

# The Orchard School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	134507
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lambeth
<b>Inspection number</b>	316262
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lynn Bappa

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	150
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Farouk Valimohamed
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Iffat Fariduddin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Christchurch Road Streatham London SW2 3ES
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8671 4400
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8674 6239

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The Orchard is a smaller than average but growing voluntary aided Muslim school serving an economically diverse urban community. Around three-quarters of the pupils are entitled to free school meals and this figure is much higher than the national average. The school attracts pupils from several London boroughs. All pupils are from minority ethnic groups and almost all speak English as an additional language. There are currently no pupils with a statement of special educational need and the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. These needs relate mainly to moderate learning difficulties and emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school was previously independent and became part of the voluntary aided (VA) sector in September 2006. This is the school's first year with the full age range, although in Year 6, there is a very small cohort of only five pupils. Since it gained VA status, the school has had three changes of leadership and is currently led by an interim headteacher who was appointed in January 2008. A deputy headteacher was appointed in June. This is the school's first inspection report.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The Orchard is a caring school that provides a satisfactory quality of education. At its heart lies a clear commitment to Islamic values in which all pupils feel safe, valued and included. The good pastoral care develops pupils' confidence and self-esteem and contributes effectively to their good personal development and well-being. As one parent commented, 'We are all very happy and confident that our children are getting the best Islamic care and general education possible.' The school has a good partnership with the local authority (LA) and growing links with neighbouring schools and other organisations to promote the learning and well-being of pupils.

Current assessments for pupils in Year 2 show that the proportion of pupils reaching the levels expected are below last year's average. However, the school's first set of test results for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2007 were judged by the LA as too high and the school agrees. Since then, senior leaders have introduced an effective tracking system to monitor progress and teachers have significantly improved the way in which they assess pupils. Their assessments show that pupils did best in reading as a result of a recent whole-school focus on improving standards in that area. The school has rightly identified that there are particular weaknesses in writing and problem solving in mathematics. Although there is no evidence to show the starting points of this cohort on entry to Reception, records show that pupils in Key Stage 1 are making satisfactory progress.

It is not possible to make a judgement on standards by Year 6 because there were no Year 6 pupils last year. There are only five pupils currently in Year 6 (there were six at the time of the recent national tests) and the evidence indicates that they have made at least satisfactory progress during their time in the school. Their unverified test results arrived during the inspection and show that all are working at or above age-related expectations. Pupils' satisfactory progress in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, coupled with their well-developed personal qualities, prepare them soundly for the next stage of their education.

The curriculum is satisfactory and improving. It currently meets most, but not all, requirements for the National Curriculum. There are currently gaps in the provision for music and for ensuring that pupils learn about the different religious faiths represented in Britain. Governors and senior leaders are fully aware of the need to address these gaps as quickly as possible and have already begun to do so. Teaching and learning have improved in the last school year and are now satisfactory overall. More remains to be done, however, to increase the percentage of good lessons with a particular focus on developing pupils' independent learning skills.

The interim headteacher, ably supported by the school's associate adviser, has led the school well in challenging circumstances that have included high staff turnover and the transition from independent to VA status. The initiatives that have been put into place are well judged and some are beginning to bear fruit. Reading standards, for example, have improved and the school now has reliable assessment data so that it can track pupils' progress and identify those who need particular support. Some initiatives, however, are too recent to have had a full impact on standards and achievement, particularly in writing and mathematics. Although the interim leadership is doing a good job, and is working with effective support from the LA, governors are rightly aware that they need to appoint a substantive headteacher to lead the school forward.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Attainment on entry, based on the school's new assessment data, is variable but lower than national expectations overall, particularly in communication, language and literacy, and in the children's personal and emotional development. Many children have little or no English and have limited pre-school experience. They make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage. Children are happy and have trusting relationships with adults. They develop their social skills effectively and play together well. Teaching is satisfactory. Opportunities for children to be involved in their own learning have improved but more needs to be done to ensure an effective balance between adult-led activities and those that the children choose for themselves. Teachers and other staff make good use of the accommodation but are constrained by its small size, and particularly by the very restricted outdoor provision.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in literacy and numeracy, with a focus on writing and problem solving in mathematics.
- Embed assessment procedures and improve the consistency of teaching and learning, with a focus on increasing the percentage of good lessons.
- Ensure that the curriculum fully meets statutory requirements in religious education and music.
- Secure the long-term leadership of the school by appointing a substantive headteacher.

