

# Elm Wood School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100597
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lambeth
<b>Inspection number</b>	330199
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Pye

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

---

<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)	230
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	56
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr N Donlevy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr C Tunstall / Mr S Hall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 December 2007
<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>	Carnac Street London SE27 9RR
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8670 1621
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8761 6316

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 November 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	330199

---

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. When the school was inspected in December 2007, it was judged to require special measures.

## Description of the school

This smaller than average primary school has well above the expected level of pupils entitled to free school meals. Almost three-quarters of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, over twice the average number speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average as is the proportion of pupils having a statement of special educational need. These are mainly pupils with speech and language problems, specific learning or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The school became part of a hard federation with the neighbouring Kingswood school in May 2008 and a new governing body was established. In the past year, there have been wholesale changes of staff, and new executive and associate headteachers have been appointed. The school has been recognised as a National Support school and has national recognition through the International Schools Award, and the Parent Partnership Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Under the new, outstanding leadership and with a reformed teaching staff the school's performance has been quickly transformed. The successful focus on raising standards and achievement, and improving the quality of teaching and learning means that pupils are making good progress. The school provides a good education for its pupils. Their personal development is outstanding and they feel secure and safe because of the very high levels of care, support and guidance. The school has established an excellent range of partners that benefit the pupils. This particularly includes parents who attend regular forums and have good opportunities to support their children's education.

An impressive amount of assessment information is gathered about pupils' progress. This allows the early identification of those requiring additional help and the prompt introduction of appropriate intervention strategies. Coupled with good and often outstanding teaching this has resulted in quickly improving achievement levels for pupils. Provisional results in the 2008 tests for 11 year olds show standards are average. For these pupils this represents good achievement. Not complacent, the school has set very challenging targets for improving standards in English, mathematics and science, particularly for high attainers.

The school has successfully promoted teaching methodologies that have accelerated the progress of pupils. Teachers provide good practical activities in lessons that motivate pupils and hold their concentration. Effective, good classroom teaching has been backed up by a range of booster classes, which has included regular after-school revision sessions. Pupils say how behaviour has improved and that they are really involved in their learning. They concentrate well on their work, and are appreciative of the improvements to the learning environment. Classrooms are bright and stimulating for pupils.

A good curriculum helps ensure that the work stimulates pupils. They also benefit from an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities. The pupils' excellent knowledge of how to stay healthy results from regular physical education lessons but also their eager involvement in after-school sports clubs.

Senior leaders have been very effective in promoting and managing change. Establishing the federation has been a successful focus of the governing body. Within school, all managers have an active monitoring role and in their evaluations pay careful attention to measuring the impact of their work on learning. This focus on achievement has been successful in bringing sustained improvements to standards and the progress of pupils. The capacity to improve the school further is outstanding.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with well below the expected levels of skills and knowledge. In particular, they have weaknesses in literacy. Consistently good teaching helps the children to achieve well, but most enter Year 1 with below the expected levels. The school's analysis has correctly identified that, in order to improve reading skills, the strategies of how to link sounds and letters need to be taught in a more consistent fashion across both the EYFS and Year 1. Relationships are very positive and the children settle quickly to their

work; their personal development is good. The children are very happy and this reflects their trust of the adults. The school's commitment to the children's welfare is outstanding, and in this very safe environment they thrive. Leadership of the EYFS is good. As with other leaders, monitoring is embedded and has a clear focus on improving achievement. Thoughtful evaluation leads to very appropriate development planning. This includes the need to pay more detailed attention to identifying more specific learning outcomes for children, especially in outdoor play.

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

- Further improve standards in English, mathematics and science, particularly for higher attainers.
- Improve reading skills in Key Stage 1 and the EYFS, in particular through ensuring the consistent and high quality delivery of strategies for linking sounds and letters.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

