

# Queenswell Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	101312
<b>Local authority</b>	Barnet
<b>Inspection number</b>	376542
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 April 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	David Radomsky

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	328
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sasha Alter
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2–3 December 2008
<b>School address</b>	Sweets Way Whetstone London N20 0NQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8445 0524
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8446 0979
<b>Email address</b>	office@queenswellinf.barnetmail.net

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## Introduction

Inspection team

David Radomsky

Additional inspector

Jo Curd

Additional inspector

Sarah Beales

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 21 lessons taught by 11 teachers. In addition, inspectors made short observations of 16 sessions on the teaching of phonics (letter patterns and the sounds they represent) for a total of 100 minutes. Many of these observations were made jointly with either the headteacher or the deputy headteacher of the school. Account was taken of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at school documentation, including teachers' planning, the school and coordinators' development plans, assessment information, safeguarding documentation and samples of pupils' work. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils read and talked with them about their enjoyment of books. Inspectors analysed 154 questionnaires from parents and carers, and 38 from staff.

## Information about the school

Queenswell Infant School is larger than most infant schools. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those known to be eligible for free school meals are well above average. Over half the pupils speak English as an additional language and approximately 6% are at an early stage of language acquisition. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average. The school has a number of accreditations including the Artsmark and the Inclusion Quality Mark. A daily breakfast club and after-school club are operated by an external provider and are not part of this inspection. Since the previous inspection, there have been substantial changes to staffing and the leadership team, including the appointment of a new headteacher who took up her post in January 2011.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school. The school is not yet outstanding because, although pupils make good progress and do particularly well in reading and writing, teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure pupils make outstanding progress. Pupils do not have enough opportunities across different subjects to develop outstanding numeracy skills and to reach the higher levels for their age by the end of Year 2.
- Achievement is good. From well below expected starting points, pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress so that by the end of Year 2, attainment is above average in reading and writing and broadly average in mathematics. There are no significant or consistent differences between the achievements of any groups of pupils other than for the more able in mathematics.
- Pupils and their parents and carers confirm that pupils feel very safe, behave well and develop very positive attitudes towards learning.
- Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. In a minority of lessons, mainly in mathematics, pupils' misconceptions are not identified and addressed quickly enough by teachers and the most-able mathematicians are not always sufficiently challenged throughout the lesson. This inhibits consistently rapid progress. Occasionally, feedback, in subjects other than writing, does not make clear to pupils what they need to do to improve their work, and pupils do not consistently respond to teachers' comments.
- Good leadership and management have continued to drive improvements since the previous inspection. Leaders develop teachers' skills well through regular and effective monitoring, performance management, personalised feedback and training. Assessment information is used effectively at termly meetings to review pupils' progress to ensure that teachers are accountable for the progress of every pupil and that appropriate support is provided for any underachieving

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pupil. In this inclusive and caring learning environment, all pupils gain greatly in self-confidence because the school promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. The curriculum provides pupils with many enjoyable and stimulating experiences.

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

- By July 2013, further accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment in mathematics at the end of Year 2 to above average by:
  - providing greater challenge for the more-able pupils, particularly in every part of each lesson in mathematics
  - ensuring that all teachers consistently identify and address any misconceptions that arise, particularly during mathematics lessons
  - planning additional opportunities across the curriculum to practise numeracy skills
  - improving the quality of the feedback that teachers give to pupils, in subjects other than writing, so pupils clearly understand what they must do to improve their work, and are given sufficient opportunities to respond to their teacher's comments.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Achievement is good. From starting points that are well below age-related expectations, especially in communication and social skills, children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They enjoy coming to school and being purposefully engaged in the richness of activities available. As one parent said, 'Our children love going to this school and ask to go back in the holidays!' Teaching is good and the well-planned curriculum engages children's interest effectively. As a result, children show high levels of curiosity, imagination and concentration. As part of the 'mini beast' topic, inspectors saw children looking under logs in the garden for small creatures and building a mini beast hotel. This sort of activity results in children developing the self-confidence to talk to teachers and other adults. As one girl enthusiastically told an inspector, 'I actually held a worm. He was licking my hand and he felt slimy and squiggly.' This enthusiasm is because both the indoor and outdoor provide stimulating learning environments and adults consistently engage the children in speaking and listening activities.

Parents and carers are accurate in their assertions that children of all ages make good progress. Evidence shows that, as pupils continue to make good and sometimes outstanding progress in Key Stage 1, overall attainment by the end of

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Year 2 is above average, though the proportion of pupils reaching Level 3, the level higher than that expected for their age is lower than average in mathematics. Pupils' reading abilities are consistently above the average for their age when they leave the school, because the school effectively uses a systematic programme for the teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) and pupils are encouraged to read daily at school and at home. Through highly effective support systems, the school ensures that disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language and those that join other than at the usual time, make the same good progress as all others.

