

Earlsmead Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102091
Local Authority	Haringey
Inspection number	323582
Inspection dates	9–10 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Mike Thompson

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)	378
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	58
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Susan Moyse
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Head
Date of previous school inspection	28 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Broad Lane Tottenham London N15 4PW
Telephone number	020 8808 7915
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Earlsmead is a large primary school serving a culturally and socially diverse community. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is almost three times the national average. Most pupils are from minority ethnic groups and about a fifth are at an early stage of learning English. The languages most commonly spoken at home by these pupils are Turkish, Somali and Polish. About a third of all pupils do not stay at the school for the whole of their primary education. This level of mobility is much higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is just below the national average. About a half of these pupils have more severe difficulties, and the majority of these have specific needs in speech, language and communication. The school has accreditation as a Healthy School, and recently gained the International School Award in recognition of its work in developing the curriculum.

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is being developed. At the time of the inspection, there was no EYFS provision in place in the new children's centre on site, and the Nursery had yet to open, therefore Nursery-age children were not included on the roll. The first day of the inspection was also the first day of full-time education for children in the Reception classes.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Earlsmead Primary is a good school. It is an important part of its community and makes good use of many local links to enrich its curriculum. Parents value the school highly. One summarised one of the key strengths of the school very well when commenting, 'The teachers know the children very well. I feel that this has had a huge impact on my child's development.'

From well below average starting points in the Nursery, pupils make good progress academically and, by the time they leave school at the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average overall. Pupils make outstanding progress in their personal development. By the end of Year 6, most mature to become well-behaved, considerate and thoughtful learners, and generally have an excellent awareness of the importance of healthy and safe lifestyles. Their excellent social skills, enthusiasm for learning, and developing ability to question and interpret information ensure that they are well prepared for a future as life-long learners.

Pupils' good progress is the result of good teaching, the wide range of stimulating and exciting activities provided and the rigorous monitoring of their performance. The work of senior managers in keeping a very close check on the progress made by pupils and the effective action taken to remedy the weaknesses identified ensures that most pupils reach their potential. Pupils appreciate the excellent relationships they have with their teachers and all adults. 'I like the teachers best of all because they listen to you and are understanding' was the response from one pupil when asked to explain what she liked best about the school.

Each child matters in this school. Everyone is warmly welcomed and equally valued. An excellent feature is the way in which the school integrates newcomers, some with limited English, and enables them to play a full part in all activities. Although teaching is good overall, there are significant variations in its quality. In most lessons, teachers make good use of assessment information to provide achievable challenges for pupils. Consequently, they learn well. However, in some classes teachers do not always pitch work at the right level for their pupils, and where this occurs the pupils' progress slows. In some cases this is because teachers lack experience of the new year group they are teaching and have yet to adjust their expectations.

Overall, the leadership at all levels is good, and is ensuring that pupils achieve well. Particularly noteworthy is the clear leadership of the headteacher and her senior managers. The school has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. There is a very strong commitment to continuous improvement and robust systems to help ensure that this happens. Despite the inconsistencies found in teaching, the school is well placed to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress and achieve well. By the end of the Reception year standards are above average in creative and physical development and in some aspects of personal and social development. However, children fall well short of the expected goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children in the Reception classes settle very quickly as a result of the good routines and links with parents established in the Nursery. Children treat each other and adults with respect and are confident, happy learners. There is a good system for documenting the achievements of the children. Their 'profiles', which contain a wealth of useful information illustrating the levels they are working at, are compiled through regular formal and informal observations. Staff use

this information well in their planning to ensure that work builds logically on past achievements and takes account of children's individual needs. The provision for outdoor learning in the Reception classes is in need of improvement, and there are too few good quality resources for this. The school has already identified improvement in this area as a priority for this term. The leadership and management of this key stage are good and staff work well together as a team.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that even more teaching is consistently good.
- Improve the quality of outdoor learning in Reception.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well overall. Good teaching contributes strongly to this, but a further key factor is the actions of senior managers in very closely tracking the progress of pupils. The good quality strategies, such as targeted support to improve pupils' comprehension skills, help ensure that those identified as underachieving get the help they need. New arrivals, many of whom have little English, are very quickly integrated and supported, and make good progress in improving their language skills. Pupils with LDD, including those with speech and language difficulties, make good progress. This is because their programmes of work are very clearly mapped out and skilled teaching assistants are effective in helping deliver these programmes. These pupils also benefit significantly from the expertise of the special needs coordinator, for example, when teaching the lower-ability mathematics group in Year 2. Sometimes improvements in learning are such that pupils with LDD no longer require small group support.