A small proportion of schools whose effectiveness is otherwise 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

Standards are below average and achievement is satisfactory. Teacher assessments in Year 2 in 2007 were inaccurate. Since then, senior leaders have introduced rigorous assessment procedures. The data collected about the levels reached by pupils are now much more accurate and indicate that attainment is below average, especially in mathematics and writing. Pupils do better in reading, however. Available evidence suggests that pupils are making satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. The school's first and very small cohort of Year 6 pupils are all working at or above age-related expectations and have made at least satisfactory progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress during their time in the school. The school has identified that those with emotional and behavioural difficulties achieve better than those with moderate learning difficulties because of particularly good support and is targeting the latter group to ensure that they catch up with their learning. The school had no targets to meet last year but the evidence suggests that it is on track to meet its challenging targets this year.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. There are good opportunities for daily prayer and Islamic Studies. As a result, they value and care for each other and develop

a strong sense of right and wrong. They particularly value the school's racial and cultural diversity. During a playground discussion, for example, one pupil was keen to introduce the inspector to her classmates from countries as far afield as Kenya, Ghana, Morocco and Somalia. They behave well in lessons and around the school and show respect for their teachers and high levels of courtesy to visitors. Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to exercise responsibility in the school and wider community. For example, older pupils help the younger children to play games at lunchtime. Pupils were also keen to explain how they picked pears from the school trees and gave them to the school's neighbours. However, there is no school council or any other systematic way in which pupils can contribute to improving their school. Senior leaders are rightly considering the most effective ways of providing pupils with a more structured voice. Pupils recognise the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle and taking physical exercise. They are very appreciative, for example, of the recently introduced cricket club. Constraints in the accommodation, however, limit the amount of physical activities the school can provide. Despite the school's best efforts to improve attendance, it remains just below average with a small number of families regularly keeping their children off school or arriving late.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Evidence from lesson observations carried out by senior leaders and the LA shows that the percentage of satisfactory or good lessons has increased in the last year, although more remains to increase the percentage of good lessons. This evidence also shows that the school has changed its approach to teaching and there is now a much more effective focus on pupils' learning rather than on what the teacher is doing. The school has made good use of local authority consultants to improve teachers' planning so that pupils understand what they need to learn and why. Teachers are getting better at pitching work at the right level for all pupils. One pupil explained this by saying 'There is more challenge now. We like hard work - we just don't give up.' Classroom relationships are very positive and pupils enjoy their lessons. As one pupil commented, 'Teachers are trying to make lessons fun.' Good displays of work and other materials in classrooms enhance the learning environment well. Recent training has developed teachers' use of marking and target setting so that pupils know what they have done well and what they need to do to improve.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

Pupils learn Arabic throughout the school and teachers are beginning to make interesting links between subjects so that pupils have more opportunities to enrich their education. Year 5 pupils, for example, recently wrote to NASA about the space junk orbiting the earth. Good use is made of the new computer suite and other technological resources. Year 6 pupils, for example, are working on multi-media presentations on when to visit the seaside for pupils in Year 2. Religious education and music are at an early stage of development and do not fully meet statutory requirements. Senior leaders and governors, with the support of the LA, have made firm plans to address this to ensure that the school fully meets legal requirements as well as addressing any parental sensitivities. Extra-curricular provision has improved in the last year and pupils are appreciative of the growing number of clubs, including cricket, karate and Qur'anic reading.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

Teachers and other adults know the pupils well and respond sensitively to individual needs. Child protection procedures are robust. Pupils joining during the school year settle happily into the daily routines. Pupils in Year 6 look forward confidently to secondary education. The school has a good partnership with parents and carers and with a range of outside agencies. Attendance is carefully monitored and absentees and latecomers are followed up well. Academic guidance is satisfactory and improving. Effective procedures for keeping track of pupils' progress have been put into place. However, these are recent and are only just beginning to have an impact on raising standards.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The interim headteacher's committed leadership, very ably supported by the recently appointed deputy headteacher, has encouraged a strong sense of unity and purpose among all levels of staff. They have galvanised school improvement and much has been done in a short time to improve provision. Self evaluation is thorough and accurate. A strength of the school is the high quality teamwork that ensures that everyone plays an integral part in moving the school forward. Classroom practice is increasingly being monitored rigorously and training opportunities are well targeted. Senior leaders are beginning to develop a layer of middle managers with accountabilities for their subjects, although this work is in its infancy. The subject leader for literacy, for example, has made a good start to her work. Governors are very committed to the school and take an active part in helping it to improve. These positive features form a solid foundation and the school has a sound capacity to improve.

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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
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	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	3
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	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?	3

<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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

15 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Orchard School, London, SW2 3ES

Thank you for making me so welcome and sharing your thoughts about your school. I particularly enjoyed talking to some of you about your work and my tour around the school. Well done! You obviously enjoy lessons and activities, and help a lot to make the school an enjoyable place to be. I think that The Orchard is a satisfactory school that is getting better. Your behaviour, positive attitudes to work and play and the ways in which you care for one another are good. The headteacher and all the staff have obviously worked hard to improve the school. They certainly believe that all of you can achieve well, so it's up to you to prove them right and help the school move from being satisfactory to good in all parts of its work.

I have asked your teachers to make a few improvements to make the school better. I think your teachers have worked hard to make lessons better so that you learn more quickly. I have asked them to carry on doing this and to improve the way they check how well you are doing so that you achieve well in all subjects, particularly in writing and mathematics. I have also asked your headteacher and the governors to work with your parents to make sure that you learn more about music and about different religions in this country. Finally, I have asked them to make sure that when the interim headteacher has to leave you to return to her own school, they appoint a permanent headteacher.

I hope that you continue to enjoy your time at school and wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Dr Lynn Bappa

Lead Inspector