From below expected levels of entry, the pupils achieve well. Whilst standards remain below average at the end of Year 2, the foundations, particularly in literacy and numeracy in Key Stage 1, are well built upon in Key Stage 2. For example, in 2008, the number of Year 6 pupils gaining the expected levels in English increased by 40 percentage points on the previous year. In work seen during the inspection, standards are broadly average and pupils' progress is good. This is the result of consistently good teaching, positive pupils' positive attitudes and the effective tracking of their progress. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress well because of effective support from pro-active teaching assistants. The school has recognised that a small number of Black African pupils are not fully on track to meet their learning targets. As with the few remaining pupils, who, as part of the legacy, are still underachieving, effective support is in place which is accelerating their progress. The tracking of pupils who speak English as an additional language shows that, as a result of skilled support, they progress well and often very well.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Cultural diversity within the school is celebrated and the inclusion of pupils is outstanding. The ethos of the school is one of total respect between pupils and adults. Behaviour is good. This all contributes to pupils' great enjoyment of school and their excellent contribution to the community, whether as brass band members, for example, or as school councillors. Pupils say that the school listens to them, and quote the prompt refurbishment of the lavatories as an example of where their views are taken into account. They are eager to tell of their training as peer mediators and how they are inspecting and advising in other schools. Pupils are rightly proud of their fund-raising for charities. They have an excellent knowledge of how to stay safe. They relate their knowledge of rules to science and physical education lessons, as well as safety outside school, on the roads, for example. The school's promotion of teamwork opportunities, Junior Citizenship programmes and the sound level of basic skills prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The impact of senior managers is very clearly demonstrated by the improvements to the quality of teaching and learning. Effective recruitment, coupled with rigorous monitoring has resulted in teaching being good and often better. Advanced skills teachers share good practice and help ensure that teachers' expectations of pupils remain high. Lesson planning is detailed. There is good attention to developing work for pupils of different abilities. Team planning sessions help ensure very good use of resources, and strategies are imaginatively planned that address pupils' different learning styles. For example, in one lesson on *Oliver Twist* the pupils' learning was enhanced and made more real through using film and music, as well as group discussions. Lessons are organised well with appropriate opportunities for teachers to establish the level of pupils' understanding and to recap on the learning. Good attention to the training and deployment of teaching assistants results in them being effective in supporting pupils in lessons. On occasions, teachers' guidance could focus more on what learning is expected of the individual pupils who the assistant is working with. Pupils benefit from some very good guidance on how to improve their work, however their comments are not always followed up by pupils.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills and knowledge across all subjects. The result is the improving standards of basic skills. However, the pupils tell of need for even more challenge in literacy and numeracy. This reflects that there is scope for the school to use its detailed assessment records to identify even more specifically in curriculum planning how it can provide such challenge. Pupils benefit very well from the excellent enhancement opportunities. Effective partnerships help to ensure that community cohesion is good. Links are developing with a Parisian school and the teaching of French and Mandarin are helping to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures. The school makes full use of the locality, but also provides visits further afield to theatres, museums and the opera. Pupils' emotional needs are well catered for through a programme of personal and social education. Individual needs are met through the effective provision of mentors. The pupils also benefit from the motivation they receive through the various theme days and weeks, such as International Week and the healthy living focus.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

The pupils are emphatic in their appreciation of all that the school does to ensure their welfare. They talk of feeling safe and know well where to go if they need help. The school is extremely committed to ensuring that every child matters and care, guidance and support are outstanding. Child protection procedures, health and safety matters and risk assessments are robust. Pupils' attendance has improved by four percentage points in one year and is now satisfactory. The needs of individuals are not overlooked, either in the tracking of their academic progress, or in pastoral matters. For example, the 'Chill Out' club provides pupils with a quiet area, whilst pupils with autism are encouraged to take part in horse riding. Academic and personal targets are carefully monitored, and pupils are clear about how to improve their work.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

One parent wrote, 'I am particularly struck by the availability of staff and their absolute attention to detail'. This applies particularly to the leaders and managers of the school. Working closely as a team, they have maximised the opportunity afforded to the school of basically, a fresh start. The school has come a long way in a short time. The executive and associate headteachers quickly established an ambitious and very clear vision for improving the school. It was based very high expectations and a message that not a day was to be wasted in improving pupils' academic performance. The effectiveness with which this vision is shared with staff is seen in the impact, particularly in the classroom. The quality of teaching and consequently pupils' standards and achievement levels have improved. The federation has been successfully embedded, with positive impact for both schools, not least of all in the opportunities for the continuing professional development of staff. Communication and management systems are excellent. There is a consistent focus in monitoring and self-evaluation on improvement and the impact of any changes introduced. This has allowed the school to identify quickly where it has been successful and to share good practice. For example, the depth and quality of the on-going tracking of pupil groups has quickly revealed the need for further support for Black African pupils. Governance is good. The governors are now looking to develop their strategic role in the school's development.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



**Annex A**

**Inspection judgements**

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
--	-----------------------

**Overall effectiveness**

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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	1

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	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?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

**Achievement and standards**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	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	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

<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>	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?	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**

10 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Elm Wood School, London, SE27 9RR

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed listening to what you had to say. We saw for ourselves just how much has changed in your school, and very quickly too! Whilst it once had some serious problems, it is now a good school. Thank you particularly to the pupils we spoke to; their views were very helpful to us. One reason why your standards of work have improved is that more of you are attending school more regularly. Well done!

You told us how much behaviour has improved, and we feel it is good. We also recognise that the standard of your work has improved and that you are making good progress. The positive attitudes you have towards your work, along with the good teaching you receive helps explain why you are doing so well. You told us how you feel safe and well cared for in school and that you really enjoy your education. You certainly have a really good range of activities that keep you interested. You also told us how much the school decoration has improved - you are rightly proud of the new garden area.

The improvements you mentioned to us and which we saw for ourselves, are the result of very good leadership by the adults. All the adults in your school are committed to improving things even further. We have asked them to look at two things. Firstly, to improve your standards of English, mathematics and science even further, and particularly for those of you who find learning easy. Secondly, that there are similar arrangements for teaching sounds and letters in the early years and Year 1. We feel this will improve your reading.

Thank you once again for your help. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Pye

Lead Inspector