

Tottenham Infant School and Children's Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102006
Local Authority	Enfield
Inspection number	323567
Inspection dates	25–26 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Margaret Goodchild

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	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	314
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	Ms Sam Murray
Headteacher	Mrs Clare Clarke
Date of previous school inspection	9 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Tottenham Road London N13 6HX
Telephone number	020 8829 1100
Fax number	020 8829 1118

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves a community that is ethnically very diverse. The vast majority of pupils are of minority ethnic heritage and most speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual times is high, and about a third are refugees or asylum seekers. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is very high. The school has a designated resource base, called the nurture group, for 10 pupils who are vulnerable because of their behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is otherwise broadly average, and their needs relate mostly to speech, language and communication difficulties or autistic spectrum disorder. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a Nursery and three Reception classes. In addition, a children's centre opened on the school site in September 2007 to provide for families and young children from birth to three. On-site childcare is provided by an after-school club, but this provision is not managed by the governing body, and it is therefore inspected separately.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that has sustained and built on the excellent practice found at the last inspection. Most parents are very pleased with the school's work. One expressed this by saying, 'This is an excellent school that meets the needs of a diverse population of children in innovative and effective ways.' In a presentation about the school, a pupil took this further, saying: 'Our school is a place where our thoughts can take wings. We always want to know more and more and more...We care for each other and learn to be responsible for the world we live in. In our school we learn from experience, we enjoy the present and build the future'.

The school provides a vibrant and purposeful environment that enables pupils to grow and flourish as individuals. They are cared for exceptionally well and their personal development is outstanding. Pupils join the school with attainment that is very low compared with expectations for their age. Their outstanding achievement ensures that they reach average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2, and above average standards in the arts.

Displays around the school and in classrooms celebrate pupils' achievement and provide a visually exciting stimulus for learning. Work on display reflects pupils' great enjoyment of learning, the outstanding quality of teaching, and a curriculum that is exemplary in meeting pupils' needs and interests. The curriculum is the jewel in the crown of the school's work, and its quality has been recognised by an extensive range of awards. These include the NACE Challenge Award for excellence in whole school provision for able, gifted and talented pupils, the Inclusion Quality Mark, the International School Award, the Quality Mark for Physical Education, the Healthy School Award and local awards for the school's inspiring Eco Garden. Links between subjects are exceptionally strong and teachers are highly responsive to pupils' emerging interests. Topics such as The Great Fire of London skilfully weave work in literacy, numeracy, science, and information and communication technology (ICT) with a wealth of opportunities for creativity and visits into the community. Such experiences enthral and captivate the pupils, and lead to the production of highly original and attractive work.

The school promotes community cohesion exceptionally well through its responsiveness to the local community, and its many national and global links. The school itself is a harmonious community that embraces and values cultural differences. Through its work as a children's centre, it provides a range of services for parents and families, and partnership with parents is outstanding. This is reflected in the school gaining the Leading Parent Partnership Award.

