

# Northside Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101296
<b>Local Authority</b>	Barnet
<b>Inspection number</b>	323443
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Pritiben Patel

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)	234
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 Ross Houston
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Gina Thompson-Newman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 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>	2 Albert Street North Finchley London N12 8JP
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8445 4730
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8446 8598

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## Introduction

Two Additional Inspectors carried out this inspection. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issue:

- to what extent can the school demonstrate the outstanding progress and above average standards identified in its self-evaluation, particularly with regard to reading, writing and girls' progress at Key Stage 1?

The inspectors gathered evidence from performance data, observations of teaching, the work produced by pupils, and observations of the pupils at play and at lunch. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, representatives of the governing body, and some members of staff also contributed to the judgements.

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

Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds including other White, White British, Black or Asian British. Pupils speak forty-five different home languages with Gujarati, Pashto and Arabic being the most common. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average, as is the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. More pupils than usually found have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including moderate learning difficulties, behavioural problems, or speech and language difficulties. More pupils than usual either join or leave the school at other than the expected times. The school's provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage comprises the Nursery and Reception classes. The school has attained many awards including the Activemark accreditation for its commitment to physical education and sport and Artsmark Gold for recognition for work in art, design technology and music.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Northside is an outstanding school because pupils make outstanding progress. Pupils' progress and personal development are at the centre of the school's work and each one is truly valued. This is illustrated in the comment made by one parent but typical of many when writing, 'The school provides a warm and caring environment in which to learn and every child is valued for what they bring to the school'.

The care provided by the school is outstanding. Strong pastoral systems are in place to help those pupils who arrive at different times of the school year to settle in quickly. Examples include a buddy system, support for parents, and language support and resources for the high proportion who speak English as an additional language. Consequently, pupils hold the school in very high regard. To illustrate, a Year 5 girl told an inspector, 'I have been here since Nursery and things just keep getting better'.

Pupils behave excellently and have an outstanding enjoyment of school because of outstanding and exciting curriculum provision. This includes a range of visitors such as hip-hop dancers and environmental speakers, and themed weeks such as Refugee and International Weeks. Such varied work, which promotes very strong cultural awareness in pupils, has resulted in the International Schools Award. The school has also gained the Artsmark Gold award for strong commitment to art, music and design technology through participation in music and arts events.

Pupils' adoption of healthy lifestyles is outstanding as they participate in 24 clubs involving physical activities such as football, archery and rugby. The school has been awarded the Activemark for its work in sports. Pupils' understanding of safety is outstanding and is boosted by outside speakers such as the police who discuss personal safety. Pupils also visit the fire station and they learn about alcohol and drugs misuse in science.

Children's skills on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage are well below those usually expected. As pupils move through the school, they make outstanding progress and now attain above average standards by the end of Year 6. Along with their strong personal skills, this means their preparation for the next stage of their education is outstanding. Results obtained in national assessments frequently vary because of high levels of mobility, and the inconsistent proportions of pupils who are new to English or have learning difficulties in each year group. The school's assessment information shows that, for pupils who remain at the school, progress is outstanding. The school recognises that it needs to provide more opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to write and to further improve standards in writing, particularly for the high numbers of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English.

Pupils make outstanding progress because of the outstanding quality of teaching and learning. Teachers work hard to make lessons fun and they set practical activities to actively involve and engage pupils in their learning. Inspectors observed pupils using equipment extremely well to solve problems in mathematics. Highly meaningful discussions in literacy were also observed. Activities are challenging and encouragement from teachers is a strong feature of lessons, helping pupils to try out new ideas with confidence. Teachers set clear targets for pupils and, as a result, they are clear about what they need to do next to improve.

The school is very successful because of outstanding leadership from both the headteacher and her deputy. They have a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses and put successful plans in place to ensure any shortcomings are addressed quickly. They work hard to ensure that parents are fully supported and involved in their children's education and that the curriculum

helps pupils to value each other's cultural diversity. As a result, the school's promotion of community cohesion is outstanding. Robust assessment systems are in place to track the performance of pupils and identify at an early stage those needing extra support at an early stage. This results in the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities attaining above average standards by the end of Year 6. Leaders, including governors, have outstanding capacity to move the school forward from strength to strength.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Children come into the school with skills that are well below those expected. However, because of the vibrant teaching, children make rapid progress in all areas of learning. At the end of Reception, almost all children have reached the expected goals and many have exceeded them. Teachers plan stimulating activities and there are very good systems to assess children's progress. The children's behaviour is exemplary and they respond well to the high expectations that adults have of them. They thoroughly enjoy learning and engage fully in activities. There are many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and they rapidly learn to read and spell through rigorous teaching of phonics. This is underpinned through regular consolidation. Children learn to interact well with each other and their excellent relationships contribute strongly to the highly enjoyable and purposeful environment. The Early Years Foundation Stage has an outstanding curriculum which provides a very good balance between teacher-led activities and opportunities for children to develop their creativity and independence. The learning activities in the Nursery and Reception class are carefully linked to provide continuity and this contributes strongly to the outstanding progress that children make. Children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those whose first language is not English, receive excellent support, and progress as well as their peers. There are robust systems in place to ensure that children are able to learn in a safe, healthy and caring setting. The Early Years Foundation Stage has outstanding leadership which is strongly committed to the care of the children and to raising achievement.

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

- Increase the opportunities given to pupils to develop their writing skills across the curriculum to further raise standards.

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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

<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	2
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	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**

11 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Northside Primary School, London, N12 8JP

On behalf of the inspectors, I would like to thank you for helping us so much when we came to find out how well you are getting on. We particularly enjoyed visiting your lessons and talking to some of you.

We agree with you and your parents that Northside is an outstanding school.

Here is a list of just some of the things that we found out about your school.

- You make outstanding progress and attain standards that are above average by the time you leave in Year 6.
- You thoroughly enjoy school and behave excellently.
- The curriculum is outstanding because of all the various visits, visitors, celebrations and themed weeks such as International Week. The curriculum also helps you to develop an outstanding understanding of each other's cultures.
- All the adults in your school show outstanding care for you and as a result you feel highly valued.
- Teaching is outstanding because your teachers plan fun lessons for you and involve you in practical activities. They tell you what you have to do next, so you have a very good understanding about how to improve your work.
- All the adults in your school such as your headteacher, deputy headteacher, class teachers, support staff and governors work very hard to ensure you receive an outstanding education.

Even in an outstanding school like yours there are areas that can always be improved. I have asked your teachers to give you more opportunities to write in different subjects so that you can achieve better standards in your writing. I am sure that you will continue to work hard.

Yours faithfully

Pritiben Patel

Lead Inspector