

# Edmund Waller Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 100680               |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Lewisham             |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 354864               |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 22–23 September 2010 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Kevin Hodge          |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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| <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 of pupils on the school roll</b> | 454                                      |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                       |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Judy Harrington                          |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Brian Smith                              |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 17 March 2008                            |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Waller Road<br>London<br>SE14 5LY        |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 020 76390436                             |
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 21 lessons taught by 15 staff. They observed the school's work, including lessons, before- and after-school clubs, playtimes, lunchtimes, and one assembly. They looked at planning, monitoring information, information sent to parents and carers and a range of pupils' past work. Inspectors met with staff, pupils, members of the governing body and parents. They also looked at 229 questionnaires returned by parents and carers 38 from staff and 111 from pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- If teaching and learning are addressing some weaknesses in pupils' attainment, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- The care, guidance and support, particularly for those vulnerable pupils or those in minority groups.
- The school's promotion of community cohesion, particularly at the national and global level.
- How well pupils behave in the light of some parental concern.

## Information about the school

This much bigger than average sized school serves a culturally diverse community. Many pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds with pupils of Black Caribbean, and Black African backgrounds making up the largest groups. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average as is the number with a statement for special educational needs. The largest groups are pupils with speech, language, behavioural, emotional or social difficulties. The proportion of pupils eligible to receive free school meals is higher than average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Nursery and two Reception classes. The school has received a number of awards reflecting its commitment to promoting active lifestyles and environmental awareness.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

### Main findings

Edmund Waller Primary provides a good standard of education. Its main strengths lie in the way that it helps pupils develop well-rounded, mature and positive attitudes. Most, but not all, parents and carers agree that pupils are well cared for and enjoy their time in the school. One comment accurately reflected one of the outcomes of the inspection, 'The school has a strong focus upon inclusivity and respect.'

The school's clear approach and focus on pupils' well-being is most clearly shown by pupils' willingness to speak enthusiastically about activities within and outside the school. The inviting play areas enable pupils to be very active at playtime if they choose and others who just want to discuss the hot topic of the day, can do so safely. The pupils' excellent knowledge of the right things to eat is added to by knowing what combination of proteins, carbohydrates or sugars are good for you. As a result of good care and guidance, pupils are mature and behave well. The school is inclusive and relationships are harmonious. A small minority of parents are not fully convinced these levels of behaviour and harmony are the norm, but inspection evidence, informed by pupils themselves, indicates behaviour is usually good. Pupils say instances of bullying are relatively rare and are dealt with fairly when it occurs. Pupils' knowledge of their local area is good, but their knowledge of others' lifestyles and communities much further afield is not sufficiently well developed.

Children's good start in the Nursery is continued in the Reception classes so that by the time children start Year 1 they make up good ground from their starting points and are close to reaching the expected levels of attainment. Senior leaders have successfully addressed the school's dip in academic performance in 2009. The latest assessments, confirmed in pupils' current work, indicate pupils' attainment has risen back to broadly average levels by the end of Year 6. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are above average as these skills are promoted well in lessons and in the good range of enrichment activities, such as drama. In writing, pupils' enthusiasm to write is evident in original ideas, but some of it is not of sufficient depth or in a wide enough range of styles. Pupils' grasp of number work and concepts through the school is generally secure and accurate. Pupils' progress in Years 1 to 6 is good overall, but can occasionally be uneven where the quality of teaching and planning varies between year groups.

