

# Queenswell Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101312
<b>Local Authority</b>	Barnet
<b>Inspection number</b>	323447
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 December 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Susan Thomas-Pounce

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	328
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>	Ms Lynn Maycroft
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Sarah Porter
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 November 2005
<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>	Sweets Way Whetstone London N20 0NQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8445 0524
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8446 0979

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<b>Age group</b>	3–7
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 December 2008
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This popular infant school is larger than average, serving a mixed area in Whetstone. Of the 334 pupils on roll there is a high and increasing number of pupils with English as an additional language and the proportion of pupils with learning and emotional difficulties is above average. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is higher than average. Over 15% of the school's population come from families serving in the armed forces, and therefore a much higher than average number of pupils enter or leave the school other than at usual times. A new headteacher took up post in April 2007. The school has a number of awards including the Activemark and Healthy Schools Award and is a member of the North London International Schools Network. The school has provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and when they join the school children have skills and knowledge close to those expected for their age.

An external provider offering a breakfast club and an after school club for children from Queenswell Infant School and other local schools operates in the school building.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

In this good school, effective leadership and management are improving the quality of teaching and learning and, as a result, standards are rising. The vision and determination of the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has inspired the school to build upon its many strengths. The school has an enthusiastic staff team whose morale is high; everyone shares the same vision and commitment to improvement. The care and guidance provided for pupils are outstanding with a very strong emphasis on the development of their academic, personal and social skills. Each individual is valued and staff work exceptionally well with parents and other agencies to ensure pupils' well-being, so that they settle into school happily and gain in confidence. This provides a strong basis for learning.

Although children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), many do not continue in the school into Year 1 and a high percentage of pupils join throughout the year. Sharing of information between staff means that senior leaders can quickly provide necessary support. As a result, from starting points below those typical for their age, pupils achieve well and standards are average by the end of Key Stage 1. However, as the school has acknowledged, not enough pupils are achieving highly and in some aspects of the school's core curriculum, boys do less well than girls. The school has tried to provide boys with good male role models for reading and writing, but it is too early to judge the impact of these initiatives.

Teachers' enthusiasm helps to make lessons fun and ensures a good pace. Lessons are characterised by warm and caring relationships that create an atmosphere that supports learning well. Skilled support staff also make a very positive contribution in ensuring that pupils who find learning harder, or those with disabilities, are fully involved in lessons. The use of ability groups for letter and sound (phonics) teaching each day helps to ensure that children's learning needs in this area are met well and they make good progress. The use of interactive whiteboards is good and frequently includes pupils as part of the teaching team. Throughout the school, there is an ethos of shared responsibility for learning and pupils are helped to understand their part in doing even better. The focus on learning to learn is developing independence and a desire to achieve well.

The school's curriculum and extensive out of school activities, visits and visitors do much to promote racial and social harmony. This helps pupils to understand ethnic and cultural diversity by appreciating shared values. The work on celebrating strengths and achievements has had a very significant impact on the outstanding personal development and well-being of the children. This is further strengthened through the carefully constructed personal, social and health education programme. All staff actively help pupils to reflect on their learning during lessons and this informs what they need to aim for next. Targets and successes are shared with parents regularly and the school works hard to encourage parents and carers to be part of the learning journey. One parent reflected the views of many when stating that, 'The school is an inclusive and innovative school that is always looking for ways to improve and interest the children; sending my child here is one of the best things I have done.'

The enthusiasm and the drive of the headteacher are producing a cohesive community of staff, governors, pupils and parents, all striving for excellence. As a result, there is a good capacity for the school to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children make good progress because of good teaching and a very stimulating learning environment. Excellent practice was seen with challenging questioning and activities and assessments well matched to children's needs. During indoor and outdoor learning, children learn in relevant and meaningful ways. For instance, they thoroughly enjoyed finding the Wellington boots for 'teddy bear' and enthusiastically joined in storytelling activities by acting out the story.

Most children achieve well in communication, language and literacy activities. This was observed during specific language activities in Reception, where children had opportunities to develop word and sound skills in fun and interesting ways. Early writing skills are less well developed. Relationships are strong and children learn in a safe, secure and positive learning environment. The high emphasis placed on personal development impacts very well on children's behaviour. The staff team has built strong relationships with parents, who are closely involved in children's assessments. The staff team works together very cohesively and this is evident in the consistency in planning to address individual needs. The leader is an excellent role model in her practice and is clear about priorities for improvement in terms of raising achievement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards further by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly for boys and the more able pupils.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