The most recent national assessments carried out towards the end of the summer term, but which are yet to be validated, show that by the end of Year 2 the proportions of pupils attaining the nationally expected level 2 in reading writing and mathematics are below average. The incomplete results for Year 6 show that standards overall are likely to be close to the national average, as they have been in recent years. However, there have been good improvements in the proportions of pupils attaining the nationally expected level in mathematics and an increase in the number exceeding this level in science. Standards in mathematics and science are broadly average, while standards in English are just below average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They contribute extremely well to their school through class councils and the work of the school council, and are proud of the changes that they have been involved in, such as the improved toilet facilities in Key Stage 2. They are fully aware of the importance of regular exercise and healthy eating, and the large majority make those choices. They have a very clear sense of right and wrong, and behave well both in and out of lessons. They are polite and courteous to adults and one another. The average attendance rate does not reflect pupils' clear enjoyment of school. The attendance rate is adversely affected by the absences of a very small minority of pupils, most of whom are in the Reception classes or Key Stage 1. Pupils have an excellent appreciation of, and value the wide variety of cultural traditions within the school. They play a very good part in the life of the wider community through, for example, participation in musical and sporting activities in the borough.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers work hard to develop positive attitudes towards learning by their pupils, and generally manage their pupils well. They effectively use lively activities and discussions to help pupils develop their speaking and listening skills. They also make good use of resources, such as interactive whiteboards. This helps involve pupils in lessons, particularly those learning English as a second language, and develops pupils' understanding of new concepts. In most lessons teachers use assessment well to identify clear learning objectives and to plan achievable challenges. However, in a small minority of lessons, teachers' expectations of their pupils are sometimes either unrealistically high or too low. When this occurs, pupils' behaviour deteriorates and progress slows. In most lessons teachers show good knowledge of what they have to teach, and this results in clear explanations and good learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Since the last inspection the curriculum has been considerably broadened and now gives greater emphasis to science and information and communication technology (ICT). The school has recently developed a detailed 'creative curriculum'. This links subjects together, particularly through literacy, and gives pupils more opportunities to develop their basic skills. The school is carefully monitoring the outcomes of this initiative and its impact in making learning more interesting and meaningful for pupils. Pupils' personal development is given high priority and there is very good provision for learning about healthy lifestyles. Cultural diversity is strongly valued. Guest speakers from abroad, such as those from China and India widen pupils' horizons with their talks and colourful artefacts. The good range of extra-curricular activities is popular, and many pupils take part in them.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils are exceptionally well cared for by vigilant staff and effective learning mentors. There are thorough procedures for recruiting staff. The school constantly works hard to promote good attendance and punctuality. However, a small number of families do not respond to these initiatives. Pupils who have been absent get the extra help they need in the Catch-Up room and from their peers. They are helped to be more punctual through effective rewards. Pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work, through effective marking and written targets that are shared with their parents.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

High quality teamwork and the sensitive management of personnel have enabled the headteacher and her senior managers to bring about good improvements in the school. Nonetheless, senior management recognises that more work is to be done to help eliminate the inconsistencies in teaching and learning and improve the quality of outdoor learning in the Reception classes. Leaders at all levels successfully focus on improving the quality of provision. The school's

monitoring of teaching and learning, including the close tracking of pupils' progress, has helped ensure that pupils achieve well. A great deal is been done to promote cohesion within and outside the school community and to support parents in bringing up their children. There is a strong commitment to ensuring that all pupils' needs are met. Governance is good, and this is an area where significant improvement has been made since the last inspection. Governors work hard to support the school, have a good understanding of the issues facing the school, and are good at holding it to account.

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

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	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

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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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**

22 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Earlsmead Primary School, London, N15 4PW

On behalf of the inspectors, I would like to thank you very much for being so helpful when we came to visit your school. We really enjoyed meeting you, talking to you and looking at your work.

Your parents think that you go to a good school, and we agree. Here is a list of some of the things we like.

- You learn well in lessons and make good progress because the teaching you are given is good.
- You all follow the values your school teaches you. Everyone in your school is friendly and welcoming, and you behave well. You know a lot about how to keep healthy and safe.
- All of the adults in your school make sure that you are really well looked after.
- Your headteacher and the other people who help run your school are doing a good job.

Every school has something that could be better, so this is what we have asked your school to concentrate on to help you to learn more.

- We would like your school to make sure that even more of your lessons really make you think hard. I'm sure that you are ready for this challenge!
- We would also like your school to improve the outdoor area for the Reception classes. In particular, we think that these classes need more and better equipment.

We know that when you are at school you really enjoy all of the exciting things that there are for you to do, so it makes us sad to learn that a few of you do not always come to school as often as you should. Your teachers cannot help you to improve your work unless you help them, and the best way that you can do this is to make sure that you come to school on time and don't take time off when you shouldn't.

We wish you lots of success in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Thompson

Lead Inspector