

Colvestone Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100221
Local Authority	Hackney
Inspection number	319382
Inspection dates	1–2 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Martin Beale

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	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Adam McDonald
Headteacher	Mrs Gene Huie-Manneh
Date of previous school inspection	28 March 2007
School address	Colvestone Crescent London E8 2LG
Telephone number	020 7254 1143
Fax number	020 7249 7576

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

A high proportion of the pupils in this average sized school are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Pupils of Black Caribbean backgrounds form the main group. One third of the pupils have a home language other than English, with a considerable number of these at an early stage of learning English. A similar number is eligible for a free school meal. The proportion of pupils needing additional support with literacy is above average. The headteacher has recently been appointed permanently to the school following a period of almost a year as acting headteacher. The school has gained the Activemark award. At its inspection in March 2007, the school was given a Notice to Improve, with significant improvements required in standards in English and mathematics, the quality of teaching and learning, behaviour management, academic guidance and the way teaching, learning and behaviour was monitored.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Its rapid improvement this year under the dynamic and thoughtful leadership of the headteacher is much welcomed by parents. 'Under the new management of the school, I feel Colvestone has made excellent progress.' In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

A new teaching team has been in place for the last year, following a period of high staff turnover. This stability has been the key to the pupils' good and much improved achievement as well as to their improved behaviour. Pupils say how much they enjoy school because they feel safe and know that everyone cares about how well they are doing. Encouraging pupils to understand the feelings of others and to appreciate the effects of their actions means their behaviour is now good, and older pupils enjoy the responsibility of acting as 'buddies' to younger ones. This contributes to the happy atmosphere and sense of purpose throughout the school.

Effective teaching supported by a rich and interesting curriculum is leading pupils to make good progress from their below average starting points, so that standards are rising and are broadly average by the time they move on to secondary school. Pupils develop basic skills well, but do not use their information and communication technology (ICT) skills consistently to support learning in other subjects, because of shortages in resources that have only recently been remedied. Pupils enjoy working with others, and as one Year 6 boy said, 'We pull together well as a unit now.' This gives them a firm foundation for success in the future. The pupils' experiences are considerably enriched by a wide range of educational visits, often based on exploiting the school's position close to central London.

Parents make a major contribution to school life and are very pleased with all that the school does for their children. Pupils understand how to live healthy and safe lives, through the emphasis on sport and healthy eating. Each pupil is well known to staff and no one is allowed to slip through the net and underachieve. The headteacher has introduced a rigorous system for checking the progress of pupils. From this, programmes often delivered by the skilled team of support staff, are put in place to help individual pupils to catch up and meet their challenging targets. This is a key factor in the good progress of pupils who need extra help with their literacy and later arrivals from overseas as they begin to learn English.

The headteacher is relentless in her determination to improve the school. Even though teaching is now good, she is working to reduce some unevenness in teachers' practice such as how they consistently meet each pupil's learning needs and use questions to develop the quality of their responses. She is supported by a new but effective senior staff team and a well-run governing body. Management systems are focused sharply on improving the outcomes for pupils. As a result, all staff and governors have a much clearer view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. This in turn informs the school's aim of striving for excellence. It is well placed to achieve this challenging goal.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children are happy, keen to come to school and motivated to learn. Adults provide plenty of support to develop their social skills, by encouraging them to work together and try new things. One parent reflected the thoughts of many. 'My son has spent a wonderful first year at school

where his confidence is blossoming. He is being noticed for his own individual traits and returns each day smiling and content.' From skills below those expected of three-year olds when they enter the Nursery and often lower, children make good progress and many but not all reach expected goals by the time they leave Reception. The recent focus on reading is effective, but writing remains the weakest aspect and so it is receiving close attention. Teachers know the children's needs well and use this to plan activities that balance opportunities to learn formally and through play activities. Children enjoy the opportunity to link their 'Eco' activities between indoors and outdoors in the Nursery, but the lack of access to an outside space inhibits their progress in Reception.

