

Sunnyhill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100585
Local Authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	323304
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Joan Lindsay

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)	436
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 David Walker
Headteacher	Mrs Annie Clews
Date of previous school inspection	8 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Sunnyhill Road London SW16 2UW
Telephone number	020 8769 4785
Fax number	020 8664 6709

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large primary school, with Early Years Foundation Stage education for up to 80 children either full- or part-time at nursery age and continuing into two Reception classes. An after-school club, which is not managed by the school, is run on the premises. Almost half the pupils are eligible for free school meals and almost two-thirds speak English as an additional language. Both these proportions are well above average. The largest groups of pupils are of Black Caribbean or Black African heritage. More pupils than average have learning difficulties, the largest groups being those who have moderate learning difficulties; behaviour, social and emotional needs; or speech, language and communication needs. There is high pupil mobility in the school and a major rebuilding programme is taking place.

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. There are some good features, especially in the way pupils are cared for and in their personal development and well-being. Parents speak highly of the school, with one parent, who reflected the views of many, stating, 'We have nothing but praise for the school.' There are strong links with the local community, with the children's centre and with parents. This has a positive impact on pupils' well-being.

Pupils achieve satisfactorily, although standards are below average. Most children start in the Nursery with skills and knowledge that are well below the levels expected for their age. Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, particularly in personal and social development, but children's reading and writing skills remain low. Standards at the end of Year 2 have been declining for several years. However, progress at this key stage is satisfactory, considering that it is hampered by very high pupil mobility and that a large proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and many are at an early stage of learning English. Satisfactory and improving achievement at Key Stage 2 means that standards at the end of Year 6 have improved in recent years and that, although they are still below national levels, the gap is narrowing. Overall achievement across the school is satisfactory. Some groups of pupils, such as those with English as an additional language, often make good progress as a result of the well-targeted support they receive. Achievement and standards in writing across the school are not high enough because there is not a consistent approach to providing opportunities for extended writing. Whole-school planning is not in place for writing.

The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. There are some good elements, especially in the way pupils are managed and in the use of teaching assistants. However, there is an inconsistency in the way teachers use information about what pupils know to guide them in how best to improve.

The curriculum has improved since the last inspection, with better use of topics to make learning more relevant and interesting. There are lots of opportunities for pupils to get involved in extra-curricular activities. Visits out of school, to places such as the Barbican and the Oval cricket ground, are plentiful. Music is a particular strength which enhances pupils' self-esteem through, for example, performing with steel pans in assembly.

Pupils are well looked after in school and parents speak about the warm and friendly atmosphere. Academic support and guidance are only satisfactory because marking and pupils' targets are not used consistently across the school to ensure all pupils know what to do to improve.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Strong community cohesion has been developed under the headteacher's guidance. However, there is not enough rigour and focus in the way lessons are monitored, targets are used and action plans are measured to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can. The prolonged and extensive building works have had a negative impact on senior leaders' time as well as the day-to-day working conditions of staff and pupils, although the staff have worked very hard to minimise the impact on pupils' education.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children settle well when they start in the Nursery. The adults focus on their personal development so they soon become confident and independent. They are thoughtfully looked after by the well-trained, experienced staff. Children obviously love their time in the Nursery

and Reception classes, approaching activities such as music lessons with infectious enthusiasm and lots of laughter. Teaching is satisfactory. Adults work well together as a team and there are high expectations of the children's behaviour which helps their personal development. However, staff do not make enough use of their observations of children to plan the next steps in their learning. In addition, there is not enough data available relating to children's progress for effective planning to meet the needs of all children. While the new children's centre is being built, the outdoor provision is severely restricted which, while it is carefully managed, does have some adverse impact on children's welfare needs. The cramped, sloping playground has no covered area, making child-selected free-flow activities severely limited. This hampers children's development in several areas, especially their physical development. Leadership and management are satisfactory. However, there is not enough readily available information about children's progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage to help set targets and ensure continuity when they move on to the next stage of their learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards across the school, particularly by improving achievement in writing.
- Develop an effective system to track progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage and into Year 1.
- Improve management through greater rigour in lesson observations, action planning, target setting and academic guidance for pupils.

A small proportion of 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

At the end of Year 2, far fewer than average numbers of pupils reach the higher levels in reading, writing or mathematics. However, pupils enter Year 1 at levels below those expected for their age, especially in their reading and writing skills. A high proportion join the school throughout the year, often with specific language and/or learning needs. This has an inevitable impact on standards. At the end of Year 2, progress, in the light of pupils' difficulties, is satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, standards have been improving year on year since 2002. Although standards remain below national averages, many pupils, especially those with English as an additional language, make good progress in terms of what pupils attained at the end of Year 2. Progress in mathematics throughout the school has improved since the last inspection as a result of better teaching and well-targeted support for pupils. The school now, rightly, has as a key priority the improvement of writing because writing standards are particularly weak.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils have positive attitudes and behave well. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds work and play together well, which gives the school an ethos of harmony and productivity. They are sensitive to the needs of others, such as when they use peer mediation to resolve arguments. Pupils say that bullying and racism are rare and they are confident that, should they occur, they will be firmly dealt with. Attendance has improved since the last inspection after a concerted effort on the part of the school. A small number of pupils are still persistently absent, however.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and contributes to the happy, friendly atmosphere. They have a keen sense of right and wrong and a strong awareness of their own beliefs and those of others. They speak positively about the many faiths and cultures represented in the school and have a good understanding of the multicultural world in which they live.