The school's effectiveness is the result of outstanding leadership and management. The headteacher and senior leaders have exceptionally high expectations, and a very clear vision that is communicated and embraced by all the staff. Morale is high throughout the school and there is a total commitment to making provision as good as it can possibly be. Self-evaluation and monitoring are rigorous, and pupils' attainment is carefully tracked so that any who need support are quickly identified and initiatives put in place. The school does not however, fully analyse the progress made by pupils, although this could provide valuable information for use in evaluating aspects of the school's effectiveness.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Outstanding leadership ensures that children have a stimulating and exciting experience in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children make outstanding progress, although as they enter the Nursery with very low attainment, only a minority are likely to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception Year. Children learn in a vibrant and magical environment, where staff provide them with a great deal of encouragement. As a result, they are confident and eager to explore the wealth of resources provided. Planning ensures that the six areas of learning are promoted indoors and out, and there are particularly good opportunities for children to develop their personal, social and emotional, creative and physical skills. Assessment is good overall. Home visits are used to very good effect, and the school has put in place excellent systems for involving parents in their children's learning. Children help to choose work to go in their profiles, which are a colourful celebration of their learning, and the school provides a book for parents to record home learning. Staff regularly check and record children's skills in communication, language and literacy, and in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy, and track their attainment across the areas of learning. There is scope, however, to refine some aspects of assessment to make it more efficient and to be absolutely sure that any gaps in learning are quickly identified.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the existing detailed analysis of pupils' attainment to include an evaluation of the progress that different groups and classes make across the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding and the school has sustained average standards in Year 2 National Curriculum assessments since the last inspection. Higher-attaining pupils do very well, and the percentage reaching Level 3 at the end of Year 2 is generally in line with the national average. Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make exceptionally good progress. This is because they receive excellent support from teaching assistants, both individually and in small groups. Vulnerable pupils in the school's nurture group do particularly well: they make rapid progress as a result of the very high-quality provision. Pupils at early stages in learning English as an additional language quickly develop sufficient skills to learn alongside their peers. In 2008, the school identified that Turkish pupils were reaching lower standards than other groups, though their attainment was still broadly average. It put in place a range of initiatives to develop their literacy skills and self-esteem, which have led to an improvement in their performance this year. Throughout the school, pupils produce artwork in two and three dimensions that is of an exceptionally high standard, and the work of famous artists is used to very good effect to stimulate pupils' ideas and develop their technical skill. Where a number of subjects are linked and learning comes alive, pupils also produce highly original and imaginative written work. For instance, as part of the work on The Great Fire of London, a pupil wrote: 'The fire is a roaring animal, as fast as a cheetah, as dangerous as sharp spikes, munching the houses and gobbling them up.'

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils grow in confidence during their time at the school, have high self-esteem, and are excited about learning. They say how much they enjoy their lessons, especially their art lessons and 'golden time', which they earn by being good. Pupils in the nurture group relate very well to the teacher and really enjoy the time they spend there. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Racial harmony is a particular strength of the school, and all pupils work very well together. Behaviour is good and often outstanding; occasionally a minority of pupils show a lack of self-discipline if teachers do not remind them about the importance of working quietly. Pupils are very clear in their understanding of the need to keep safe, to eat a healthy diet and take plenty of exercise. The school has worked hard to increase its attendance rate, and the most recent figures are above the national average. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the community. By taking part in and raising funds for initiatives in developing countries, they increase their social and environmental awareness, for example by recycling unwanted shoes for Africa. The school council is active in raising funds for a number of charities by various means, including activities that develop pupils' enterprise skills such as publishing a joke book and selling it for 50 pence for Comic Relief. Pupils make outstanding progress in gaining basic skills, together with many personal qualities that are likely to serve them exceptionally well in the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Lessons are carefully planned, and work is matched exceptionally well to the needs of different groups of pupils. Teachers use practical resources very well to help pupils grasp new concepts, and they make enormous efforts to make learning fun and to expand pupils' creativity and thinking skills. This is evident in the exciting displays around the school, many of which promote further learning. The display on '30 different ways of describing the number five' and another that explores all the different elements that make up a story are just two of many examples that show excellent teaching and learning. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills, by discussing their ideas in pairs and groups, and teachers frequently ask probing questions. Teaching assistants are highly effective in supporting pupils, and some outstanding teaching takes place when they work with individuals and small groups of pupils. Teaching in the school's nurture group for vulnerable pupils is exemplary: it is innovative, and activities are matched precisely to the learning needs of individual pupils. Where teaching is good rather than outstanding, lessons are planned well but teachers do not always explain points clearly enough, check the understanding of individual pupils in discussions, or communicate sufficiently high expectations about the importance of all pupils working quietly and concentrating on their work. There are outstanding opportunities for parents to get involved in their children's learning, for instance through attending workshops on mathematics and learning about supporting their children's literacy skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum ensures pupils make outstanding progress in reading, writing, mathematics, science and ICT, as well as placing particular emphasis on music, drama and the creative arts. Learning is enriched by an excellent range of clubs and special events, including weekly African drumming and dancing, the French club, cheer-leading, violin and keyboard lessons, Black History Month, science challenge, book week, an annual harvest festival where pupils learn about sharing with people less fortunate than them, a trip to the theatre at Christmas, and an annual whole-school visit to the seaside. Gifted and talented pupils have very good opportunities to extend their skills, knowledge and understanding; for instance, through visits to the local council chambers and Houses of Parliament. The school welcomes a host of visitors, including artists-in-residence, and the links with Tottenham Football Club, the fire service and police support ensure that pupils learn about citizenship and the world of work. They have the opportunity to perform in dance festivals, visit a wide range of places of worship, and celebrate various religious festivals. The school maintains high standards and a focus on enjoyment by placing pupils' ideas as the starting point for all activities. Weekly meetings within year groups enable staff to take pupils' needs into careful account in their planning, and transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 1 is very carefully organised to meet pupils' personal and learning needs. The vision and ambition of the curriculum underpins outstanding inclusion, so that all members of the school community flourish and feel valued.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils flourish in the school's safe and inclusive environment. The school is rigorous in promoting pupils' health and safety, and ensuring that they are protected. Outstanding liaison with outside agencies, and the instigation of 'tiger teams' and the development of the nurture group, all help to ensure that the most vulnerable pupils make extremely good progress. The school has worked unstintingly to reduce the number of absences and beat its own challenging attendance target. Pupils' work is carefully marked so that they know what to do to improve, and they are involved in the termly review of their individual targets. The school provides very good support for pupils learning English as an additional language, and does all it can to meet the needs of their families, for instance by providing half-termly coffee mornings for Somalian, Polish and Albanian parents. Through the children's centre, the school provides a range of activities that are highly responsive to the needs of the local community.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher provides exceptional direction to the school's work, and she is currently leading a second school in the absence of its headteacher. There is a clear shared vision among leaders at all levels, including members of the governing body, who are knowledgeable about the school's work. High expectations, an absolute commitment to school improvement, and excellent attention to detail permeate all aspects of the school's work. In the headteacher's words, 'We never take our fingers off the button, never stand still, and nothing is allowed to escape if it's not good enough.' Inclusion is at the heart of the school's work, and rigorous monitoring ensures that teachers are accountable for the standards which pupils reach. The school sets

