

Nightingale Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100160
Local Authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	323236
Inspection dates	19–20 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Natalia Power

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)	228
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Bob Love
Headteacher	Mrs Linda Pethick
Date of previous school inspection	7 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Bloomfield Road Plumstead London SE18 7JJ
Telephone number	020 8854 6838
Fax number	020 8317 4001

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This one-form-entry primary school is average in size. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. Most pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, with pupils from Black African heritages forming the largest group. Around two thirds have first languages other than English, most commonly Somali, Bengali and Yoruba. More pupils join or leave midway through their primary school career than is usual. A lower than average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Of these, pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties form the largest group. The school has achieved a range of awards, including Basic Skills Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It is popular with parents, who describe it as 'a welcoming school'. They recognise the good work that the school is doing in creating an inclusive environment, where pupils from all backgrounds and cultures get on well. This is because, as one parent commented, 'Teachers pay great attention to the individual needs of pupils.' The school knows the pupils well and takes good care of them. It fosters pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils know right from wrong and respect the values of others. In this safe and secure environment, pupils develop good personal qualities. They behave well in class and around the school, and are polite and friendly towards one another and to visitors.

Pupils' overall achievement from their starting points is satisfactory. Children join the Nursery with standards below those expected for their age. Through good teaching and welfare arrangements, children make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage, leaving the Reception year with skills closer to those expected for their age. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' standards are broadly in line with the national average and their progress is satisfactory. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make satisfactory progress overall, but do less well in English than in mathematics and science, leaving the school with standards which are below those expected for their age. Pupils who join late and those at an early stage of learning English are supported well. They quickly settle down and make progress that is in line with their classmates. Effective support is provided for pupils with behavioural, emotional or social problems, and these pupils know there is an adult ready to support them. As a result, these pupils, too, make satisfactory progress. The school prepares pupils adequately for their secondary schools. The school works in effective partnership with local secondary schools and sports clubs to enhance the curriculum and provide good role models for pupils.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have clear plans for lessons and manage pupils' behaviour well. Some teachers expect a great deal from pupils and encourage them to work to the best of their ability. Others, however, do not expect enough from their pupils. Sometimes pupils are given too many worksheets to complete in lessons and too few opportunities to write independently and gain fluency. Leaders and managers recognise that not enough has been done to bring all teaching up to the level of the best, and to ensure that all pupils have work that is sufficiently challenging to enable them to make faster progress. Leaders observe lessons regularly, but their evaluations are sometimes overgenerous and lack rigour.

Leaders and managers know which groups are doing well and which are falling behind. They provide good-quality extra help, and this is particularly successful in raising standards for less-able pupils. However, the information gathered about pupils' progress is not always used in the classroom to devise personal targets for pupils. Many pupils are not sure what they need to do to improve their work, and marking does not always offer clear guidance on the next steps.

Leaders, managers and governors have a broadly accurate understanding of the areas where the school needs to develop. They have responded to points raised in the last inspection by improving the Early Years Foundation Stage and by improving attendance. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Most children start the Nursery with language and number skills and personal development well below those expected for their age. Through good teaching, they make good progress and, by the time they leave the Reception year, their skills are just below those expected of five-year-olds. The provision for children's welfare is effective, and safeguarding procedures are secure. Children feel safe. They are taught to be healthy, and have good opportunities to learn outdoors in the fresh air. Their personal development is good. They enjoy the activities that are provided for them, and are well behaved, playing cooperatively and taking turns. Tasks are planned well to enable children to follow their own interests, as well as join in adult-led activities. The curriculum is broad, and all areas of learning are covered effectively. Good emphasis is placed upon the basic skills, including the use of computers. Leaders and managers of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. They keep detailed records of children's progress, but these are not sufficiently used to plan for pupils' individual needs.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' achievement overall, and particularly in writing, by ensuring that work offers more challenge and by providing better opportunities for independent writing.
- Improve the consistency of teaching, by monitoring lessons more rigorously and helping teachers to improve their practice.
- Ensure that pupils know how they can improve their work through consistent marking, and by setting clear and measurable individual targets.