Underpinning the school's caring approach are senior managers who are determined to improve provision still further. They successfully evaluated the effectiveness of management roles and addressed weaker areas of academic performance. They are currently consulting on anti-bullying policies and the behaviour policy is due for publication in the next few weeks. These initiatives and successes reflect senior leaders' good capacity to improve. While most parents agree the school performs well, a small

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minority would like a quicker response to concerns and difficulties when they arise and the school has identified this as an area to work on. Governors have recently reviewed their composition and oversight of the school's work. These changes are at an early stage, so routines to help inform them how best to challenge senior leaders to improve are not yet fully effective. Their promotion of extended services to help support pupils' well-being is a strength, valued by parents, carers and pupils.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the pupils' quality of writing in Years 1 to 6 this coming academic year by:
  - setting higher expectations of what pupils can achieve in lessons
  - making sure teaching and learning are consistently good through the school
  - widening the range of writing opportunities
  - ensuring marking consistently gives pupils good ideas about how to improve their work.
- Raise pupils' awareness of others with differing backgrounds and beliefs by:
  - working with governors to audit and build upon current provision
  - developing links with schools with pupils of different backgrounds and beliefs both nationally and abroad.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

One pupil's comment summed up the views of many when saying that, 'I love every minute of being here.' Pupils value the school, their friends and the staff. Many pupils comment they feel safe and enjoy school. This is due to several factors. The school's clear aims and values ensure the pupils' good spiritual, social and moral development. Pupils relate easily to classmates and visitors and behave well, particularly when they are not directly supervised. The youngest children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are happy to be at school. The work of the school council, although not yet formed at this stage of the year, is well thought of by other pupils. Pupils have other responsibilities, but these are not systematically planned through the school. Pupils' enjoyment of the pre-school breakfast club and after-school club is not surprising as both provide a welcome start and end to the school day for those who attend and contribute to the school's above average attendance.

Pupils' positive behaviour and attitudes contribute to their generally good achievement and progress. This good achievement is also true for groups of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, often because their needs are identified early and small group activities are matched well to their needs. One pupil said, 'It really helps me to work out words.' Pupils learning to speak English as an additional language achieve well because of close identification of their needs which are then addressed well.

Class activities generally enable interesting learning. Pupils in Year 6 enjoyed developing

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their poetry writing and book making skills and younger aged pupils out on a local trip to look at features found in streets were amazed to find that a modern looking house close to the school was, in fact, quite old. Learning in some class activities is more routine in nature and composition so pupils' attention and learning are slower. Pupils achieve well in their mathematical and scientific work. The new wireless internet and laptops were not yet ready to be used this term, but pupils know how to keep safe while using computers and confidently describe how technology can help them. The level of pupils' achievement, combined with some activities such as annual school 'restaurant' and shop projects, helps pupils prepare for their next schools and later life.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:  |          |
| Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>   | 3        |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress  | 2        |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress                      | 2        |
| <b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Pupils' behaviour</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>  | <b>1</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:  |          |
| Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>   | 2        |
| <b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>  | <b>2</b> |

## How effective is the provision?

The good teaching results in pupils' good achievement and progress, but some occasional variations in the quality slows progress for some classes. Good teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes ensures pupils' secure start. Early reading and writing skills are promoted well. In Years 1 to 6, teaching normally capitalises on pupils' interests and abilities, but this is not always consistent in every class, resulting in some

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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unevenness of progress and dips in pupils' interest levels. That said, concerted efforts to get pupils' academic performance back on track after a dip has paid off for the older pupils. In less well taught lessons, the pace and challenge set are not high enough, so pupils mark time; this leads to some occasional inattentiveness. The aims of lessons are clear, prompted by a systematically-planned curriculum that caters for pupils' well-being needs in addition to their basic academic skills. Extra-curricular activities, such as annual performances, music tuition, the parent-led school orchestra and significant sporting successes, particularly in cricket, add to the pupils' sense of pride and achievement. Modern foreign languages help pupils prepare for later life as does the school commitment to teaching about eco principles, such as using solar power. Marking is very good in some classes, but this not always the norm.

