

Thomas Jones Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100488
Local Authority	Kensington and Chelsea
Inspection number	323288
Inspection date	19 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Lorna Brackstone HMI

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)	233
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 Simon Blanchflower
Headteacher	Mr David Sellens
Date of previous school inspection	6 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	St Mark's Road London W11 1RQ
Telephone number	020 7727 1423
Fax number	020 7221 4838

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following:

- provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- progress made by pupils throughout the school
- the quality of pupils' personal development and well-being
- the quality of pastoral care, support and guidance
- the effectiveness of the governors.

Evidence was gained from visiting classrooms, looking at pupils' work, and scrutinising documentation and information on their progress. The inspectors also analysed the parent questionnaires and met with senior leaders, pupils, staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This average sized primary school serves a culturally and linguistically diverse community. Two thirds of pupils use English as an additional language, and one third of these speak Arabic as their first language. Over half of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils who experience learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly below the national average. These include issues relating to social and emotional problems, and specific learning difficulties. Children start Nursery at the age of three and a half. Most transfer into the adjoining Reception class after one year in the Nursery. It is believed that the school is named after Thomas Jones, born in North Carolina in 1806. A passionate critic of slavery, Thomas Jones obtained a rudimentary education, and used his skills to emancipate his own children.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This outstanding school lives up extremely well to the reputation of its namesake, who always strove for equal opportunities and who had the highest aspirations for his own children. The exceptional pastoral care, guidance and support are clearly evident when each pupil, parent, carer and pre-school child is welcomed at the school gate every morning by the headteacher and his exceptionally talented staff. They are regarded by most parents and carers as 'an inspiration to the pupils'. By exchanging daily news updates and checking the well-being of all their pupils and their families, they demonstrate exceptional commitment to the local community. The headteacher has extremely high expectations of behaviour and conduct, and this is reflected in the excellent manner in which the pupils greet visitors with a handshake and welcome them into their school. They are justifiably very proud of their school, and their love of learning is reflected in their daily punctuality and their excellent attendance records. This is a remarkable achievement, given that a number of key religious festivals for the community fall during term times.

Pupils' achievement at Thomas Jones is outstanding. From a starting point in Nursery that is generally well below that expected, pupils leave Year 6 having attained exceptionally high standards in English, mathematics and science. Their literacy and numeracy skills are used extremely well across the curriculum, and this enables them to attain high standards in other subjects, such as history and geography. Absorption of an extremely rich cultural environment, which is enhanced by frequent visits to local art galleries and careful attention to detail by the talented staff, ensures that pupils' artwork is of an exceptional standard. Moreover, as one parent commented, 'the school demonstrates a holistic approach to developing the potential of the children in their care'.

There are robust procedures in place to keep the pupils safe and secure. They develop into mature young people who share a strong moral code, take a sensible approach to maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and know how to stay safe. The pupils' high aspirations for their future are a striking feature of the school. They are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education, and apply the skills they have learnt to everyday life situations. An example of this is when the Year 6 pupils don white coats for science lessons and eagerly respond to the school's expectation that they are preparing for university. Immersion in the plays of Shakespeare, poetry readings from Lord Tennyson, and high-quality literature such as *Lord of the Flies*, has instilled in pupils a love of literature, and has enabled them to reflect with confidence. Very good problem-solving skills ensure that the older pupils can apply their learning to everyday life, such as when planning, marketing, and presenting an adventure theme park to the younger pupils.

All pupils make excellent progress because the quality of provision is outstanding. Teachers have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the way pupils learn. They plan the highest-quality lessons and deploy very good strategies to ensure that skills are consolidated. This was demonstrated in a French lesson where the names of different colours were modelled by adults who taught in small groups. The pupils were then encouraged to work with a learning partner to consolidate their new French vocabulary, and to share their conversations with the rest of the class. The lesson concluded with a song that required the pupils to have a secure knowledge of all the new vocabulary they had learnt. Teachers also ask questions that have been very carefully crafted to ensure that everyone feels fully included and valued in the lessons. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language, and those who have learning

difficulties and/or disabilities, are extremely well supported. This ensures that all individuals understand what they need to do to progress in their learning. Pupils know how to move on to the next stage of learning, because they are given targets for improvement when teachers mark their books. However, while this is an outstanding feature in some classes, it is not of a consistently high level throughout the school.