By the end of Year 2, standards are average; however, boys are not doing as well as girls and relatively few pupils attain highly. The school's high priority to include all pupils in all activities is reflected in the good progress pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make. Their needs are identified; appropriate learning targets are set so that those who do not find learning particularly easy are expertly supported by teaching assistants. Pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language are welcomed into the school, and closely supported in their learning until their level of English improves. Pupils make good progress in the development of basic literacy and numeracy skills. This, together with their very good capacity to work constructively as members of a class team or group, prepares them well for their future lives.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Pupils enjoy school immensely, they trust and respect their teachers and their behaviour is good. The school works exceptionally well to support pupils' understanding of the need for simple and fair rules and how they all can work together to make a positive contribution, within the school and the wider community. As a result, pupils accept responsibility willingly. Celebration of strengths and circle time are used effectively to promote pupils' care and understanding of others. Spiritual development is outstanding because of the reflective atmosphere in assemblies, lessons and many other activities. Moral and social development is also exceptionally well developed, particularly because of the celebration of pupils' strengths that generates very positive, 'can do' attitudes across the school. Pupils show great understanding of the cultures

of others and understand why people follow different traditions. They know about healthy food options and have a clear understanding of why a healthy diet helps them to grow and learn. Pupils with disabilities are integrated exceptionally well into all aspects of school life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils make good gains in their learning because of the overall good quality of teaching. As a parent said, 'My child is learning extremely well and that's down to the teachers, who are approachable and helpful.' Teachers and support staff know pupils well and plan lessons carefully to ensure they capture the interest and enthusiasm of boys and girls alike. All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and involve them effectively through careful questioning and opportunities for practical activities including much paired partner talk. The school has worked recently to refine marking of work by teachers. It is regular and accurate and gives pupils good information about how to make their work even better. On occasions not enough attention is given to what individuals and the different groups of pupils should learn next during whole-class sessions, or the work is incorrectly pitched.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school has exceptionally strong and effective links with parents, other professionals, other settings, schools and organisations. Consequently, the school prepares the learning environment extremely thoroughly and conscientiously in order to meet the wide spread of needs that different children bring to the school. The use made of the home languages, of which there are 31 across the school, has been effective in developing a pride in pupils' heritages. The strengths in the curriculum do much to broaden pupils' experiences and support their outstanding personal development. The curriculum focus weeks, for example Book Week, Black History Week and Science Week, all contribute well to pupils' enjoyment and to learning within a context. The basic curriculum is effectively supplemented by a very good range of extra activities that pupils can take part in voluntarily, such as art, dance, cookery or playing football. In addition to many visits into the local community, pupils in Year 2 take part in an annual residential visit. Links between subjects are developing, with much learning starting from the pupils' interests, but the use of information and communication technology (ICT) could be further developed as a learning tool.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

Staff know the pupils extremely well and have established very positive relationships with them and their parents. The school works hard to meet the needs of all pupils, especially the high proportion of pupils who find learning more challenging, or who face other difficulties. A particular strength is the way in which all pupils are included in what the school offers. More rigorous assessment and careful tracking of pupils' progress have enabled the school to target support for pupils who are not making expected progress and this is helping to raise standards. Well-chosen programmes of activities, based on these assessments, ensure that pupils who need extra help make good progress. This is evidenced in the very good support provided by teaching assistants in lessons and through the range of excellent individual learning plans for

children experiencing difficulty. Arrangements for child protection and for safeguarding pupils are robust and, as a result, pupils feel safe and well cared for.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher whose skills are complemented well by those of the deputy headteacher. They have a highly inclusive approach and successfully inspire a commitment to raising standards. Opportunities for parent workshops are seen as a powerful tool in developing the learning partnership with parents; for example, parents appreciated the 'Reading Drop-off' scheme as 'a brilliant idea', encouraging them to make time to sit down and read with their children at the start of the day. The management of inclusion is outstanding. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about what the school does for their children. In particular, they say that they are well informed and their children make good progress. Governors have a good understanding of the challenges facing the school and share with staff a sound perception of the needs of the local community.

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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?	1
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?	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?	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>	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	2
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	2

## 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?	1

## 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	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	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**

16 December 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Queenswell Infant School, London, N20 0NQ

Thank you for your warm welcome when my colleagues and I came to inspect your school. You are right to be proud of your school! It is a good school and we can see why you enjoy every day so much. All the staff take good care of you and are always there for you when you need them. Your parents told us it is a good school and we agree with them. All of the staff care deeply for each and every one of you. They make sure you are safe and well protected, and they give you work to do that helps you to learn more each day.

In the Nursery and Reception units, your teachers and their helpers make sure you have lots of interesting things to enjoy both indoors and outside. Some of you thoroughly enjoyed finding the Wellington boots for 'teddy bear' and engaging in matching and counting activities.

It was good to see all of you in Years 1 and 2 getting on so well together and to see your good behaviour in lessons. Your Healthy School and Activemark awards have certainly helped to give you all a good understanding about living a healthy lifestyle. Most of you concentrate well and work very hard for your teachers. They are quick to help you if you need it. Although most of you are doing well, the inspection found that the school needs to concentrate on improving how well some of you do in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2, so that more of you achieve highly and so that boys and girls do equally well.

You can help by continuing to enjoy school and working hard in lessons.

Thank you once again for being so kind to us. We wish you all the best in the future.

Yours sincerely

Susan Thomas-Pounce

Lead Inspector