

# John Donne Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100797
<b>Local Authority</b>	Southwark
<b>Inspection number</b>	323348
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Sudworth

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	376
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tim Higginson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Evelyn Holdsworth/ Nicholas Tildesley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 May 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Woods Road Peckham London SE15 2SW
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7639 0594
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7635 9246

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 June 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Children begin the Nursery full time in the September or January after their third birthday in this larger than average primary school. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language and from minority ethnic groups is very much higher than usually found. The proportion of the pupils who experience difficulties learning the basic skills and/or with emotional problems is higher than in most schools. About half the pupils are entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the customary times of the year is higher than is usually found. The school has been jointly led for nearly two years by two part-time headteachers whose duties overlap for one half-day weekly to ensure continuity.

## 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. The joint headteachers' outstanding leadership and the clear focus on attainment and progress have brought about rapid improvements since the last inspection, particularly in the last 18 months. Pupils achieve well and make good progress in reaching broadly average standards.

This is a happy school where the joyfulness shown is strengthened by uplifting singing. There is a real focus on making learning meaningful. Pupils enjoy school and are keen to do their best. Parents responding to the questionnaire are wholeheartedly behind the school and pay tribute to the massive improvements that have taken place. They note their children's good progress. One parent writes, 'There are lots of strategies and information to help parents to improve the lives of their children, and wonderful extra-curricular opportunities.' The school is working hard to engage the parents as complementary partners in their children's education. This is beginning to reap rewards. A large group of parents sat beside their children in a Year 2 class at the start of a new project. They were taught how they could help their children at home with writing. The weekend following the inspection, there was to be an International Day for all the school's families. The attractive weekly newsletters are exemplary and provide both helpful and interesting information for parents.

Staff work very hard and are prepared to go the extra mile. The school strenuously seeks to work with the whole family. For example, they have recently offered a financial advice service. As one of the headteachers said, 'What the school offers is based on unconditional love.' Staff take excellent care of the pupils and take a keen interest in each one. Pupils are very effectively supported if they have emotional problems. New children settle quickly. Consequently, pupils develop well as young people. Pupils are prepared effectively for their future education. They take a good level of pride in their work and set it out neatly. They have a good awareness of safe and healthy living and practise this, for example through their regular involvement in sport.

Teaching is good and is improving further, as staff support one another with ideas and work together as a team. They recognise that they need to improve their skills in using the new system which tracks pupils' progress. While good practice was observed, use of assessment data is not always sharp enough in matching work accurately to challenge each pupil to the utmost. The school seeks to improve this. The curriculum is good and pupils really enjoy visits, visitors and the special weeks, which add variety to the usual routines, such as the mathematics week. Overall, the activities in the Nursery and Reception are stimulating and support the children's learning, but the outside arrangements are not planned as rigorously to extend their learning as effectively as those inside. Nevertheless, provision is good overall in the Early Years Foundation Stage and, as elsewhere, the children make good progress.

The work of the governing body is satisfactory and developing further. The outstanding leadership of the headteachers, improving rates of progress, and rising teaching quality together indicate that this school has a good capacity to improve even more.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Attainment on entry to the Nursery is well below expectations for the children's age. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in communication and language development, although their attainment in all areas of their learning is still below

expectations by the end of the Reception Year. Good settling-in procedures and one-to-one discussions with the parents encourage increasing rates of parental involvement. Staff provide an exciting learning environment in many respects, especially in the Reception class. Children enjoyed their experience in the 'Space Station' with its glittery lights. Nevertheless, the outside environment does not provide the same quality of learning stimulation as indoors. Routines are well established and encourage the children's independence. Children enjoy their activities because staff make learning fun. Children 'fished' to find the letter sounds that they had been learning. The balance between activities directed by the staff and those that the children choose is good. Staff provide good support for children who have little understanding of English, and the activities help these children to develop their speaking skills. The provision is led and managed effectively. The children are well cared for and their personal development is good. Regular observations help to link planning closely to the children's needs.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Build on the best practice already in the school by ensuring greater consistency in the use of assessment to help pupils take the next steps in their learning.
- Plan activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage which make more effective use of the outdoor area to develop children's skills across all areas of learning, and so match to the quality of those indoors.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well in reaching broadly average standards by the end of both Years 2 and 6. Pupils make good progress. Past underachievement in some parts of the school has been tackled rigorously. Rates of progress are rising rapidly. All groups of pupils make equally good rates of progress, including pupils whose first language is other than English and those who have emotional difficulties and/or who have difficulty learning basic skills. Progress by Year 6 in 2008 from the levels of attainment reached in Year 2 was among the very highest in the country. Pupils have good musical skills and their singing is inspirational. They develop good skills in information and communication technology. Staff's well-chosen opportunities for pupils to discuss aspects of their learning in class assist the development of their speaking skills, and these are particularly helpful to those with limited understanding of English.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils behave well. Most pupils show a ready attitude of keenness to work, and many have high aspirations for their futures. Pupils' cultural development is outstanding. They show high levels of respect for one another's different backgrounds. As one pupil said, 'School is a happy place - there is no bullying and no racism.' The breakfast and after-school clubs contribute well to pupils' social skills and to punctuality. Pupils engage enthusiastically in after-school clubs which contribute to their healthy life styles. Attendance is satisfactory and has improved. The school council is very effective and represents the pupils' voice very well. For example, following consultations with the school kitchen staff, an African meal at lunchtime was prepared by lunchtime staff who dressed up in full African costume. Members arrange school discos, which are thoroughly enjoyed by the other pupils. The Eco-School committee ensures that there is a good awareness of environmental matters, such as recycling. Pupils support several charities, and the choir sings to the elderly in the local community.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

