

Linton Mead Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100159
Local Authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	323235
Inspection dates	4–5 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Alison Thomson

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)	479
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	90
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Peter Kotz
Headteacher	Mrs Linda Bird
Date of previous school inspection	4 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Central Way Thamesmead London SE28 8DT
Telephone number	020 8310 1902
Fax number	020 8311 0153

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Linton Mead is larger than the average primary school. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision in two Nursery classes and in two Reception classes. There is private childcare provision onsite, with a parent toddler group. This provision was inspected and reported on separately. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who do not speak English as their first language, is much higher than average. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is higher than average. This includes a group of pupils who have speech, communication and language difficulties. The school has achieved the Healthy School Award for the promotion of a healthy lifestyle.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Linton Mead is a good school where careful attention to meeting the needs and interests of each pupil results in both their personal development and academic achievement being good. Parents are very positive about the school and these comments sum up the views of many: 'I am very pleased to say that Linton Mead has had a huge impact on my child' and 'The teachers are doing a terrific job with the children'.

Pupils are welcoming, polite and courteous. They look after each other well and say that they feel very safe and secure in the school environment. This is due to the good care, guidance and support they receive and the school's excellent ethos for equality of opportunity. One pupil commented, 'The teachers are always there for you'. Pupils understand very clearly what it means to have a healthy lifestyle, fully justifying the Healthy School award. They also welcome the opportunities for taking on responsibilities, such as being 'playground friends', where they look after and organise play for younger children at lunchtimes. They feel that the school listens to them and they are proud of organising events such as talent shows. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They have an outstanding awareness of cultures other than their own through celebrations such as international days where they enjoy sampling the variety of foods on offer. Pupils accurately rate behaviour as good and say that there is always someone to look after you if you have a problem. When asked to describe their school, typical comments were, 'It's a fun place' and 'It's really good ? it feels like a family together'.

From starting points that are well below average, pupils make good progress and leave at the end of Year 6 with standards that are just below those seen nationally. This is due to good teaching and learning, and specialised small group teaching for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is not their first language. The curriculum is good, very creative and meets the needs of the pupils well. Many pupils take advantage of the numerous clubs on offer during and after school, ranging from dance to philosophy. The school provides pupils with a good level of care, guidance and support. While the pastoral aspect of this is very good, the academic side is not as strong. This is because there are some inconsistencies in the use of assessment procedures and, as a result, some pupils do not know how they can improve their work.

The headteacher has established good teamwork within school and there are excellent partnerships outside school, such as the work with a local business to develop a sensory garden. Subject leaders oversee their areas well and there is a shared vision for raising pupils' achievement. Self-evaluation is good and there have been improvements in many areas, for example in teaching and learning, and in boys' writing. However, although action plans to bring about improvements are very detailed, success criteria are not always clear or easily measurable. As a result, information about improvements is not drawn together into a concise overview. Governors know the school very well and are robust in holding it to account.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well managed and children are given a good start to their education. Children enter the Nursery with standards that are well below national expectations and make good progress, reaching improved standards that are, however, still below average. Provision in the Nursery is of a very high standard, and the care provided is excellent. Children

have free access to inside and outside activities and there are many interesting and varied activities for the children to choose from, some of which have a teacher or teaching assistant in attendance supporting the activity and assessing the children. The personal development of the children is good and they vie with one another to become the 'star of the week'. In the Reception classes, the curriculum is broad and stimulating, but there is not a good balance between activities led by teachers and those chosen by the children themselves. This is due in part to the limited outside space which does not lend itself to supporting complementary activities that would enrich their learning further. The recently appointed Early Years Foundation Stage leader has introduced a new tracking system that has considerably improved the data available for analysis, giving a more accurate picture of children's progress. An innovative programme for engaging parents in their children's education at an early stage, encouraging them to spend just a short time helping their child to complete tasks during school is beginning to have a good impact on the children's learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure more consistent use of assessment strategies so that all pupils know how to improve their work, and what the next steps are in their learning.
- Strengthen evaluation at a whole-school level and have clear criteria by which improvements may be measured and thus drawn together more effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From starting points on entry to Nursery that are well below those typical for their age, pupils make good progress and attain standards that are just below average by the end of Year 6. Standards have been steadily rising over the past two years, both at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Although the rise in standards has not been as dramatic at the end of Year 6 due to these pupils having lower starting points, progress is good throughout the school. The school has successfully tackled underachievement, so that previously underperforming groups, such as higher-attaining pupils, now make good progress. A particular focus on writing, through the creative curriculum, has resulted in dramatic rises in standards there in all years. Throughout the school, pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those who speak English as an additional language and those who are vulnerable are supported very effectively. This helps them to overcome possible barriers to learning and achieve well in relation to their individual targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils have an increasing involvement with, and respect for, groups different from themselves. They have strong links locally, playing a regular part in the life of the local community. Their behaviour is good and they have a particularly high sense of their safety and that of others. Pupils' good contribution to the school and wider community is clearly evident. For example, older pupils assist younger ones and are very considerate of pupils who have disabilities. Through the school council, pupils' views on bullying, conservation and recycling have become part of the school's ethos. They are involved in a range of activities, which develop good skills for their future economic well-being. An example of this was the creation of a CD to demonstrate how the school had spent a grant for information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils' exceptionally well-developed understanding of how to keep healthy results from the wide range

