

Mulberry Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133707
Local Authority	Haringey
Inspection number	316203
Inspection dates	14–15 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Mike Smith

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	664
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father Luke Miller
Headteacher	Mr Alan Jenner
Date of previous school inspection	23 February 2004
School address	Parkhurst Road Tottenham London N17 9RB
Telephone number	020 8801 0189
Fax number	020 8885 8690

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average inner city primary school provides for a very diverse and multi-ethnic community with the great majority of pupils coming from non British backgrounds. The largest pupil groups are from Black African families and White, often Eastern European, countries. There are 150 refugees and asylum seekers and a much larger than average number of pupils whose first language is not English. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is much higher than average and pupils join and leave the school much more frequently than usual. The number of pupils with speech, language or moderate learning difficulties, is significantly above average, as is the proportion who have a statement of special educational need. There are 11 pupils in the care of the local authority. The school has a designated provision for pupils with statements of special educational need for their autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). The school achieved the Healthy School status in 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education for pupils and works hard to support the needs of its community. The headteacher has a clear vision for improvement, shared by the whole school. The monitoring and evaluation of provision is effective and the school knows what it has to do to improve. Raising standards is top of the agenda and different management groups are identifying relevant issues for improvement. Senior managers are successfully implementing improvement strategies, which are improving provision and practice and are beginning to impact on pupils' learning and progress. For example, information on pupils' progress is now being analysed more effectively to identify underachievement and initiate appropriate intervention strategies. Further analysis is still needed to evaluate the impact of the strategies used to support pupils' learning and to keep a closer watch on the learning styles of different pupils.

The school works hard to support the diverse needs of the ever-changing school population. Parents appreciate the school's commitment to their children and the support they receive. One parent, reflecting the views of many, reported, 'My son is very happy in school which has a friendly, calm and positive atmosphere. His additional needs have been met with real care and consideration and I feel well supported as his parent.'

Although standards overall are still below average, they are improving. The school was placed in the top 100 performing schools for showing sustained improvement over the last three years. Pupils enter the Nursery with very low social, language and number skills. When they leave the Foundation Stage these skills are still low, but they have made good progress in their physical and creative development. By the end of Year 2 pupils are making good gains in their reading but are still struggling with their language, writing and mathematics. The school is aware of the need to improve pupils' speech and language to assist their progress in all subjects and has started to implement appropriate strategies. When leaving at the end of Year 6, most pupils' achievement is satisfactory in relation to their starting points. Pupils who arrive with little English and those with moderate learning difficulties make satisfactory and often good progress, as do those pupils with ASD. This is due to the effective support they receive.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and improving. Relationships are excellent, resulting in pupils behaving well and having positive attitudes. The inconsistencies seen in teaching result in uneven progress for some pupils. Information on pupils' progress is not being consistently used by all teachers to challenge pupils and ensure that they build on their previous learning. The curriculum has focused on improving pupils' core skills in English and mathematics and this emphasis has helped to raise standards. The care and support given to pupils is of a high quality. The school has outstanding partnerships with external providers and parents that ensure pupils' well-being is fully supported. The needs of vulnerable pupils are very carefully monitored and supported. Academic guidance is satisfactory and improving, and in lessons, pupils are very clear about how to improve their work. Pupils are polite, friendly and naturally inquisitive and clearly understand about healthy living and how to keep safe. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils show empathy for each other's differences and support each other well. Their involvement in the community is good and effectively contributes towards good teamwork. The governing body is fully involved in the monitoring, self-evaluation and strategic management of the school, and clearly know the school well. The provision for ASD is well managed and pupils' academic and personal development needs are well met. Further opportunities for inclusion are being explored. Overall, the school has made

good improvement since the last inspection and is demonstrating it has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The effective emphasis on language acquisition and the development of personal and social skills is resulting in pupils developing good attitudes and confidence in their learning. The provision in the Nursery is good. Pupils are given opportunities to independently explore a variety of interesting activities. Pupils with limited English language skills learn to communicate and socialise effectively, although there are not enough opportunities to develop their language and vocabulary through specific activities. There is a good balance between teacher-led activities and independent play although it is not always clear what pupils are expected to learn. Staff provide high quality care within a very safe and stimulating learning environment. The recently appointed and enthusiastic Foundation Stage Leader has introduced baseline assessments and pupil records which clearly show pupils' achievements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' standards in their speech and language to help improve their progress in all subjects.
- Analyse the data on pupils' progress more rigorously to identify the impact that support strategies are having on pupils' achievement.
- Improve the consistency of teaching to be good or better across the school.