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

Year groups are relatively small, and results fluctuate between years. Broadly, pupils join and leave the school with standards somewhat lower than the national average and make satisfactory progress overall. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, their standards are a little closer to the national average than when they begin, and they remain so in Years 1 and 2. Over Years 3 to 6, pupils do a little less well, particularly in writing, but their achievement overall remains satisfactory. Pupils from all ethnic backgrounds, those who speak English as an additional language, and those with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, are well supported and make progress in line with others. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils speak enthusiastically about the school. 'I like this school, because teachers take care of you and support you all the way,' is a typical comment. Pupils enjoy school, and their good behaviour in lessons shows their willingness to learn. They are tolerant, respect differences, and work and play together harmoniously. They feel safe, and know that any playground or other incidents will be quickly sorted out by adults or their Playground Friends. The premises are secure, and equipment is safe to use and in good condition. Pupils understand the importance

of a healthy diet and exercise. They look forward to their lessons in the fresh air in the outdoor classrooms. They make a good contribution to the school, for instance by raising funds for the Early Years Foundation Stage garden. Attendance is improving and is now average. However, the poor attendance of a small minority of pupils prevents these individuals from achieving their full potential.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers have warm relationships with pupils and manage their behaviour well. Teaching assistants give good support to pupils with additional needs, to help them to keep up with the pace of work. Teachers are confident in their use of information and communication technology (ICT) and use interactive whiteboards well to engage and motivate pupils to learn. There are, however, variations in the quality of teaching. In the best lessons there is a brisk pace, with a good blend of whole-class and group activities, and a high level of challenge. Overall, however, pupils make only the progress expected of their age group, because the pace of lessons is sometimes too slow and the work set is sometimes too easy.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The 'golden enrichment' afternoons are a popular part of the curriculum, and pupils are enthusiastic about the range of opportunities provided. All pupils take part in the varied activities, such as cookery and Indian dance, and these opportunities enable pupils to develop good personal qualities. The varied and well-attended clubs also help to promote pupils' personal development and to foster their independence. ICT is used well in a range of subjects. The curriculum fulfils statutory requirements and satisfactorily enables pupils to learn basic literacy and numeracy, resulting in the school gaining the Basic Skills Quality Mark. However, the too frequent use of worksheets limits pupils' fluency in writing.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Vulnerable pupils are identified carefully and supported well, both in school and through effective liaison with outside agencies. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given suitable individual learning plans and make satisfactory progress. Safeguarding procedures for all adults working in the school are secure. The effective work of the Community Liaison Officer in fostering links between school and home is a major factor in improving the attendance of most pupils. Not enough is done to help pupils to understand how well they are learning. Marking does not always advise pupils how to improve the quality of their work. Some pupils have individual targets to help them understand how to reach the next level in their work, but this is not the case for all pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and school leaders have successfully created an environment where discrimination has no place, and where pupils from all backgrounds are keen to learn and do well. The school is strongly supported by parents, one of whom commented, 'I give credit to the headteacher for her continuous hard work in maintaining a good team of staff.' The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. Pupils are encouraged to look beyond the school and understand the world around them. However, leaders' targets for raising standards in English, mathematics and science are insufficiently challenging to inspire teachers to get the best out of pupils. The school's leadership does not always monitor teaching rigorously enough to promote good learning and raise standards. Governors provide satisfactory support and, with a new Chair, are beginning to challenge the school and hold it to account.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	3

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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	3

The quality of provision

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

03 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Nightingale Primary School, London, SE18 7JJ

You may remember that two inspectors recently visited your school. Two Year 6 pupils showed us round on the first morning, and we found their enthusiasm for the school to be very widely shared. You are polite and friendly, and willing to tell visitors what you most enjoy about school life. Your school is helping you to develop into healthy, confident young people. We like the way you all get on so well with one another and respect other people's values.

You are fortunate in having many opportunities to enjoy different activities in your enrichment afternoons, and we very much enjoyed seeing some of you juggle and learn to be clowns! The school gives you other good opportunities to join clubs and visit places of interest. Your school council is very active on your behalf, and you can all help them by thinking up as many sensible ways of helping the school as possible.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. Those of you who join the school later than your classmates quickly settle down and make friends, and those of you who are bilingual make progress along with others in the class, because everyone is looked after well. The adults help you to make satisfactory progress in your learning. We have asked them to challenge all of you to do as well as you possibly can. We have asked those in charge to visit more lessons to make sure that you are all working as hard as possible. We want your teachers to make sure that you all know how to improve your work. You can help by asking questions if you do not understand what you have to do, and then working as hard as possible to get there.

We know that you are all keen to learn and want to do well, because you told us so! You are showing your commitment by coming to school regularly, and this is a very good thing. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Natalia Power

Lead Inspector