

Shaftesbury Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102744
Local Authority	Newham
Inspection number	323683
Inspection dates	14–15 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Norma Ball

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)	643
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	Cllr Ted Sparrowhawk
Headteacher	Mr Geoffrey Hadlow
Date of previous school inspection	14 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Shaftesbury Road Forest Gate London E7 8PF
Telephone number	020 8472 0761
Fax number	020 8503 4965

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than other primary schools and serves a culturally diverse area. Almost nine out of ten pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and have English as an additional language. About one third of all pupils are entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below the national average and includes pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties as well as moderate and severe learning difficulties. A small number of these pupils has a statement of special educational needs. The school experiences high levels of pupil mobility, with pupils joining and leaving the school at various times of the year. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of one morning and afternoon class in the Nursery and three classes in Reception. The school holds the Activemark and the Healthy School Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school that is improving rapidly under the strong leadership of the new headteacher. Pupils enjoy learning, as is shown by their good attendance. They settle quickly and well, at whatever stage they join the school, because their needs are carefully identified and they are well supported. A very large majority of parents are pleased with the school. They respect the many changes they have seen, including an improvement in behaviour and pupils' personal development. One parent wrote, 'My son has changed a lot since he has been going to Shaftesbury. He tries to do his best in his studies and behaviour.'

The senior leadership team is very new to the school. The team has quickly and accurately assessed the strengths and weaknesses of all areas of the school's work, and is already having a visible impact in bringing about clear improvements. Pupils and parents welcome the changes that are taking place. One parent said, 'The school environment is much more welcoming. Areas that have undergone transformation are excellent.' Middle managers who lead subjects and phases of the school are growing in confidence and skill. Governors are very supportive of the school, but their skills in challenging and holding the leaders and managers to account are less well developed.

A large number of pupils join the school in all year groups, many with no English language skills and some never having attended a school before. Pupils' attainment on entry is well below average when compared with similar pupils nationally. They make steady progress through the school, but nevertheless leave at the end of Year 6 with standards that are below average in mathematics and science, and well below in English. Progress for many pupils is not better because their language skills are not developed systematically and effectively across all areas of the curriculum, in order to provide them with more opportunities to speak confidently and extend their vocabulary. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same progress as other pupils because they are well supported. The school is ambitious to improve this satisfactory achievement and raise standards in English and mathematics. New initiatives to achieve this are in place, but there has been insufficient time for their full impact to be apparent. The pace of improvement and the clarity of future planning demonstrates that the school has good capacity to improve further.

The curriculum provides a broad balance of activities that meet pupils effectively. New resources such as a structured reading scheme, and new information and communication technology (ICT) facilities, are contributing well to raising achievement for pupils. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and improving as a result of senior staff's close monitoring and guidance of teachers. The progress that pupils make is assessed with increasing confidence. However, setting work in lessons that meets the needs of pupils of different abilities is inconsistent and is still developing throughout the school. Pupils are very clear about how to stay healthy. They are well cared for and safeguarding procedures are rigorous. The satisfactory progress that they make and their satisfactory personal and social skills ensure that they are soundly prepared for the next stage in their education. Pupils are very positive about their school and feel safe there. One summed up his feelings by saying, 'I like my school because I have made nice friends. The teachers are friendly and teach you lots of things.'

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children are happy and enjoy trusting relationships with adults, because they are well cared for in a happy atmosphere. Most children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and understanding that are well below expectations for their age, particularly in their language and social development. Children make steady progress across all areas of learning, although most do not reach the levels expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Their development is carefully monitored and a variety of interesting activities promote their learning soundly. There is a good balance between activities led by adults and those chosen by children in the Nursery, but this is not yet evident in the Reception classes, where opportunities are missed for children to explore and develop imaginative play for themselves. In the Nursery, activities inside and outside the classroom are stimulating and well planned. Outdoor activities in Reception classes do not yet extend children's learning well enough, or make full use of the good outdoor play resources. The recent refurbishment of the Early Years Foundation Stage has created an attractive, well-resourced learning environment. The phase leader has an accurate understanding of what needs to be improved and the impact of this is now evident in Nursery, but has not yet been successfully integrated into the Reception classes.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English and mathematics throughout the school, by ensuring that all teachers plan lessons that provide activities that are challenging for pupils of all abilities.
- Ensure that teaching consistently and progressively builds language skills across all subjects of the curriculum.
- Improve planning in Reception to ensure that greater use is made of the outdoor learning area and that there is an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, but which have areas of underperformance, will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils make a good start to their learning in Nursery and Reception, though when they enter Year 1 their abilities are still well below those expected for their age. Standards attained at the end of Years 2 and 6 remain below average in mathematics and science, and well below average in English. This, however, represents satisfactory achievement for pupils in their time at the school. Sizeable numbers of pupils join the school in all year groups and this provides a high level of challenge. In Year 6, for example, a quarter of all pupils have joined the school in the last five terms. Many pupils arrive with poorly developed learning skills and speak little or no English. The few pupils who have been in the school from the age of five achieve well. Increasingly effective strategies to improve pupils' language and communication skills, and their calculation skills in mathematics, are showing early signs of having a positive impact on achievement, especially in Years 1 to 3. Throughout the school, more careful use of tracking of pupils' progress is helping to identify quickly those pupils who underachieve and well-structured support is provided for them. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and for those with English as an additional language has been carefully reviewed and improved and as a result these pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils are friendly and enjoy their lessons. Sometimes boys do not concentrate well in lessons and although they do not disturb the class their attention drifts for periods of time. Pupils acknowledge that behaviour has improved considerably, although sometimes the rough play of a minority of older boys in the playground can be a concern to younger children. Their cultural development is promoted well, and pupils respect and value the many faiths and heritages in their school and the friends they make. Attendance is good, and recent initiatives have been successful in reducing the percentage of days taken for holidays in term time. Pupils are knowledgeable about what they need to do to lead a healthy lifestyle and the playtime fruit bar is popular. They are proud of the improvements to their school, such as the new theatre and the small garden, where each year group has its own growing trough. Responsibilities undertaken by school councillors, the Eco Group and the recycling club are carried out with pride. Pupils know that their views are important – for example, they are pleased with the new playground equipment they requested.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