Adults make a good contribution in many lessons. Well-targeted support for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including small group work, one-to-one tuition and help through drama therapy, helps ensure they keep pace with classmates. Those pupils learning to speak English as an additional language benefit from specialist help and a dedicated well-resourced room to enable pupils to feel secure and stimulated while expanding their spoken vocabulary. Routines to cater for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well organised in the main, but a small minority of parents would like speedier contact or feedback from the school about their child's progress. The school, prompted by the appointment of a new inclusion manger, is reviewing routines to ensure they are effective and to spot where improvements can be made. Links with other professionals and agencies beyond the school are particularly effective in ensuring pupils' well-being. It has a marked effect in supporting individual pupils, their parents and carers through initiatives such as the 'LAMP' project which helps to resolve conflict situations between and within families.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The quality of teaching</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The use of assessment to support learning  | 2        |
| <b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b> | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>   | <b>2</b> |

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Senior leaders have recently reviewed roles and responsibilities to good effect, although the changes have, on occasions, hindered the pace of some developments. A new policy on behaviour is being published shortly, while consultations on a new anti-bullying policy are included in the clear priorities for action also this term. The prompt response to a dip in performance last year reflects a determination to improve and keep pupils' academic performance on track with their general levels of well-being. The school's

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good promotion of equal opportunities is reflected in their analysis of how well different groups of pupils achieve and in ensuring pupils have, as far as possible, equal access to the range of activities on offer. Preventing discrimination at any level is high on the school's agenda and incidents are recorded and tackled quickly. Teaching is monitored systematically. Staff changes, some through promotion, have caused some unevenness in teaching which is taking time to remedy. Partnerships with others are particularly good in helping pupils' well-being, sense of safety and in supporting parents' and carers' needs. Safeguarding routines are satisfactory in keeping checks on staff up to date and secure, as are assessments to ensure offsite safety. The governing body holds regular meetings with parents and staff to keep its finger on the pulse of the school. Recent changes in its membership have meant that its overview, while secure, has been hindered while new routines are fully established. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good in the way the school pulls together to ensure good relationships exist between pupils and adults. However, it is satisfactory rather than good, because governors and senior staff have not yet fully audited their provision to see what currently works well or how to promote links nationally or globally to expand pupils' horizons much further than the immediate area.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The leadership and management of teaching and learning   | 2        |
| <b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b> | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>   | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>  | <b>2</b> |

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Despite the early stage of the term, most children appear confident and eager to explore their environment, which is stimulating and well planned. The majority of children enter Reception with skills and knowledge below those levels expected for their age, with a



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significant number having weaker communication, language, literacy and, in some cases, social skills. In the Nursery, children like exploring both inside and outside with high levels of play-based activities combined with one-to-one teaching. For example, one child clearly enjoyed it when the teaching carefully recorded the child's shopping list of ingredients for what sounded like a very appetising meal! Good teaching in the Reception classes helps children reach standards that are close to those expected when they start in Year 1. Children make especially good progress in their physical and social development, learning to behave well and developing good relationships with others. Children's personal, social and emotional development and their communication and language skills are particularly focused on and develop well because adults make expectations clear and constantly encourage and challenge all children to learn at a good pace. Some children enjoyed their role play as spacemen using model spaceships to add to the adventure and fun in developing language skills. Others were carefully working together to see how quickly balls ran down gutters set a different angles. Adults encourage children to respond individually to questions and supervise them well when undertaking activities, although children are sometimes left for too long, particularly in outside activities, before an adult gives them some brief help to extend their learning further. The newly-appointed leader has a clear view of what works well and what needs to be improved, such as creating a more child-centred approach to planning and in responding to the children's interests quickly. Care and welfare are good and contribute to children's positive achievement.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>                   | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:   |          |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage                          | 2        |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage                       | 2        |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2        |

**Views of parents and carers**

Close to half of all parents returned the questionnaires. Those parents voicing concerns outweighed those with more positive comments. There were questionnaires which, while pointing to areas they wanted improving, also contained comments praising the work of the school. The concerns were sometimes very specifically centred around their own experiences or that of their child. There were some common concerns around pupils' behaviour, bullying and communication. Inspectors spent extra time observing behaviour and investigating pupils' experiences of bullying. On both counts, pupils recognised that there are lapses in the behaviour of classmates and that bullying can occur. Neither aspect was of prominent concern in their discussions with inspectors however. Behaviour observed was generally good. The school's behaviour policy is being