Pupils greatly enjoy learning. A balance of active and engaging learning opportunities, combined with appropriate challenge, helps pupils consolidate and expand their learning. This was typical of the learning seen in most lessons during the inspection. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson on collecting data and recording findings on a pictogram, pupils quickly understood the concept as they enthusiastically opened up holiday bags and counted and recorded pictorially the numbers of the various packed items. Pupils then used a range of previously learned mathematical skills in analysing various aspects of the data they had collected, thus effectively applying prior learning. Different challenging questions and activities, prepared by the teacher to meet the differing needs of pupils, ensured that almost all groups of pupils made good progress. The most able, however, made less progress than they are capable of as they were held back from starting their independent work as they listened to the teacher continuing to explain the concept of pictograms to the rest of the class.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teachers skilfully use a range of creative resources to capture pupils' imaginations in order to maintain their very good attitudes to learning. Relationships are strong, with teachers and teaching assistants interacting well with pupils to support them in their learning. When teaching is at its best, teachers plan for the learning needs of all pupils, set a good pace and extend thinking through effective questioning. Lesson observations during the inspection confirmed that, occasionally, mainly in mathematics, teachers do not provide enough challenge for the most able throughout the lessons, and do not always identify and address any misconceptions. As a result, pupils' learning and progress are slower than in the more successful lessons. The marking of pupils' work and oral feedback is well developed in writing and effectively helps pupils to improve their work. This quality of marking and feedback is not consistently replicated across all other areas of the curriculum.

Teaching of reading skills is good. It is systematic and based on a structured scheme fully adopted by teachers and teaching assistants, who are very skilled in its effective delivery. Pupils therefore make good progress, showing interest and a desire to succeed.

Teaching assistants provide good support for the groups and individuals they work with. They are effective in ensuring that disabled pupils and those with special

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educational needs make similar good progress to others through early identification of needs, well-targeted support and activities that meet their learning needs well.

In a Year 1 science lesson on plants and how they grow, pupils were enthralled with the short introductory video animation on the journey of a seed to becoming a flower. This engendered a sense of awe and wonder with one pupil spontaneously exclaiming, 'Wow, that is beautiful.' Pupils participated in a carousel of activities, each getting the opportunity to plant a seed, write down their predictions about what will happen to the seed over time, draw a picture of daffodils, dig and explore in an outdoor trough of earth, and use a computer program to label the parts of a plant. A scrutiny of pupils' work confirmed that they experience a good range of similar engaging activities that do much to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These activities also offer good opportunities for pupils to extend the literacy skills learned in formal English lessons and make a particularly significant contribution to developing the speaking and listening skills of those who join the school in the early stages of language acquisition. These activities, however, are not planned to systematically extend pupils' mathematical skills. This lost opportunity inhibits pupils from making better progress in their development of numeracy.

The inspectors' judgement that teaching is good matches that of parents and carers: as one typically said, 'This is a really good school with professional teachers that always have the care, safety and education of the children at the forefront of their minds.'

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Inspectors found the pupils to be polite and welcoming, emulating the excellent role models of the adults in the school. The vast majority of parents and carers believe that their children are safe and that the school deals effectively with any challenging behaviours. Good behaviour was evident in lessons, assembly and playtimes. The behaviour of pupils and the very positive attitudes in lessons are major reasons why pupils are making progress that is consistently at least good, and sometimes outstanding.

Pupils said that they feel safe and know that the teachers and other adults in school will help with any problems if they arise. Pupils are aware that there are different types of bullying such as physical and name-calling. They are well aware of fire, road and internet safety. Although a very few felt that rare instances of bullying did occur, they explained that it is to do with boisterous behaviour during playtime and which staff deal with appropriately. Attendance, which historically had been low, has improved significantly over the last 18 months, is now average and continuing to rise.

### **Leadership and management**

The school benefits from the dedicated leadership from the headteacher, her senior

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colleagues and the governing body. Despite significant staffing changes since the previous inspection, attainment by the end of Year 2 has risen and the rates of attendance have increased. The rich learning environment and recent curricular developments are providing even more stimulating learning opportunities for all pupils and ensuring better progress. These successes demonstrate that the school has the capacity for future sustained improvement.

All staff, leaders and the governing body work together to ensure that pupils' needs are addressed on an individual basis and that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed. Staff and school leaders are equally effective in ensuring there is no discrimination of any kind. The governing body monitors the work of the school well and provides good support and challenge in helping to drive improvement. Leaders and managers ensure arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust and fully meet statutory requirements.

Leaders at all levels monitor the quality of teaching and the progress of individual pupils rigorously and regularly hold teachers to account for the quality of their work. Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness and where it could improve further. All leaders support teachers well through classroom observation, mentoring and training, and through collaborative work with outstanding schools. These strategies have a very positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced with a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. Well-planned enrichment activities such as dancing and drama clubs, the Year 2 residential journey, visitors, and the harmonious relationships evident in the school promote well pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



26 April 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Queenswell Infant School, London N20 0NQ**

Thank you for the warm welcome that you gave us when we visited your school. We greatly enjoyed talking to many of you. Yours is a good school and these are some of the reasons why.

- Your headteacher, staff and governing body want to help you achieve your best in all that you do.
- You clearly enjoy school and we were very impressed by how well you all get on with each other and how keen you are to learn new things.
- You feel safe at school and behave well.
- The school provides you with many enjoyable and fun learning opportunities, including visiting many interesting places.
- Your teachers prepare good lessons, and work with you to make your learning exciting.

We have asked the school to do these things to make it even better.

- Make sure teachers give you plenty of challenging work, particularly for those that find the work easier in mathematics, so that you can make even faster progress.
- Make sure the teachers check, particularly during mathematics lessons, that all of you understand your work, and if you are having difficulties that they help you.
- Make sure the teachers give you even more opportunities to practise your mathematical skills when you work in different subjects.
- Ensure that teachers' marking and oral feedback always tells you how to improve your work, and that the teachers give you enough opportunities to correct your work so that you can learn from your mistakes.

All of you can help to improve your school by working hard and making sure you always try to do as well as you can. We wish you all the best for the future and thank you again for your help.

Yours sincerely  
David Radomsky  
Lead inspector

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