of classroom activities provided. A very effective programme of work generated and delivered by the school nurse further supports this. Although attendance is below average, it has improved a great deal, through close monitoring and encouragement by the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons are well planned and pupils come ready to learn, as there are strong relationships between teachers and pupils. Most lessons are characterised by clear planning, a wide range of activities and a brisk pace throughout. Pupils are challenged through effective questioning, and the use of ICT helps make lessons more interesting and engaging. The work is well matched to the pupils' abilities and there are good opportunities for them to share ideas. Teaching assistants know and understand the learning needs of their pupils well and so help the groups they work with to be involved successfully in lessons. Teachers usually explain to the pupils what they should be achieving by the end of the lesson. Sometimes, the expected outcomes of lessons are not detailed enough or graduated enough in difficulty. This limits the opportunities for the pupils to be effectively involved in assessing their own learning. Pupils say that they learn best when they get 'to do things'. This was seen to particularly good effect in a Year 6 geography lesson where pupils were actively engaged in making models of a village they had read about in a story. Marking of pupils' work is generally good but it is not consistent in giving pupils advice on how they can improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The development and use of a more creative approach to curricular activities is providing pupils with a good appreciation of how they can apply skills they have learned in other subjects. This was seen to particularly good effect in a Year 6 lesson that effectively linked literacy, design and technology, and geography. As yet, not all lessons reflect this linked approach well enough. Personal, social and health education is good, reflected in the school gaining the Healthy School award. In conjunction with a range of coaches, specialists and visits, pupils have been able to use the specific subject skills they are gaining in a variety of situations and so develop more confidence in their understanding. Pupils talked enthusiastically about curriculum areas they enjoy and particularly so where those subjects are practical. There is a high uptake of the school's many clubs, and pupils told us how much they loved music and dance lessons. This was exemplified well during the inspection when pupils in Year 2 enthusiastically put on an excellent display of dance.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care and support for the happiness and well-being of all pupils are at the centre of school life. Pupils say that, 'There is always someone to talk to if you are in need'. The school's strong commitment to inclusion is evident in the very good provision for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who do not speak English as a first language. Support for these pupils, both in lessons and through individual and small group work, is managed very well and means that they make good progress in line with their peers. A significant number of pupils enter the school part-way through the year. Staff take great care to nurture these pupils,

support their families and help them integrate. There are excellent partnerships with local support agencies and their expertise is drawn upon when appropriate. The school keeps a close eye on the progress of individuals and different groups. This enables speedy intervention where underachievement is spotted. Most pupils know their targets well, but are less secure in knowing what to do to improve their work and the next steps to take in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The good leadership and management of the school contribute significantly to the good progress made by pupils. The enthusiastic and committed headteacher has strong support from both her senior and middle managers. As a result, both standards and achievement have been rising over recent years. Recently developed tracking systems, for example, have led to more focused implementation of appropriate interventions. Professional development is used as an effective tool to encourage and develop the skills of teaching and non-teaching staff, and has resulted in a staff team that is increasingly reflective. The school has a detailed school improvement plan, but the school's process for self-evaluation does not always clearly reflect the strengths of the school and the impact of provision. For example, the monitoring of teaching, although accurate, is not coordinated and collated to produce a portfolio of observations which would give a clearer picture of the quality of teaching in the school. Governors work well together, fulfil their statutory responsibilities and give good support to the school. They act as critical friends, challenging decisions and ensuring requests for resources are linked to outcomes for pupils. Community cohesion is strong. The school has a wide range of effective programmes for reaching out and supporting the community. The school is able to demonstrate that all three strands, faith, ethnicity and culture, and socio-economic dimensions, are effectively supported.

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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?	1
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?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
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?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which 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	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	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

19 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Linton Mead Primary School, London, SE28 8DT

We would like to thank you for making us feel very welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing all the interesting work that you do.

Your school is a good one. You behave very well and you are very polite. You look after each other well, in roles such as 'playground friends'. You like coming to school and you are very keen to learn. Your teachers make your lessons exciting and listen carefully to your ideas. The adults in school make sure that you are very safe and well cared for. You enjoy the many opportunities that the school offers, both in lessons and through the interesting visits and clubs.

Here are two things that we have asked the school to improve.

- Your teachers should check better how well you are learning and give you clearer advice on how you can improve your work.
- Your school leaders should use clearer ways of measuring and reporting how well the school is doing.

You can help by asking your teachers what you should be achieving in lessons and what the next steps in your learning should be.

We would like to wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Alison Thomson

Lead Inspector