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published shortly and the school is consulting about an anti-bullying policy this term. In terms of communication, the school recognises that some staff absence and resulting disruption have made dealing with concerns or requests slower than they would like. The school uses a wide range of methods to aid communication, such as text messaging, website information, an annual non-statutory meeting for parents, as well as regular 'meet and greet' open evenings. On the positive side from responses, other parents spoke highly of the school, particularly its ethos, care and outreach to those in the local community who need support and guidance. Others testified to their child's own positive experiences and enjoyment of school which appears to be confirmed by the overall level of parental satisfaction.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Edmund Waller Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 229 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 454 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly Agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |    | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | %  | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 139            | 61 | 76    | 33 | 6        | 3  | 2                 | 1 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 112            | 49 | 96    | 42 | 5        | 2  | 7                 | 3 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress   | 73             | 32 | 124   | 54 | 23       | 10 | 1                 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 68             | 30 | 120   | 52 | 24       | 10 | 6                 | 3 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 79             | 34 | 125   | 55 | 12       | 5  | 1                 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning  | 65             | 28 | 121   | 53 | 28       | 12 | 4                 | 2 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 81             | 35 | 124   | 54 | 10       | 4  | 0                 | 0 |
| The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment) | 58             | 25 | 126   | 55 | 17       | 7  | 4                 | 2 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs  | 63             | 28 | 122   | 53 | 24       | 10 | 7                 | 3 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 54             | 24 | 109   | 48 | 29       | 13 | 17                | 7 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 52             | 23 | 115   | 50 | 36       | 16 | 9                 | 4 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 66             | 29 | 115   | 50 | 30       | 13 | 8                 | 3 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school   | 92             | 40 | 116   | 51 | 15       | 7  | 3                 | 1 |

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

| Grade   | Judgement    | Description  |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding  | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.  |
| Grade 2 | Good         | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.  |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.  |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate   | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

### Overall effectiveness of schools

| Type of school       | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) |      |              |            |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
|                      | Outstanding   | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools      | 58  | 36   | 4            | 2          |
| Primary schools      | 8   | 43   | 40           | 9          |
| Secondary schools    | 10  | 35   | 42           | 13         |
| Sixth forms          | 13  | 39   | 45           | 3          |
| Special schools      | 33  | 42   | 20           | 4          |
| Pupil referral units | 18  | 40   | 29           | 12         |
| All schools          | 11  | 42   | 38           | 9          |

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Achievement:               | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.  |
| Attainment:                | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.   |
| Capacity to improve:       | the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.   |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.   |
| Learning:                  | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.   |
| Overall effectiveness:     | <p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul> |
| Progress:                  | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.  |

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



24 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Edmund Waller Primary School, London SE14 5LY

I am writing to let you know about the findings from the inspection we carried out recently. The vast majority of your parents and carers think your school is good and we agree.

Here are some of the things we found out:

- The youngest children settle in the Nursery and Reception classes well and are enjoying all of the activities that take place. They particularly like the outside activity areas and overall learn well.
- Most of you behave well and try hard in lessons and you make good progress.
- Well done for reaching average levels when you leave and achieving well in most aspects of your work.
- You are good at keeping active at playtimes and know lots about eating healthily.
- Staff work hard to make sure you feel valued and a part of what's going on.
- The range of things you do, such as learning languages, learning about eco principles and sports competitions, sound exciting
- The school helps those of you who sometimes feel find work difficult or learning how to speak English.
- The teaching is usually good which helps you to learn well in most lessons.

We have asked the school to do two things to help it improve further:

- Give those of you in Years 1 to 6 more guidance and variety of work in order to help to improve your writing so you can write at greater length and in a wider range of styles.
- Develop more links with other schools so you get to find out about other children who live in a different type of area or who are a bit different to you.

You can help your teachers by keeping up your good behaviour and making sure that you let staff know if there is anyone who is persistently unhelpful to you or friends.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Hodge

Lead Inspector

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