Pupils have a good understanding of how diet and exercise promote healthy lifestyles. They make informed choices from the varied lunch menu and appreciate the many opportunities for participating in sport. The school's recent award of the Active Sportsmark illustrates pupils' commitment to keeping fit. Pupils think the school is a safe place and readily follow revised safety procedures while building works are in progress. The school makes a good contribution to the local community, participating in many events such as festivals that celebrate the people, culture and diversity of the area. The pupils on the school council are proud to serve their peers and take their responsibilities seriously. Activities such as the Young Enterprise project have given pupils a secure understanding of life after school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is inconsistent. In the most effective lessons, there is a clear focus on what pupils are learning, and activities are relevant and match the differing abilities of pupils, who are reminded of their targets. However this is not consistent across all classes. Less effective teaching slows pupils' progress, and this is most noticeable in the development of their writing. Classrooms are well equipped and staff and pupils make much use of interactive whiteboards to help learning. There are good systems to identify pupils with language development needs, and guidance for these pupils ensures that their progress is generally good. Learning support assistants provide constructive help to pupils in class and liaise effectively with class teachers so that pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress. Good links exist between the school and home and parents are encouraged to support their children's learning. For example, popular workshops have been established to support families whose children have speech and language needs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

A topic-based curriculum has been developed since the last inspection, which helps pupils enjoy their learning more. There has been a strong emphasis on mathematics which has had a positive impact on standards across the school. However, the lack of a cohesive strategy for the development of writing throughout the school has led to a significant number of pupils not reaching their potential. Opportunities to create links between subjects are not always made use of, for example by encouraging extended writing in subjects other than English. The school is rightly proud of its very strong music tradition, with high standards of singing and instrumental playing. For example, an enthusiastic and talented samba band entertained the school assembly with intricate rhythm patterns and dance. The recent Arts Mark award reflects work done to enliven the pupils' experiences. The curriculum is further enriched with numerous clubs for sports, drama, computers, art and dance and the personal development of older pupils is enhanced by a residential visit.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

There is a strong family atmosphere in the school, as a result of which pupils feel safe, happy and ready to learn. Where there are specific problems, such as a learning or social need, the school provides additional support where possible. Consequently, pupils who are in the early stages of learning English, for example, often make impressive progress, benefiting from well-organised guidance to support their individual needs.

Procedures to ensure the safety of pupils are fully in place. The guidance given to pupils in response to their work is varied. There are examples of effective marking with helpful comments to encourage improvement but this is not evident in many of the books seen. Targets to support individual pupils in the next stages of their learning are inconsistently applied across the school and few pupils are involved in assessment of their own progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

A particular strength of leadership is that the headteacher clearly understands the needs of a diverse community. Community cohesion is promoted well and there is a very clear understanding of the needs of the local community. For example, there are language groups, interpreters are provided for school events and parents are helped to develop different skills, which in turn support their children. The wealth of cultures represented in the school is celebrated and pupils also have opportunities to reflect on wider global issues. The headteacher values every pupil which ensures that they are all fully included in the life and work of the school. Many parents speak highly of the support she has given to pupils and families in the area.

An enthusiastic senior team supports the headteacher. Roles are clearly defined and leaders are providing increasing levels of support and guidance to their teams. They are now more involved in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and self-evaluation is largely accurate. Resulting action plans form a sound starting point for improvement but lack measurable targets against which to judge success. Other key activities, such as lesson monitoring and target setting, promote satisfactory levels of progress but are not sufficiently rigorous to secure consistently good progress. Governance is satisfactory. Governors have improved their work since the last inspection and are more effective in challenging and holding the school to account. There are indications that initiatives are beginning to bear fruit, for example in the achievement and standards at the end of Year 6 and in mathematics. This, combined with a developing management structure, shows the school has a satisfactory 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	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?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

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?	2
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**

16 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sunnyhill Primary School, London, SW16 2UW

Thank you very much for such a warm welcome to your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and your teachers, and visiting your lessons and assemblies, especially listening to the fantastic steel pans! Your school is a satisfactory one and has some good things in it.

Here are some of the best things about your school.

- You really enjoy school, behave well and feel safe because adults are very caring. You know a lot about how to stay healthy.
- Your school works well with others, such as the children's centre and your parents, to make sure you are happy and able to learn.
- The headteacher makes sure that the school is very much a part of the local community.

This is what we have asked your school to do next.

- Improve your skills in all subjects, especially writing.
- Make sure that staff keep a more careful track of what progress children are making in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Make sure that the people who lead and manage in the school keep a careful check on lessons and how well you are doing so they can help you to improve.

You can help your school by continuing to behave well and trying to do your best all the time.

Best wishes for your future.

Yours faithfully

Joan Lindsay

Lead Inspector