
<b>School address</b>	Mollison Drive Roundshaw Wallington SM6 9JN
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8669 3978
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8773 3955

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Amy Johnson is larger than average. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and having a home language other than English are higher than in most schools, with Somali and Bengali being the most common languages. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is well above average. This includes pupils who have difficulties with literacy and numeracy as well as other difficulties such as dyslexia; additionally there is an attached unit for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. The school is a designated Children's Centre and it provides a range of extended services. The headteacher and several other staff joined the school in September 2007.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Amy Johnson is a satisfactory school. A majority of parents are generally satisfied with the school. In particular they praise the friendly staff and the way their children enjoy school. However, a significant number have concerns about the frequent changes of staff in some classes which, they feel, have affected their children's progress.

Standards in the school have been low, especially in English, and progress since the last inspection has not been as rapid as it should have been, partly because of high staff turnover. However, improvement is now accelerating because of the good leadership of the headteacher, coupled with good support provided by the Local Authority. The quality of teaching is now satisfactory overall and there is quite a high proportion of good teaching. There are still, however, some inconsistencies, for example, in the clarity of learning objectives and pace in some lessons. Staff are enthusiastic and willing to take on new ideas. For example, an increased focus during the past year on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is having a clear impact on their progress. As a result, standards are rising throughout the school and pupils now leave school at the end of Year 6 attaining at the expected levels in mathematics and science. Although standards have risen in English, they are below average because of weaknesses in pupils' knowledge and understanding of punctuation and grammar and in their ability to write freely.

The school looks after pupils very well. Vulnerable pupils, those who need extra help with their learning and those who are still learning to speak English are well supported and make good progress as a result. Pupils develop sound personal skills in the school. They know about the importance of staying safe and healthy although some are slow in developing healthy eating habits. Most enjoy coming to school but the rate of attendance, though improving, is still far too low. Considerable emphasis has been placed in developing pupils' social and emotional skills and these are good as a consequence. Pupils relate well to each other, behave well in school and have good attitudes to learning. Good integration of the pupils with moderate learning difficulties is contributing well to their personal development.

The school evaluates its strengths and weaknesses well. Leaders know what needs to be done to continue to improve the school and teamwork across the school is good. Several staff are new to their posts and some initiatives, such as the use of challenging targets and performance management, are still too new to be having an impact. Links with parents are developing well, aided by the recently opened Children's Centre, and good links with a wide range of outside agencies are contributing to improving provision in the school. Governors support the school and monitor its work well. Overall the school's track record shows it has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The school's Foundation Stage is good and there is outstanding provision in the Reception class, where teaching is especially strong. Staff make good use of the accommodation and resources to offer children an exciting, inspiring and imaginative curriculum with many opportunities for them to try out new experiences and find things out for themselves. All adults interact sensitively with children and help them develop their confidence and curiosity. There

is very warm partnership with parents who are encouraged to be fully involved in their children's learning.

As a result of good teaching and the good curriculum, children achieve well in the Foundation Stage. When they enter the school, either in Nursery or Reception, most have skills which are below expectations for their age, and some have skills which are significantly lower than this. They make good progress in their learning in the Nursery and outstanding progress in the Reception class. This year, most will move into Year 1 reaching broadly average standards, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. There has been very good recent improvement in the standards reached by children in literacy, particularly in their enjoyment of books and their knowledge and use of phonics to help them read. This is thanks to the good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage, and to the close teamwork and planning amongst staff.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards in English by improving pupils' knowledge of punctuation and grammar and giving them more opportunities for extended writing.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good, by ensuring objectives for lessons are clear and by improving the pace and structure of lessons.
- Improve attendance.
- Ensure that systems to set challenging targets and manage the performance of staff are used fully to help raise standards.

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**

The progress of pupils is variable, being satisfactory in some classes and good in others. For a number of reasons, several classes in the school have had several changes of teacher and this has disrupted pupils learning significantly in some cases. Staffing is now much more stable and pupils who had fallen behind are starting to catch up. Standards are rising and pupils attain average standards in mathematics and science by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6. Significant weaknesses in pupils' reading and especially in their writing have been evident for a number of years and so standards in English have been very low. Although pupils' literacy skills are now improving, there are still weaknesses, especially in writing and standards remain below average. Pupils' progress and, hence, their achievement are satisfactory.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Personal development is satisfactory. Considerable emphasis is being placed on developing pupils' social skills. These steadily improve as pupils move through the school and are good overall. Pupils generally enjoy school and say, 'We stay safe and make loads of friends'. However, their rate of attendance is too low. Although the school is doing a lot to improve attendance, which is leading to some improvement, attendance is still inadequate. Pupils are aware of the need to adopt healthy lifestyles and what this involves but need to take more responsibility for doing so. They have a sound understanding of their rights and responsibilities and many

