

Cayley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100894
Local Authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	323369
Inspection date	5 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Christopher Parker

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)	501
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 Nick Adams
Headteacher	Mrs Lissa Samuel
Date of previous school inspection	26 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Aston Street Stepney London E14 7NG
Telephone number	020 7790 1490
Fax number	020 7702 8136

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school. They investigated:

- the impact of the teaching, curriculum and guidance on the achievement of the pupils, and particularly boys, in mathematics
- how well children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are performing
- how leaders and managers evaluate the impact of their work.

Evidence was gathered from the analysis of pupils' progress, case studies of support for pupils, pupils' work, observation of lessons, parents' questionnaires, and from discussions with pupils, the headteacher and senior leaders and chair of 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, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This primary school is much larger than average. Half of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals; this is very high. Almost all of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, predominantly Bangladeshi.

There are slightly more pupils who have learning difficulties and statements of special educational needs than usual. More pupils leave and join the school throughout the school year than in most schools. Often those joining the school speak little or no English.

The school has Early Years Foundation Stage provision for children from three years of age in Nursery and Reception classes.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

When the school was inspected in 2006 it was judged to be outstanding. Pupils made exceptional progress in their academic and personal development. This continues to be the case and, as a result of sharply focused leadership, the school's strong performance is being enhanced and extended. Pupils are very positive towards school; in discussion one commented, 'I love learning things at school - it's a great opportunity - learning something new every day'.

There is a trend of improving standards over the last few years, although there are fluctuations in national test results caused by the movement of pupils in and out of the school. Some of the pupils who join the school in the later years of primary education speak little or no English. Overall standards have risen above average largely due to very strong results in English in 2007 and 2008. Given the very low levels of attainment on entry to school this represents excellent achievement.

Mathematics results fell back from well above average in 2007, to just above average in 2008. The school's tracking of the pupils' progress shows that more pupils in Year 6 are working at the higher level this year, and that standards have risen again to be above average. This improvement is the result, not only of steps taken this year, but the sustained drive to raise standards over a number of years based on careful monitoring and focused improvement planning.

The school has very strong partnerships with parents, commerce and local projects. The school's long-established partnership with the Ocean mathematics project has been a significant factor in raising standards and changing attitudes. The project has drawn parents into supporting their children through mathematical games and investigations that can be built on at home. When the school entered into this partnership, only four out of ten pupils reached the expected level. This increased to nine out of ten in 2008. The school uses a range of other strategies to keep driving standards and pupils' achievements forward. More and more lessons have a strong practical element to engage boys. Additional support for small groups and individuals results from frequent review meetings that identify pupils who are not making as much progress as expected. Through 'Numbers Count', pupils receive intensive teaching to help them overcome difficulties. In one session observed during the inspection, this resulted in a boy who was experiencing difficulty in understanding subtraction making rapid progress and successfully and confidently finding the difference between numbers to 20.

The pupils' outstanding progress and achievement result from a high level of consistency in the quality of teaching. The pupils are very well taught in thoroughly planned and well-managed lessons in which they are interested, engaged and concentrate very well. This was the case in a Year 6 mathematics lesson where the teacher set the pupils a challenging problem to solve. The lesson was lively, well paced and interesting, and developed the pupils' mathematical vocabulary as well as their ability to devise a strategy to solve a problem. The pupils cooperated very effectively to discuss and seek solutions to the problem.

The school is very keen to involve and develop its partnerships with parents. There are many opportunities for parents to attend workshops and meetings to 'have your say'. At these events translators are available to encourage as many parents as possible to attend. During the inspection, a 'parents' voice' meeting was led by a Bengali-speaking member of staff. These weekly meetings are very positively received and lead to parents gaining a clearer insight into

the school's work. There have also been 'spin-off' developments such as embroidery and keep-fit classes for parents.

The very effective partnership with parents is made possible by the warm and welcoming ethos that pervades the school. This ethos encourages and strongly promotes the outstanding personal development of the pupils. The pupils greatly enjoy school. As one pupil put it, 'We must have fun with our education, and we have a lot of fun every day'. They particularly enjoy and appreciate the many clubs and sporting activities available to them and, as a result, have a very positive attitude to their own health and fitness. The pupils say they feel safe, know who to turn to if they need help and have very few concerns about behaviour in the playground. Behaviour in lessons is often impeccable. Pupils say this is because they are encouraged to make their own decisions.

