

Camelot Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100780
Local Authority	Southwark
Inspection number	323343
Inspection dates	5–6 May 2009
Reporting inspector	George Rayner

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)	503
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 Oliver Wooller
Headteacher	Ms Teresa N'Guessan
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	Bird-in-Bush Road London SE15 1QP
Telephone number	020 7639 0431
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school is larger than most primary schools. Almost all pupils come from minority ethnic groups, with Black African and Caribbean communities the most strongly represented. Few pupils are still at an early stage of learning to speak English. An above average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Their most common needs are related to developing speech, language and communication skills, or to behavioural, emotional and social aspects. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average. The school provides for the Early Years Foundation Stage in a Nursery and two Reception classes. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2007. An after school club takes place on the school premises, managed by the local authority.

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. Leaders are effectively focused on improvement, so that the school's quality and performance is advancing in all areas. Parents agree. The great majority say that they are happy with their children's progress and that they enjoy being at the school. A typical comment was, 'The changes being made are good for the children.'

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They say that they like coming to school and show this by their cheerful attitudes and willingness to join in with all that it offers. Pupils have a good understanding of a healthy lifestyle. They know why healthy eating and drinking are sensible and they lead active lives. Pupils know that they are well cared for and this helps them to feel secure and develops their confidence well.

Good teaching and learning, together with a well-planned curriculum, help pupils to achieve well. As a result, they improve from their starting points, which are below expected levels for their age, to reach broadly average overall standards. Improvements to teaching have been in place for longest in English. This means that progress is most rapid and consistent in this subject. It is now catching up in mathematics, because teaching is becoming more effective in helping pupils to use their skills to solve problems independently. The leaders know that, while satisfactory, progress is least strong in science. While the need for improvement to the curriculum and teaching for this subject is well understood, the strategies to secure these are only beginning to be put in place. In all subjects, most lessons are well planned, but the effectiveness with which teachers implement these plans is not fully consistent. For example, teachers often use pairs and groups well to involve all pupils. This is sometimes less productive, however, when a few pupils do not join in and are not given the extra encouragement that they need to do so.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, provides a clear vision for the school and strong guidance for her colleagues. There is considerable unity of purpose, shared by staff working at all levels. Rigorous self-evaluation has given the leaders an accurate view of the areas that have needed improving. Well considered strategies have brought improvements in most areas, including teaching and the curriculum, and standards are rising because of this. The track record demonstrates a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Nursery with skills and abilities below those usually expected for their age, especially in literacy, where they are well below expectations. They settle quickly because there is a good range of interesting activities for them to enjoy. There is a good mix of adult-led activities and those that children can choose for themselves. In the Nursery, good use is made of the well-equipped outside area to help children to develop good habits as active, inquisitive, independent learners. However, the outside area for Reception is less stimulating, with a more restricted range of resources that encourage children to find things out by exploring. Careful assessments ensure that the activities planned for each child are appropriate for the progress that they are making. Children's behaviour is good and they respond well to the guidance that they are given to care for the safety of themselves and others. Parents are well informed about their children's targets and progress towards these, through the Southwark Transition and Assessment Record (STAR). They are also enabled to learn how to contribute to their children's

learning through a 'family learning' course. Good leadership and management and strong teamwork, have been successful in securing better provision and faster progress than at the time of the last inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make progress in mathematics and science more rapid, to match that in English.
- Increase the consistency of teaching so that the quality in all lessons matches that in the best.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Following good progress from their starting points, pupils' overall standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6. Progress is good, and particularly strong in English. In this subject, in which pupils have marked weaknesses when they enter the school, they improve to reach average levels. Most are able to write in an interesting style, to meet the purposes of a variety of tasks. Although satisfactory, progress is slowest in science. Standards remain below average in this subject, because many pupils find it difficult to use their skills and knowledge to find things out for themselves through independent investigation. The needs of the pupils who find it difficult to develop communication skills, or to concentrate on their work, are carefully identified and effectively provided for. As a result, they make as much progress as their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They speak warmly about their school. Older ones say that behaviour has improved greatly since they started and are proud that this is now good. Pupils show consideration for one another and for adults. They say that they feel safe and are not worried about racism or bullying because these '...hardly ever happen now'. This is borne out by a recent marked reduction in recorded incidents. One pupil commented, 'If you have a problem, the adults treat you well and look after you.' Attendance is satisfactory because, while most pupils attend school regularly, a small number are absent too often. Pupils develop a good level of self-confidence and enjoy being part of the school community. The school council is rightly proud of its involvement in some of the changes within the school, for example the new lunch menu. Pupils enthusiastically contribute to their wider community through, for example, a non-school-uniform day to raise money for a local charity. Cooperating on such activities, together with the progress that they make in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), helps pupils to prepare well for their futures.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