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

There has been a gradual increase in attainment in English, maths and science but standards at the end of Year 2 and 6 are still generally below national averages and few pupils achieve the highest levels. Attainment in reading is higher than writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. Pupils overall make satisfactory progress with some making good progress from very low starting points. School analysis indicates that there has been a clear improvement in progress over the last two years. The high numbers of pupils joining the school throughout the year are not disadvantaged in any way and make satisfactory or better progress from their starting points because of the effective individual and group support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' positive attitudes are a strength of the school. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds work and play together in harmony, making newcomers welcome.

Positive attitudes towards their learning supports pupils' preparation for the next stage of their education, although low academic standards are a disadvantage for some. Attendance is average and pupils are encouraged and rewarded for improvement. Pupils fully understand what is expected of them because they have been involved in drafting clear behavioural guidelines that are on open display. They willingly take on duties around the school, for example, as

monitors and playground helpers. The very large school council acts as a voice for all pupils, discussing issues of concern raised by each year group. Fund raising and supporting a range of charities is embedded within the school's culture.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy their learning and teachers know pupils very well. Most, but not all, use this information to plan and deliver challenging activities that meet individual needs. Practice is improving through monitoring and support and there are many examples of good teaching. However, opportunities to promote consistently good teaching, through sharing the very best practice, are often missed. Good use is often made of 'talk partners' to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used effectively by most teachers to support learning, although pupils do not get sufficient opportunities to reinforce their skills across the curriculum. Teamwork is excellent and teaching assistants effectively support pupils' learning and achievement, particularly in the various support groups.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactorily meeting pupils' learning needs and most lessons are suitably adjusted for pupils of differing abilities. For example, a structured phonics programme for younger pupils is helping to raise standards in reading. Opportunities to develop pupils' writing and speaking skills across all subjects are not yet fully embedded in planning and practice. Links between subjects are also being developed to strengthen learning. A Year 6 project, based on a history topic, makes good links with ICT and is leading to good achievement. Support programmes for pupils with learning difficulties, ASD or those learning English are effective in supporting their progress. Visits and visitors support the curriculum well and support pupils' cultural development. Pupils benefit from the wide range of clubs and after school activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

High quality and consistently applied school procedures and practice ensure pupils' safety and security. The very effective planning and teamwork between senior staff, learning mentors, nurses, special needs coordinator, teaching assistants and teachers ensure pupils' personal needs are very well met. Vulnerable pupils are quickly identified and receive specific and effective support. For example, pupils who are new to the school and who may lack in confidence are encouraged to participate in small support groups. This results in increased assurance, and self-esteem. Parents report that communication is good and they are confident their children are well cared for. A parent wrote, 'Staff are very approachable and are always willing to listen and discuss my child's learning and personal development. He is safe and happy at school'. Parents also appreciate the opportunities arranged by the school for their own development, such as learning English and computer skills. While some marking of pupils' work gives clear guidance on how they may improve, it is inconsistent across the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher along with the deputy headteacher and business development manager give good strategic guidance and encouragement to all staff. Other managers are beginning to take a fuller responsibility for pupils' achievement, although wider opportunities for monitoring and analysing pupils' progress, and through lesson observations, are not yet embedded. This overall improvement is reflected in the increasing improvement in pupils' academic and personal progress, although the school realises that there is more to do by leaders to establish more consistency in the quality of teaching and learning. There are high expectations made of staff and their work is appreciated. Professional development is valued highly and is clearly based upon school improvement, personal skills and meeting the needs of the pupils. The provision for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and the support for vulnerable pupils are very well managed. The school is aware of the need to analyse more rigorously the impact of support groups on pupils' progress and achievement.

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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?	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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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	3

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	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 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

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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

01 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mulberry Primary School, London, N17 9RB

Thank you for the welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed your company and were very pleased to see how well you enjoyed being in school. We think that your school is a satisfactory school. This means that some things are good and some things could be better. The good news is that the school has your best interests at heart and is working hard to improve things so each of you make the best possible progress.

We liked these things the most.

- You learn to do things for yourself and you are friendly and polite to everyone.
- You have positive attitudes to your learning and you work well together.
- All the staff work really well together to help you improve.
- You are well involved in the school community and the wider community.
- You really like the clubs and after school activities.
- You improve your reading skills and your confidence to ask for help.
- You think of others less fortunate than yourselves.
- Those of you new to the school or who need extra help are well looked after.
- The school works very effectively with other people to ensure you receive the support you need.
- The headteacher and all the staff have your best interests at heart.

You can help your learning by constantly checking your own progress and always asking what you need to do to continually improve your work. We have asked the school to work on these three things.

- Help you to improve your speech and language so you can make better progress in all subjects.
- Use all the information they have on the progress you are making to always set you challenging work and judge how well you are doing in your support groups.
- Ensure that all teaching is as good as it can be across the school to ensure you all make the best possible progress.

It was a delight being in your school and we wish you all every future success.

Yours sincerely

Mike Smith

Lead Inspector