A whole-school focus on improving the quality of lesson planning has led to the creation of a productive learning ethos in most lessons. Where lessons are taken at a good pace, pupils concentrate, contribute well and enjoy their learning. Staff have embraced enthusiastically the new initiatives to improve pupils' phonic skills, and their number calculation skills in mathematics. They are improving their ability to monitor and track accurately the progress that pupils are making. However, the use of assessment information to structure activities in lessons is less well developed in some classes, so pupils are not fully challenged to do as well as they can. Pupils' work is marked regularly and their efforts are praised, but not all teachers identify for pupils how and where a piece of work can be improved. Teaching assistants are well deployed and most of them work in effective partnership with teachers to support those pupils who require additional help with their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets pupils' needs soundly. New initiatives in literacy and numeracy have been successfully integrated in each year group. In Years 5 and 6, three classes are grouped into four ability sets in numeracy and literacy. This gives pupils more structured support because teaching groups are smaller. Links between subjects are planned carefully for literacy and also for Information and Communication Technology but are erratic in other subjects. Key words are identified in lessons, but pupils often have gaps in their vocabulary, which limits their speaking and comprehension skills. Their ability to articulate clearly is not systematically developed and this slows progress, especially for pupils who are still developing their English language skills. The quality of artwork on display is of a good standard and often takes inspiration from the modern art works on display throughout the school. A satisfactory range of visits and visitors are planned to enrich learning outside of the classroom. Staff are aware that extra-curricular activities can be improved to provide further first-hand experiences for pupils to extend their awareness of the world beyond school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school is a happy, caring and safe place for pupils. Their needs are carefully assessed and the quality and range of support they receive is carefully structured and flexible. This area of the school's provision has been extended and improved under the efficient direction of the inclusion manager. Induction arrangements for pupils and their parents are sensitively planned, and so they settle quickly. The school's strong emphasis on inclusion means that everyone, from whatever cultural, ethnic or social background, feels appreciated and secure. Pupils' academic guidance has also been improved. Teachers set class and group targets to help pupils to improve their work. There are still inconsistencies in the quality of targets between classes, but pupils say that they find them helpful in making clear the next steps in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The new headteacher, working in close partnership with the deputy headteacher, provides high-quality leadership which has united staff in an ambition to improve the quality of learning for all pupils. An accurate evaluation has been made of the school's effectiveness and urgent changes implemented sensitively and with the support of staff and governors. A good start has been made and the steps already taken to bring about improvement in literacy and numeracy are showing early signs of success. The confidence and skills of middle managers are developing rapidly as they begin to take more responsibility for the monitoring and development of their subject areas. Areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report are a strong focus still and are moving towards resolution. Community cohesion is satisfactory. Pupils are gaining a sound understanding of the local area and have family links with other parts of the world as well as a school link with Guatemala. Governors are supportive of the school and are appreciative of the important changes that have been accomplished in only five terms. Their confidence in the school was especially valuable during the academic year in which there was no headteacher or senior team. Less well developed is their ability to ask penetrating questions of senior leaders and managers, and monitor developments in the school carefully.

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?	3
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?	3
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?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
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?	3
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	3
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**

01 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shaftesbury Primary School, London, E7 8PF

As you know, we visited your school recently to find out how well you were doing. We really enjoyed our time in Shaftesbury, particularly when we had the opportunity to talk to you. Thank you very much for being so welcoming and polite.

Your school gives you a satisfactory standard of education. That means that there are some good things about your school and some things which could be better. Your new headteacher has made a lot of important changes in your school and you told us how very pleased you were about this. Several of you told us how excited you are about the new large sailing ship being built for you in the playground. One of the best things about Shaftesbury is how happy you all seem and how well you get on together. Most of you behave sensibly in class and in the playground. You know how to keep safe and understand a lot about keeping healthy. Your teachers make most of your lessons enjoyable and help you with your learning. You told us you felt safe in school and that you could always share your problems with an adult.

There are three things that would make your school even better.

- We have asked your teachers to help you improve your work in English and mathematics, and to see to it that is not too easy or too hard.
- In every lesson we have asked if you could be given lots of chances to improve your spoken English by sharing your ideas and talking about your work clearly and confidently.
- For younger children in Reception classes, we have asked if they could have more time to play and develop their own games and activities, especially using the exciting toys in the lovely new play areas outside their classrooms.

Thank you again for being so helpful to us and we send our very best wishes for your future.

Yours faithfully

Norma Ball

Lead Inspector