

Elfrida Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100681
Local Authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	354865
Inspection dates	25–26 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Susan Thomas-Pounce

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	381
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Malcolm Snell
Headteacher	Lloyd Murphy
Date of previous school inspection	23 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 20 lessons taught by 17 teachers. Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body, and pupils. Inspectors looked at records of pupils' progress, the school improvement plan, local authority reviews and a range of documentation. The inspection team analysed questionnaires completed by 128 parents and carers, 68 pupils and 12 staff. They also held discussions with individual parents and carers.

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

- To what degree the school's approaches to supporting pupils' individual needs and improving their well-being are helping to raise their achievement.
- How effectively teachers plan for the wide range of abilities in each class, and how they ensure that their feedback engages and motivates pupils to improve their work.
- How effectively and rigorously senior leaders, including the governing body and middle leaders, have ensured that their evaluation of the school has led to improved outcomes for all groups of pupils.

Information about the school

This is a large primary school. A large majority of all the pupils are from minority ethnic groups with no single group predominating. More pupils speak English as an additional language than in most schools. A high number of pupils join or leave the school part-way through their primary education. An above average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils who need support for their behavioural, language or physical needs is above average, although the proportion who have a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in its Nursery and Reception classes. The school holds a number of awards, including recognition of its work to promote healthy lifestyles. Since the previous inspection, there has been a significant change in teaching staff; a new headteacher was appointed in January 2009 and two deputy headteachers have been in post for one term.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Elfrida is a satisfactory school, which is improving strongly. This is particularly due to the good leadership of the headteacher, whose clear sense of direction and purpose are shared by the governing body and other senior leaders. A range of effective measures, designed to improve all aspects of provision, have been introduced. These include working closely with local authority consultants to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and strengthening efforts to improve behaviour and attendance. Consequently, attainment is rising strongly and learning and progress are improving securely and quickly. Attendance has already improved significantly and is now satisfactory. More timely and effective support for pupils with moderate learning or behavioural difficulties has also contributed to improved achievement. A major strength of the school is the good quality care, guidance and support that all pupils receive.

Children are given a good start to their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and when pupils leave in Year 6 they reach broadly average standards. At first glance, this suggests good achievement from their low standards on entry, but the school recognises that pupils' progress is too patchy. A particular challenge for the school has been to eradicate underachievement in Key Stage 1. It has taken robust action and the rate of progress for these younger pupils is now accelerating. The other issue preventing achievement from being good is the variability in the quality of teaching across the school. The teaching team is enthusiastic and the school has recently recruited some outstanding practitioners. Good and supportive relationships and effective management were typically seen in lessons. Staff generally have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve and planned activities are successful in engaging the pupils in learning. Inspectors saw much good teaching during the inspection with some outstanding features, and unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated. However, a common feature of the satisfactory lessons was lack of challenge, particularly for the most-able pupils, and because the improved teaching techniques are not yet fully embedded in practice, such remaining weaknesses mean that pupils are not yet making consistently good progress across the school.

Pupils have a positive attitude to learning, showing interest and enjoyment in their activities. Pupils' behaviour in class is often good, and any rare challenging incidents are appropriately managed. In this caring school, pupils have responded positively to the clear strategies the school has introduced in the last year. Links with pupils' parents and carers are satisfactory, but the school has not yet done enough to ensure that they are effective partners in supporting their children's learning.

The accurate self-evaluation carried out by leaders at all levels means that they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Together with the good track record of progress over the past two years, this means that the school has a good capacity for further sustained improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress so it is consistently good across the school by:
 - building on the existing best practice to increase the amount of high quality teaching
 - ensuring that new approaches to teaching and learning are consistently applied in all classes
 - ensuring consistency in terms of a high level of challenge for all pupils in lessons, particularly for the most-able pupils.
- Strengthen the school's engagement with parents and carers, in order to help them support their children's learning more effectively.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

In the all lessons seen, pupils were making at least satisfactory progress, and in the better lessons observed, they made good progress. The improving work seen in lessons and pupils' books in the key subjects of English and mathematics is now broadly average in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those whose circumstances make them particularly vulnerable, now make progress that is never less than satisfactory, and often good where support is particularly carefully targeted. Amongst other groups, the few pupils who are learning English as an additional language receive the support they need and make satisfactory progress. The most-able pupils are not always encouraged enough to aim for higher levels in their learning.

A relatively high number of pupils who transfer to the school have attendance and social, behavioural and emotional issues. Behaviour in classrooms seen during the inspection was mostly good and this contributed to the good relationships seen. A small minority of pupils have challenging behaviour, but the school's management strategies ensure that this does not disrupt learning. Although an above average number of pupils have in the past received fixed-term exclusions, this figure is swiftly declining as a result of targeted support and high levels of intervention.

Pupils say they feel safe and know how to keep healthy; and the progress they make culturally, morally, socially and spiritually is satisfactory. The school council takes its role seriously and its members say their views are valued. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the community, for example by acting as playground buddies. The satisfactory progress made in their basic academic and social skills means that they are appropriately prepared for the next stage in their education and later life.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Good levels of care, guidance and support make a strong contribution to pupils' well-being, learning and sense of security. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good care and support, as do pupils whose circumstances make them particularly vulnerable; the school involves all external agencies effectively to benefit pupils and families.