The rate of attendance is average. The school sets challenging targets for attendance and makes strenuous efforts to ensure they are met. There are many incentives and rewards to encourage full attendance. If parents do not contact the school to provide reasons for their child's absence they are contacted immediately. Requests for extended leave are refused and parents are asked to arrange overseas trips during school holidays. As a result of the steps the school takes, attendance continues to improve steadily. However, a small number of persistent absentees, and a few instances of extended leave and absences for the Eid holiday, account for the school's attendance figures not rising above average.

The pupils are very well supported so that, for example, those who start school speaking little or no English become confident in their written and spoken communications by the time they leave the school. The most vulnerable pupils are supported excellently through the nurture group and through links with other agencies. One parent commented that her child '...has significant special needs and the school has done a wonderful job catering for her'.

The continued success of the school is the result of the work of an accomplished leadership team and a governing body who are sharply focused on providing an excellent education for the pupils. To achieve this they tackle barriers that slow progress and develop partnerships and initiatives that encourage greater progress. In a bid to raise standards in science, senior leaders analysed the pupils' responses to each question in last year's national test, then scrutinised their work and observed lessons. They then devised a programme of change that included training for teachers, improved resources and the introduction of a more investigative approach to teaching science. The tracking of pupils' progress shows that more pupils are now working at both the expected and higher levels by the end of Year 6. The pupils' progress continues to be frequently reviewed to evaluate the impact of the changes made by the senior team to teaching and learning in science. The school has a positive and proactive approach to promoting community cohesion and has carried out an audit and evaluated its provision. As a result, all elements of community cohesion are now systematically planned into the curriculum for the next academic year.

Incisive self-evaluation is continuing to improve provision and outcomes for the pupils. This is possible because there are many very strong systems in place, from safeguarding pupils to tracking their progress, that enable the school to continually look forward to the next stage of development. The school is very well placed to extend its vision to 'explore, excite and excel'.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The range of the children's skills and abilities is considerably lower than that expected when they first start school. The children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage because they are well taught and are encouraged to be independent. In both the Nursery and Reception classes the children participate in an interesting range of well-planned activities both those led by adults and those they choose themselves. However, there are occasions where adults, particularly in the Nursery, are not sufficiently involved in developing the pupils' language and communication skills through questioning and dialogue.

The children's welfare is exceptionally well promoted. As a result, they grow in confidence and develop skills that enable them to become more independent. In the Reception class the children show good levels of application to the tasks they choose. They are developing excellent personal qualities that enable good learning. The good use of the outdoor area adds significantly to the curriculum. The outdoor area is well organised to enable all children, including those who have disabilities, to play a full part in activities.

By the end of the Reception Year fewer children than usual are working securely in all areas of learning. Nevertheless they make good progress from their starting points and are developing the skills that will allow them to make greater progress in subsequent years.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the involvement of adults in activities initiated and chosen by the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, so that every opportunity to develop the children's communication skills is exploited.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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?	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?	2
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

18 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cayley Primary School, London, E14 7NG

This letter is to tell you about the findings of the recent inspection and to thank you for taking the time to talk to the inspectors about your school.

You go to an outstanding school which is very welcoming and supports you very well to make excellent progress in English and mathematics. You also make excellent progress in your personal development. You behaved impeccably in most of the lessons we visited. The children we spoke to told us how much you enjoy school and that you feel safe at playtimes. Some of you also said that the school provides lots of opportunities, particularly to play sport, that help you to keep fit.

The school has excellent partnerships with your parents, commerce and projects like 'Ocean maths'. These links enhance your learning and contribute to the excellent progress that you make. The headteacher, teachers and teaching assistants all make very important contributions to your progress. The teachers focus on making lessons as interesting and enjoyable as they can so that you have fun while you are learning.

The headteacher and senior team are leading the school very well and are constantly looking at how well it is doing so that improvements can be made to the opportunities the school provides for you. The youngest children get off to a good start at school but we have asked the headteacher and teachers to consider how they can make sure no opportunities are missed to improve the communication skills of the children in the Nursery and Reception classes.

I hope that you continue to really enjoy all that you do at school and that in the future you achieve as well as you possibly can.

Yours faithfully

Christopher Parker

Lead Inspector