In most lessons, teachers effectively balance assertiveness and sensitivity. As a result, relationships are good and pupils are willing learners. Teachers usually plan activities to match the needs of all pupils, to ensure that the level of challenge is right for all. Teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants is generally effective in ensuring that those pupils who find

the work especially difficult quickly receive the help that they need to keep up with the pace of learning. Lessons are sometimes outstanding. In a Year 6 science lesson, for example, pupils thoroughly enjoyed finding out about the life cycle of a flower because of highly stimulating teaching, making excellent use of exciting resources. While the quality of teaching is better than at the time of the last inspection, it is not fully consistent. For example, class discussions at the end of lessons often work well to let pupils test their understanding of their work or look ahead to their next tasks. On other occasions, these sessions are too short to be effective.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has been reviewed and broadened since the last inspection. This has provided a more effective emphasis on literacy and numeracy, coupled with a topic approach that allows pupils to develop their skills in 'real tasks' in other subjects. The creative arts make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development through, for example, boosting their enjoyment and involvement in the school and wider communities. This was exemplified during the inspection in the quality of pupils' artwork displayed across the school, a dance lesson involving pupils choreographing their own work and a dance-music workshop in preparation for a Royal Festival Hall performance with nine other schools. A good range of extra-curricular clubs and visits that are linked to classroom topics enriches their experiences and develops their skills through direct experience. Very good ICT resources are used effectively to support learning. For example, they assist pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to be fully involved and develop confidence. Although planning for most subjects promotes good progress in all the relevant knowledge and skills, it is less strong in a few subjects. The leaders are aware of this and are introducing improvements, for example, to help pupils to develop the ability and confidence to find things out in science by carrying out their own investigations.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Procedures for ensuring pupils' safety are comprehensive and diligently carried out and the school site is secure. As a result, pupils feel safe and confident. Provision for vulnerable pupils and for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well organised and effective. Good use is made of specialist outside agencies to give additional help to pupils and their families when this is necessary. The school has implemented effective strategies that are beginning to improve punctuality and attendance rates, although a few families are yet to respond. Systems to track pupils' progress have recently been improved and are now good. They ensure that an effective range of support is quickly provided for pupils who slip behind the progress expected of them. Pupils have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and what they should do to improve. This is because they and their parents are given regular feedback about their work. Teachers use marking to guide and support pupils particularly well in English, but this is not so consistently strong in other subjects.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Senior leaders have placed considerable emphasis on encouraging all staff to be more involved in taking decisions. They say that this has had a significant impact on their morale and created a sense of sharing in moving the school forward. Monitoring and evaluation are strongest in

literacy and numeracy, where they are most effective in helping staff to improve their teaching. In other areas, recently appointed subject leaders are not fully involved in all aspects of monitoring, such as obtaining first-hand evidence by observing lessons. Plans are in hand to do this soon, however. During the past year, governors have evaluated their own roles. This has led them to improve well their contribution to decision taking, monitoring the school's work and challenging the leaders where necessary. The school has an effective commitment to community cohesion. Leaders have taken careful note of issues, such as gang culture, in the local community. For example, they have developed links with a local school in a contrasting environment to help pupils to develop an understanding and tolerance of others who might have different cultural and ethnic backgrounds and beliefs. Leaders know that the impact of these strategies has not been fully evaluated.

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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 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?	2
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	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	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	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	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 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Camelot Primary School, London, SE15 1QP

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors to your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you. We are grateful for the help you gave by talking to us and showing us your work. We were able to see that yours is a good school.

You make good progress from your starting points. This helps you to reach standards that are similar to those that pupils achieve in most schools. This is because the adults have worked together well to improve your lessons. Your strongest subject is English. It is good to see that you are catching up well in mathematics. You are not quite so strong in science. The adults know that they need to give you more chances to learn to find things out for yourselves through your own experiments. We have asked them to do this as soon as possible. Most of your lessons are good. A few are not quite so good, so we have asked the teachers to work together to make all lessons as good as the best ones.

You help your teachers a lot by being well behaved and working hard. Some of you told us that this is an important way in which your school has got better in the last year or so. You told us that you know you are well cared for and that this makes you feel safe and happy. Most of you come to school regularly. A few of you are absent too often and this makes it harder for you to do well. You can help your teachers even more by only staying off school when you really have to.

Your headteacher and the other adults know how to make your school even better. We know that you will continue to help them to do this. Well done to you all and very best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

George Rayner

Lead Inspector