Exceptionally interesting and stimulating resources are used to motivate and engage all pupils. For example, when working on a Second World War topic, talks from senior citizens in the local community about their life during the war, the use of original period photographs, and trips to museums and exhibitions enabled their learning to be brought to life. Pupils have a greater understanding about what they are learning because curriculum subjects are skilfully linked together. This is very well illustrated in the Victorian topic studied, which not only focused on historical facts, but also enabled the pupils to learn about the famous artist William Morris. As one parent explained: 'The way each topic is linked to other areas of learning seems to be really working. I can see how my child is enjoying learning, as each time he gets very involved in the topic. He comes home with so much information and wants to continue finding out more.'

Thomas Jones has remained an outstanding school since the last inspection, because of the inspirational leadership of the headteacher. As one parent explained, 'He brings personal attention and dedication to each child.' He is passionate that the diversity of the community is fully reflected in the ethos of the school, and this is at the heart of its provision. Consequently, topics such as 'Coming to England', where the school has created a DVD with the local community, and 'Calypso' are cherished by pupils and families. The feedback from parents, pupils and the local authority on these programmes of study are very positive, and shows how extremely well the school contributes to community cohesion. The exceptionally strong support that the headteacher receives from his talented senior team, his first-rate staff and his very knowledgeable governors ensures that this school has an outstanding capacity for further improvements.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The Early Years Foundation Stage (known as the Nursery and Reception classes) is extremely well managed, and children receive an excellent start to their education. Children begin in the Nursery with skills that are well below those expected for their age. Speaking and listening and communication skills present a particular challenge, because many of the children are speaking English as an additional language. The personal development of many of the children is at a much lower level than that normally found when children first start. However, they make rapid progress in becoming independent, happy learners throughout their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. By the time that they are ready to move on to Year 1, they have attained expected levels for this age group and their overall achievement is exceptional. This is due to the exceptionally well-planned and very well-thought-out activities on offer that capture children's interest from the start and ensure that they want to learn. The progress they make in their learning is outstanding. Specific teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) is having a positive effect on raising standards and preparing children well for when they move through the school. Observations by staff of what children know and can do are extremely detailed, and are used very well to plan the next steps for learning. The outdoor area is used exceptionally well, and the children are encouraged to make their own decisions about whether they want to play inside or out. Role play is encouraged, and this helps the children to make such good progress in their speaking and listening development. The 'Vet's Surgery' in Nursery and the

'Pet Shop' in Reception encourage the children to cooperate very well together, and help them to gain an understanding of the wider community in which they live.

Children who are very new to the English language, and those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are supported extremely well by the staff, who work exceptionally well together to provide a supportive and calm learning environment. They are consistent in their methods, which ensure that whichever member of staff children approach, they are treated equally. The same systems, understood by all, are used to promote communication and understanding. Adults make good use of strategies such as action songs and visual props to support children. Relationships with parents and carers are excellent and the welfare provision is outstanding. For example, the teacher responsible for the Nursery and Reception meets and greets all parents and carers with their children at the gate each morning. They are also welcomed into the classes to make comments in their children's learning profiles, which are easy to access in the classroom.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the marking of pupils' books is of a consistently high standard throughout the school.

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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?	1
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	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

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?	1
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	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

08 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Thomas Jones Primary School, London, W11 1RQ

Thank you for making my colleague and me so welcome. We enjoyed spending time with you and finding out about your school. We would like to say a particular thank you to those pupils whom we met to talk to about life at your school.

We agree with your parents that your school provides you with an excellent education, and you achieve exceptionally high standards. We were very impressed with the way you present your work and how eager you are to learn. Your teachers are excellent and make sure that you always try your best in your learning. They plan extremely interesting activities, and this encourages you to learn because the themes they chose are meaningful to you. Your knowledge about the Second World War, and what life was like afterwards when people came from the Caribbean to live in England, was impressive. We were delighted to see how well you were doing in your French lessons through the confident way you communicated with each other.

You really enjoy coming to school and 'learning new things every day'. It is very clear that you take a full part in its life. We enjoyed hearing about the trips you go on, and we were very interested to hear about how successful you are in the after-school sports activities. You feel very safe because the school looks after you so well. You told us that there is always someone you can talk to about a problem, and you are rightly proud of the way that you all work together harmoniously. You are very knowledgeable about how to keep your body fit and you know what foods are good for you to eat. Your participation in fund-raising events and your exceptional key skills prepare you extremely well for the future.

Your headteacher and the other adults involved in leading and managing your school do an excellent job, and make sure that you receive the best possible education. We have asked them to ensure that the marking of your books is always of the same high quality.

Once again, thank you for your help. Keep doing your best and working with the adults in school to make sure Thomas Jones gets even better.

Yours faithfully

Lorna Brackstone

Her Majesty's Inspector