

# Halley Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100938
<b>Local Authority</b>	Tower Hamlets
<b>Inspection number</b>	323381
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joy Considine

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)	248
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>	Mr Paul Robinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Wendy Otterburn-Hall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 June 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>	Halley Street London E14 7SS
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7265 8061
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7702 7637

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 June 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Halley is about the same size as other primary schools and has provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery and Reception classes. The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups, or who speak English as an additional language, are much higher than average. Most of these pupils are from the local Bangladeshi community. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about average but the number of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is much higher than usual. These pupils have moderate learning difficulties, social and emotional difficulties and speech and communication problems. The school also admits a number of pupils who have physical difficulties and are wheelchair-users. The school has received many awards including Investors in People, Healthy School Standard and Basic Skills Quality Mark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Leaders and managers have created a stimulating environment in which every pupil has the opportunity to thrive and flourish within a climate of trust and respect. All pupils are valued and teachers constantly challenge and encourage them to achieve well both personally and academically. As one pupil said, 'they do not allow us to fail'. Standards are good, particularly in mathematics where they are very high. All pupils make excellent progress, including those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities who receive well-focused support from highly skilled teaching assistants.

Pupils' personal and social development is given very high priority. They have an excellent understanding of the need to make healthy choices and they enjoy participating in the wide range of physical activities offered by the school. They thoroughly enjoy school and behave well. Pupils show respect both towards each other and towards adults, who provide excellent role models for pupils. Inclusion is a strength of the school. A number of pupils who are wheelchair-users are fully integrated into all aspects of school life and are helped and supported by their classmates. Pupils have a good understanding of their own community and the wider world beyond. They work with pupils from other local schools on joint projects such as art, music and sports. Local businesses support a wide range of activities and this provides pupils with an insight into the world of work. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to develop their financial enterprise skills. For example, at the time of the inspection, one class was holding a jumble sale to raise funds for their forthcoming visit to Margate.

Teaching is creative, imaginative and captures pupils' interest. Teachers use assessment information extensively to plan lessons that are well matched to the needs and interests of pupils. As a result, all pupils achieve high standards in all aspects of their work. The curriculum is extremely well planned so that it meets the learning needs of all pupils. For example, in one lesson, pupils were taking on the role of 'shark experts' to explore the life of sharks in preparation for their forthcoming visit to an aquarium. Pupils visit local places of interest including London Zoo, and visitors, such as artists, work with pupils to create sculptures that are on display in the school grounds. The school provides very high-quality pastoral care for pupils. Although teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously, some do not always provide enough guidance for pupils about how they can improve their work or what they need to learn next.

Community cohesion features strongly in the work of the school. Pupils visit the local mosque, the local church, the Hindu temple and the Buddhist centre to develop their understanding of the different faith groups in society. Displays of pupils' work in and around classrooms reflect a commitment to broadening pupils' horizons well beyond their own community. The school is fully aware of the need to extend partnerships with parents and has put into place a number of initiatives to encourage parents to help their children. For example, there is a mothers and girls fitness group and the school has provided lessons in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT).

School leaders have an excellent understanding of the needs of pupils within the community and they have developed a vibrant curriculum in which each pupil can succeed. Under the guidance of the dedicated headteacher, staff are encouraged to reflect on their practice and seek opportunities to further develop their skills. For example, teachers and other staff have visited another school to help them to develop a more creative approach to curriculum planning. The school makes excellent use of partnerships to support its work. In addition to local authority

advisers such as speech therapists and educational psychologists, the school capitalises extensively on the resources of local enterprise initiatives to provide additional facilities for pupils. School leaders are forward thinking and keen to explore new ways of improving the quality of education for all pupils. They have made some significant improvements since the last inspection and have excellent capacity to improve even further.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

Staff have created a stimulating and delightful environment in which all children can learn and flourish. Learning activities are of very high quality so that children make excellent progress in their social and academic development. All staff make extensive use of assessment information so that they plan high-quality activities which are well matched to the needs of children. There is a good balance of teacher-directed activities and those that children choose for themselves. For example, staff teach children to recognise their letters and sounds and help them to write. Through role play, children explore different areas of learning. An impressive feature is the builders' store cabin where role play is at its best with children, complete with workers' uniform and protective headgear, act as builders and carpenters using both real and replica tools to hammer, saw and construct. Staff work with children who have learning difficulties and disabilities to help them to integrate fully into activities and ensure they are included from an early age.

Children learn and develop well. They work and play with concentration, perseverance and with a high degree of independence. This is evident from their skills in cutting and pasting, using crayons, large-scale paintings and making jigsaw puzzles. They work with accuracy and a sense of pride. Their personal and social development is excellent. They work well together, sharing and taking turns and being aware of the needs of those who have difficulties. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding and has resulted in significant improvement since the last inspection. There is a strong sense of teamwork and all staff know children well so that they can meet their personal and academic needs. Provision for children's welfare is outstanding.