What the school should do to improve further

- Bring greater consistency to learning by ensuring that teachers plan to meet the needs of all pupils in their classes and give pupils more opportunity to develop their spoken answers.
- Use the improved computer resources to plan more opportunities for pupils to apply their ICT skills to support learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils are making good progress. They build solidly on their good start in the Foundation Stage. School records indicate that all classes have made rapid progress this year, in some cases making up for inadequacies of the past. Year 2 test results in 2007 were low, but pupils' standards have risen this year and are now broadly average in all areas. Year 6 test results improved in 2007, and standards have continued to rise this year with virtually all pupils working at least at the level expected of eleven-year-olds. More able pupils are now challenged effectively as shown by the considerable number working above levels expected for their age. This is mainly because plenty of opportunities are provided for pupils to apply their skills to solving problems and investigative tasks in subjects such as mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school as is evident in their positive attitudes to learning, their participation in school activities and their improving attendance. They show respect and consideration for others and are keen to help new arrivals settle into school. Pupils behave well in lessons and throughout the school. They appreciate the many opportunities for exercise and understand the importance of diet to their future well-being. They learn how to stay safe and have coped well, as have their teachers, with the extensive refurbishment of the buildings. They contribute much to the life of the local area. Their work during 'Black History Month' and parental involvement in celebrating religious festivals allows pupils a good insight into cultural diversity of their community and generates pride in their own backgrounds. Pupils contribute much to school life, but feel that the school council does not offer them the voice it once did. Pupils are also involved in the wider community and regularly take part in fund-raising activities. These strengths contribute to the pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Shortcomings identified at the last inspection have been eliminated and teaching now has a positive impact on pupils' learning and their good achievement. Pupils engage well in lessons because classrooms are calm places in which to learn. Teachers make lessons interesting and give pupils confidence by valuing their contributions. They encourage responses from all pupils to their questions, although at times they expect too little by way of detailed answers and do not follow up to ensure that everyone understands. Pupils are aware of what they are doing, why they are doing it and generally how successful they are. In the more effective lessons, methods and work are adapted to meet individual needs and now challenge pupils more effectively, although this is inconsistent and an area the school is seeking to improve further.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has improved a great deal since the last inspection, and it promotes well both the pupils' academic and personal development. It is adapted with great care to meet individual needs. Basic skills receive particularly good attention. Links between subjects are strengthening as teachers seek to make learning more relevant and interesting for pupils. However, because of resourcing difficulties, ICT equipment has not been available until very recently for regular use to support learning across other subjects. Events such as 'Arts Week' add much interest and enjoyment, enabling pupils to work together on a variety of projects. The re-introduced residential trip for Year 5 and 6 pupils to Kent was much enjoyed, and stays vividly in their minds. Clubs and competitive sports are very much a feature of after-school activities through links with the local sports partnership. These contribute much to keeping pupils fit and healthy as well as their ability to work as part of a team.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school is successful in ensuring that pupils are safe and that their individual learning and personal needs are met. Procedures to ensure their health and safety and to safeguard their welfare meet requirements. New systems for checking on how well pupils are progressing successfully identify where pupils are falling behind or where they need extra help learning English. From this, effective individually tailored support is put in place and additional help provided to enable them to catch up. Links with a wide variety of organisations help the school to access specialist expertise and advice for the specific needs of pupils with speech and language difficulties. Much has been done to improve academic guidance but some inconsistencies remain in helping pupils see clearly, particularly through marking, how to meet their individual improvement targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

In a short space of time, the headteacher has developed a tightly knit staff team, sharply focused on making learning enjoyable and working together to fulfil a shared vision for the school. The

thorough processes that help staff improve their performance, such as regular observations of teaching and rigorous evaluation of assessment data are feeding through into pupils' improving achievement and rising standards. This is also helping to give everyone, governors included, a clear understanding of the school's strengths and a focus to planning for further improvement. Whilst relatively new in their posts, senior and subject leaders are playing an increasingly central role in leading improvements, although there is scope to develop individual leadership skills. Governors have been instrumental in guiding the school through a difficult period and balance support for the school with challenge to do better.

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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?	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	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the 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

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	2
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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

11 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Colvestone Primary School, London, E8 2LG

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 you were very helpful and polite. Everyone told us how much behaviour has improved. In our discussions with you, it was great to hear how much you enjoy school. It was also good to hear about how safe you feel in school and that there is always someone to talk to if you are worried. Your attendance is good. Keep it up!

Colvestone Primary is a good school. It has improved much thanks to the work of the headteacher and the staff. Everyone cares for you well and makes learning enjoyable through the clubs and other activities. We saw how much you enjoyed activities during 'Arts Week'. The school is particularly good at helping you to keep fit and healthy. Teachers and other staff make learning challenging and interesting, which helps you to achieve well. Many of you reach the standards expected of you by the time you leave and some of you do better than this. Those of you who find learning difficult or are new to learning English are given good support.

Even a good school like yours can get even better. We have asked your teachers to push learning forward more rapidly in all classrooms by matching the work more closely to your individual needs, by expecting more from your spoken answers and planning for greater use of your computer skills.

The headteacher, the staff and governors want the school to continue 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