are happy to be involved in activities such as the School Council and collecting money for charities. Their satisfactory progress in developing their literacy, numeracy and Information and communication technology (ICT) skills and sound personal skills prepare them appropriately for the next stage in their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching is satisfactory but it is improving and there is an increasing proportion of good teaching. Teachers are enthusiastic and have good relations with their classes which they manage well. Classrooms are well organised and provide a good environment for learning. Teaching assistants are used well to provide additional support for pupils. Pupils' work is generally well marked and pupils' skills to assess themselves are developing satisfactorily. There are, however, inconsistencies in teaching which result in pupils making slower progress in some classes compared with others. The use of learning targets with pupils varies in its effectiveness because they are not always referred to often enough by teachers. There are variations in the pace of lessons, and the balance of activities in some lessons is not always appropriate because the lesson objectives are not always sufficiently clear and focussed on learning. In some cases, expectations need to be higher both of presentation and of what pupils can achieve.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

Much more emphasis has been placed on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy during the past year, for example by providing more opportunities to write for different purposes, practice mental mathematics and solve mathematical problems and investigations. As a result, their mathematical skills are now average and though their English skills are better, there are still weaknesses in their knowledge of punctuation and grammar. Also, although they are more confident in 'having a go' at writing independently, they find this difficult and need more opportunities to practice longer pieces of writing. Provision for ICT has improved since the last inspection, and pupils confidently use class based smart boards and computers to support their learning. The curriculum for pupils, who for a variety of reasons, lag behind their peers is good. There are a number of well organised intervention groups to help these pupils and enable them make good progress. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' social development, because of wide range of activities provided including one to one support and group support coordinated and run by a teaching assistant to address friendship issues. Provision for pupils' cultural and spiritual development is satisfactory. The curriculum is enhanced by a sound range of 'special event days' such as those for science and art, a residential visit for Year 6 pupils and a range of extra-curricular activities and clubs.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. 'The head is caring who always does her best for the school' commented one parent. Pupils are known well by teachers and other staff and they feel safe. Careful attention is paid to pupils' social needs. For example, children with moderate learning difficulties in the unit are given opportunities to work with pupils in the main school in activities into which they can join in, such as group reading. Safeguarding procedures in the

school, including first aid and arrangements for ensuring child protection, are secure. Arrangements to keep track of pupils' progress are good and the information is used well to identify those who are falling behind or need extra help. The recently opened Childrens' Centre is being used well to develop links with parents and provide family support.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The new headteacher and senior leaders have a clear and shared vision, strongly focused on raising standards. They have successfully established good teamwork amongst the staff and have taken effective steps to tackle inadequate teaching. Coupled with good, well focused support and professional development provided by the Local Authority, teaching and learning are improving and a calm atmosphere for learning has been established in the school. Some subject leaders are new to their roles, and some procedures to help improve standards such as performance management are still in the relatively early stages of implementation. The school, with the support of the Local Authority has evaluated its strengths and weaknesses accurately. Targets have been insufficiently ambitious in the past but the latest targets are challenging, although they are too new to yet have an impact on pupils' progress. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and support the school well. They increasingly challenge the school and hold it to account for the education it provides, for example by scrutinizing reports on pupils' progress.





## 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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	4
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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 the 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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 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	3
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**

08 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Amy Johnson Primary School, Wallington, SM6 9JN

You may remember that three inspectors recently came to visit your school. Thank you for making us feel so welcome. You were all very polite, confident and told us very clearly what you thought. We really enjoyed meeting you, your teachers and other people who work in the school, and I am writing to let you know what we found out.

We think that you go to a satisfactory school, which is improving under the good leadership of your headteacher. Your teachers and other staff look after you and we know that you enjoy school, though some of you are away from school too often. You all make satisfactory progress and do best in mathematics and science. Nearly all of you behave well, are polite and you look after one another, because the school helps you develop good social skills. You know how to stay safe and healthy and the school is trying to help you develop healthy eating habits.

We have made four suggestions as to what the school can do to improve further:

- help you do better in English by improving your writing skills
- make teaching even better
- improve your attendance
- make good use of the targets it has set itself, in order to help you do as well as you can.

You can help by continuing to work hard particularly in English, concentrating in lessons and helping each other.

Thank you again for being so friendly. We send our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Ian Wilson

Lead Inspector