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

- Improve the quality of marking by ensuring that all teachers provide guidance on what pupils can do to further improve their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils enter school with skills well below those expected for their age, particularly in literacy and numeracy where they are exceptionally low. From this low starting point, they work hard and make excellent progress so that by the time they leave school they reach standards that are above average. Standards in mathematics are particularly high at the end of Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have continued to rise since 2007 when there was a sharp dip. Standards in reading and mathematics are better than those in writing because many pupils still have difficulties with spoken and written English. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make excellent progress because they receive well-focused support from skilled adults. The school met all statutory targets in 2008 and scrutiny of school data shows that pupils are well on course to meet their challenging targets in 2009.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

'My kids love it at Halley', is how one parent summed up her child's attitude to school and this represents the views of most pupils. They are happy and they enjoy coming to school. Attendance is good and the attitudes and behaviour of pupils are exemplary. Relationships are a strength of the school. Pupils trust adults. Pupils get on well together and say that friendships are one of the reasons why they enjoy school so much. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep fit and healthy and they enjoy the wide range of activities available for them at the end of the school day. The quality of these activities was acknowledged with the receipt of the Healthy School Award and the Extended Schools Quality Assurance Award. Pupils say they feel safe in school and that there is very little racism or bullying, which is always dealt with quickly and well. They find their lessons challenging and exciting and this results in their outstanding achievements. They have a good understanding of their role within and outside the school community and have an active voice in decision-making through the school council. Financial enterprise skills are taught so that pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is a strength of the school. The quality of reflection shown in assemblies and at the end of some lessons shows maturity and thoughtfulness.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 1

The team spirit across the school helps to promote exemplary practice in many lessons. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and make excellent use of support assistants to ensure that all pupils, including those who have particular difficulties, are engaged in learning. Teachers use imaginative methods to capture pupils' interests to make learning enjoyable. Assessment information is used to plan learning activities that are well matched to the needs and interests of pupils and this enables them all to make very good progress in lessons. Teachers use opportunities to encourage pupils to develop their language skills, particularly their speaking and listening skills. For example, pupils are able to talk to their partners to discuss the answer to questions. The award of the Basic Skills Quality Mark indicates the high level of focus placed on teaching literacy and numeracy, including speaking and listening. Teachers explain clearly so that pupils understand what they are expected to do and they ask probing questions to challenge and stimulate pupils.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

The school provides an imaginative curriculum that is well matched to the needs and interests of pupils. Literacy and numeracy are given very high priority and ICT is a particular strength. For example, pupils in one class have used video software to create films to show their work on mini-beasts, and pupils in another class have used publishing software to create posters to encourage people to visit South Africa. This reflects teachers' curriculum planning where they link subjects together under specific themes so that pupils can study topics in greater detail. These themes are underpinned by a programme of specific skills for each subject so that pupils can make excellent progress as they move through the school. There is a wide range of visits to local places of interest such as London Zoo and local places of worship. The school welcomes

visitors, such as employees from major businesses who help pupils with reading, mathematics and other activities. The school's commitment to the global nature of their work is supported through their close links with a school in South Africa.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school places significant emphasis on safeguarding the welfare of all pupils. The overwhelming support from parents indicates that pupils are safe and well cared for and that school is a place where everyone is welcome. Secure systems ensure high levels of child protection and a rolling programme of training is in place to keep all staff fully up to date. Vulnerable pupils are supported well using external agencies when appropriate. The care, support and monitoring of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is exemplary. The progress of these pupils is reviewed termly with pupils, their teachers and support staff. The school has excellent systems to track and monitor the progress that pupils make and this information is used to set challenging targets for pupils. Most teachers mark pupils' work well, nevertheless, there are some instances when marking is positive but does not always show pupils how they can improve their work or what they need to learn next.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

'Including all learners and achieving great things' is the philosophy underpinning the work of the school. Leaders and managers have created a culture in which everyone strives to improve their skills continually to set an example of successful learning. There is an established programme of review, planning and evaluation so that leaders at all levels can monitor the quality of their work and make improvements. Professional development is seen as high priority and the success of this can be seen in the seamless induction of key leaders who are relatively new to the school. This was endorsed by the assessors for Investors in People who found this to be a strong feature of the school's leadership. The school promotes equality of opportunity at all levels and this can be seen in the very high quality of care provided for all pupils, including those who have very complex needs. The school makes excellent use of partnerships both within and outside the education community to support its work. An impressive example is how closely it works with other local schools by taking part in joint projects such as music and art festivals. A local major business has provided opportunities to establish links with a school in South Africa, thus strengthening provision for community cohesion. Governors carry out their responsibilities for monitoring and challenging the school well. They visit the school regularly and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.

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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 <sup>1</sup> 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

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<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>	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

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

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

02 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Halley Primary School, London, E14 7SS

Thank you very much for making my colleague and I so welcome when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed meeting you all and hearing what you had to say about your school. You clearly enjoy school and feel safe and secure and know that teachers help you. We agreed that your school is outstanding and has some very important strengths. In particular:

- your teachers are excellent and they work very hard to make sure that your lessons are interesting so that you achieve well in all lessons
- you have an excellent understanding of the needs of other pupils, and you take steps to ensure that no one is left out of any activities
- your school finds lots of different ways to get you involved in the community and you are taught to respect the views and feelings of people from other backgrounds and cultures
- there are plenty of opportunities for you to use computers and technology in your lessons. We particularly enjoyed watching the film about mini-beasts that some younger pupils made
- your school leaders put you at the heart of all the work they do and they continually try hard to make your school even better than it already is.

However, there is something that the staff can do to help you even more. We have asked some of your teachers to give you more information about how you can improve your work when they mark your books.

We know that you will continue to work hard in order to achieve high standards and we wish you all the best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Joy Considine

Lead Inspector