Recently introduced strategies that are proving successful in driving up standards include daily language and guided reading sessions; earlier intervention for pupils identified as falling behind in their work; improvements in the use of assessment information; and good quality marking. Teaching is improving because regular monitoring has identified weaknesses and these have been tackled robustly. This is a key factor in pupils' accelerating progress. Teachers have a more secure understanding of their pupils' current levels of attainment and are increasingly using this information to challenge pupils of all abilities. In lessons where good teaching was observed, pupils responded well to stimulating activities with great enjoyment and good levels of concentration. The pace of learning was brisk and teachers' expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour were high. However, these aspects are not sufficiently consistent because the new approaches to teaching and learning have not yet been applied across all classes.

The curriculum supports aspects of personal development well and is adequately matched to pupils' needs. There is an appropriate focus on the development of writing through the

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implementation of the 'Big Write' initiative, which provides more opportunities for writing at length and in depth. The school holds special curriculum events and, where possible, links are made through visits and with local speakers. Extra-curricular activities are well attended and an increasing number of children are provided with the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. The school is comprehensively revising the curriculum. Appropriate plans are in place to increase cross-curricular links and thereby increase opportunities for creativity. Provision for information and communication technology is beginning to be enhanced by a significant improvement in newly acquired up-to-date resources.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and he is driving improvement swiftly forward. With staff, the governing body and the pupils, he has established an ambitious strategy for securing improvement and successfully steered the school through significant staffing changes. Senior leaders have made a good impact on improving this school. They motivate staff by communicating high expectation about securing improvement. Consequently, staff share a common sense of purpose. Target setting related to pupils' progress and attainment is realistic and challenging, and is based on good quality data. As a result, pupils' learning and progress are improving strongly. Leadership and management roles are clearly defined and the feedback from perceptive and regular monitoring of teaching and learning has led to clear improvements, although some inconsistencies remain across the school.

Good partnerships, for example with the local authority and the local network of schools, are raising aspirations as well as making a positive contribution to improving pupils' personal and academic development. The school is effective in promoting equality of opportunity; this is based on respect and value for all pupils as individuals. Leaders have strong procedures to regularly check and evaluate information on the progress of differing groups of pupils. Consequently, they quickly spot any variations in achievement of the school's diverse population and then take prompt action to narrow the gap.

Governance is good. The governing body knows the strengths and areas for development in the school and provides good support and challenge. Safeguarding procedures and practices are good, reflecting the high levels of care in the school. The school is working hard to involve parents and carers in their children's education. They are regularly asked for their views about decisions in the school, and have an increasing awareness of the school's priorities and how they can contribute to them. The school has appropriate

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policies and procedures to promote community cohesion, but has not yet fully evaluated their impact on pupils' performance and experiences.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children consistently make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. When they start in the Nursery, their skill and abilities are well below those expected for their age. For many, it is their first experience of sharing with others, or learning to speak English. A high level of intervention from well-trained adults ensures they all make good progress. Staff are skilled at helping children to adjust to the school's routines and children settle very quickly and feel at home. Classrooms are well organised and planned to provide a good learning environment in which children want to learn.

Good quality leadership and management are having a strong impact on the provision. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has a very clear vision of what needs to be done to improve the setting further and has determination to drive this forward. For example, although improvements have been made to the outdoor provision, the school is aware that it does not yet match the good quality of the indoor classrooms. Staff work well together as a team monitoring and recording children's development. This ensures that they have a very good understanding of how much progress is being achieved, what level of intervention is needed and what needs to be focused on next. Children's welfare needs are met well.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

The very large majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school and the education it provides for their children. They say that their children are happy and enjoy coming to school. Parents and carers commented on the improvements they had noted at the school in recent years and the positive influence of the headteacher. A very small minority did not agree that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. The inspectors found procedures for managing more difficult behaviour to be very clear, consistently applied by staff, and understood and trusted by pupils. A few did not agree that their children were making enough progress. Inspection evidence shows that pupils make satisfactory progress and increasing numbers are making good progress. A few parents and carers did not agree that the school helped them to support their children's learning. Inspectors judge that the school has only recently implemented a number of strategies to improve this aspect of provision.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Elfrida 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 128 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 381 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	60	47	58	45	4	3	5	4
The school keeps my child safe	53	41	66	52	6	5	3	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	45	35	68	53	10	8	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	38	69	54	6	5	4	3
The teaching is good at this school	48	38	68	53	12	9	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	36	65	51	13	10	3	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	27	78	61	10	8	5	4
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)	32	25	72	56	13	10	3	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	29	71	55	12	9	4	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	27	71	55	10	8	9	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	26	73	57	9	7	7	5
The school is led and managed effectively	37	29	72	56	7	5	8	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	37	67	52	9	7	5	4

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 all 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). 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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



29 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Elfrida Primary School, Lewisham, London SE6 3EN

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you for your friendly welcome. We enjoyed meeting and talking with so many of you, sharing lunch, looking at your work and visiting your lessons. We have judged the school to be satisfactory, but improving rapidly under good leadership. Most of you are making satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and the improvements in teaching mean that you are well on the way to making good progress.

The headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to help you do better, and all the adults look after you well and make sure you are safe. In your questionnaires, you say you enjoy school and learn a lot in lessons. We agree with the school that the children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start. The school quite rightly has lots of plans on what it needs to improve next. We have asked your school to:

- improve the teaching further by ensuring that all the teachers regularly use the new ways of working so that you make faster progress, especially those of you who are capable of learning quickly
- give your parents and carers more guidance on how to support your learning.

We want you all to try extra hard to help your school improve even more. All of you can help by coming to school every day, concentrating on your work, behaving well and being polite and helpful to each other. I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Susan Thomas-Pounce

Lead inspector

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