challenging targets and pays exceptional attention to checking pupils' attainment, identifying trends, and focusing on specific groups of vulnerable pupils. By not measuring the value that it adds to pupils' attainment, the school misses an opportunity to identify and celebrate just how much progress pupils make during their time at the school. Improvement since the last inspection has been exceptionally good and the school is equally well placed to improve further.

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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 ¹ reached by learners	3
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	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	1

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?	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**

08 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tottenham Infant School and Children's Centre, London, N13 6HX

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We really enjoyed our time there, coming into your lessons, talking to you and seeing all the exciting work you do. Now I am writing to let you know what we found out about your school.

You go to an excellent school that helps you to do your very best. We could see that, from the fantastic displays of your work in classrooms and all around the corridors. The work on The Great Fire of London is particularly exciting, and we could see how much you enjoyed writing about it and making the wonderful collages, and especially seeing the houses go up in flames. This is just one of many brilliant examples of the work you do. You make really good progress, because teachers make learning great fun and they always want to make sure that you keep learning new things. You have very exciting opportunities to take part in clubs and to go on visits.

The staff look after you really well and care about all of you very much. The school is a happy community, where people get on very well together. You clearly love learning and try very hard with your work. Most of you behave really well, but occasionally some of you need to concentrate a bit more in lessons and not chat too much.

Your school is excellent because the headteacher and other people who work there do such a great job. They are always looking for ways to make the school even better for you. We found just one thing that they have agreed to do:

- to measure and analyse just how much progress you make in your time at the school - because we know that it is excellent.

Enjoy the rest of your time at Tottenham and keep working hard.

Yours faithfully

Ms M J Goodchild

Lead Inspector