A small minority of the teaching seen was outstanding. Teachers' high expectations of how pupils should present their work result in pupils' neat and thoughtful presentation. Good practice in Year 4 setting out the factors for success in different styles of writing supports learning well, but this is not yet consistent across the school. Specialised teaching in sport and art supports the overall good quality of teaching. Specialist science accommodation has contributed to the considerable improvement taking place in science teaching and to rising standards. Teachers usually plan lessons effectively and prepare resources well. On occasions, insufficient use is made of assessment to ensure that work builds on pupils' previous understanding of their work. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively with pupils who need extra support, such as those with limited English. Teachers make good use of opportunities to get pupils talking in pairs to discuss particular teaching points, which supports and develops their speaking skills well.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good and supports pupils' musical and sporting skills particularly well. The arrangements to teach pupils how to grow up as decent citizens with respect for themselves and for others are very strong. The school takes good account of pupils' backgrounds when planning the curriculum. Studies in history in Year 6 help pupils to understand Caribbean immigration. Some literacy units include work about African politicians. Year 6 pupils were exploring Hindu pattern through investigations in mathematics. There are good links between subjects. For example, Year 4 pupils made animated video clips from their artwork, based on a book they had been studying. Good attention is paid to the basic skills, including handwriting throughout the school. The school recognises the need to review its curriculum themes to ensure that skills are being taught progressively. For the most part there is a very good balance to the curriculum, but there is scope for greater attention to geography. Visits make a good contribution to pupils' learning and widen their experiences, for example when Year 6 pupils went on a visit to a forest, which developed a range of learning skills such as orienteering.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Pastoral support for pupils and their families is excellent. The work of the learning mentor is outstanding. Pupils new to the school are inducted very well and made most welcome. Very good care is provided in the breakfast and after-school clubs. Pupils enjoy these and the healthy snacks. Child protection procedures and safeguarding arrangements are very secure. Excellent systems are in place to improve attendance even more. The school's very good procedures to monitor health and safety assist pupils' well-being. Very supportive links with outside agencies assist the most vulnerable pupils very effectively. The well-organised individual target system, focused on attitudes and behaviour, is proving immensely helpful in maintaining pupils' good attitudes to work.

Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. The usefulness of this in helping pupils to improve varies from class to class, but at its best, as in Year 2, it is excellent. Pupils know what they must do to get to the next level in English, but this has not yet extended to mathematics.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The joint headteachers demonstrate an uncompromising commitment to high standards, and accomplish this through excellent staff relationships and harmony. The shared vision for the school is visited regularly, resulting in a constant striving to do the best for the pupils. As a result, the whole school community, including previously hard-to-reach groups, is developing into a school of which all stakeholders are proud. The impact is evident in rising standards and in increased rates of parental involvement.

Subject leaders and middle managers are developing very well, both in their roles and in their insight of overall provision. They are gaining in their expertise - for example in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, and in advising other staff how to make improvements. As a result, challenging targets are being met. The school development plan is well devised, with a clear focus on standards and with measurable success criteria.

The governing body, very well led by its highly committed chair, is developing in its role as the critical friend. Governors are gaining knowledge of their roles and are very supportive of the school. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion and has links with local, United Kingdom and international communities. The after-school and breakfast clubs are well managed.

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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 <sup>1</sup> 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

<sup>1</sup>Grade 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

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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**

07 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of John Donne Primary School, London, SE15 2SW

Thank you for your help when we visited your school. We really enjoyed our visit. You behave well and show much respect for one another. You attend a good school. Your headteachers are doing an outstanding job in ensuring that the school continues to improve. They are well supported by other staff in ensuring that you make good progress. The standards that you are reaching are around those found in many other schools. The staff work very hard on your behalf and take excellent care of you. We really enjoyed your inspirational singing and we were pleased to learn that the choir goes out into the community to sing to the elderly people. We are sure that they will enjoy your singing as much as we did. We were also pleased to see so many of you taking part in sport and other activities after school which really contribute to your good health. We enjoyed sharing the African lunch with you and are sorry that we could not attend your International Day.

There are just two things that we have asked the school to improve. First, we have asked the teachers to use the records that they keep of your progress more often to make sure that the work they give you builds on what you can already do. Second, we have asked that the outside activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage are made as good as those inside, in order to improve the children's learning even more.

Thank you once again for your help and support. We wish you all well for the future, and hope that you will continue to work hard and do your best.

Yours faithfully

Peter Sudworth

Lead Inspector