

Ambler Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100397
Local Authority	Islington
Inspection number	276299
Inspection dates	4–5 July 2006
Reporting inspector	Alan Frith

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 on roll	
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Nicholas Callow Mr Peter Simkins
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Blackstock Road Finsbury Park London N4 2DR
Telephone number	02072264708
Fax number	02072260229

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by 3 Additional Inspectors, one of whom was present for one day, the others for two.

Description of the school

The school's inner city location is diverse with higher than average levels of deprivation. The number of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the normal times is high and two fifths of those arriving recently have been refugees. Nearly a third of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. Pupils come from many different minority ethnic backgrounds and even the largest of these, Black African, comprises only a fifth of pupils. A very high proportion of pupils, over half, can speak a language other than English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade:

What the school should do to improve further

andmiddot; Build on the improving standards in English, mathematics and science so that these are reflected in all other subjects.andmiddot; Improve the attendance of pupils who have recently joined the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade:

Personal development and well-being

Grade:

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:

Lesson observations and the school's highly astute judgements show that teaching skills are moving forward. Inspection evidence and rising standards show that the school is right to evaluate teaching as good. Based on friendly and highly supportive relationships, teachers praise warmly, raise self-esteem and give pupils the incentive to have a go. Interesting tasks and well managed classes motivate pupils to get on with their work and behave well. They benefit from opportunities to explain their ideas to the class or a partner. In most cases, and especially for those needing extra help, tasks are well matched to ability. This is because good use is made of information about how well pupils are doing. There is well placed additional support and resources. Pupils understand the consistent approach to target setting and enjoy the challenge of objectives they 'must', 'should', or 'could' achieve. They like the fact that teachers mark their books so they can see how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

The school is right to judge the curriculum as satisfactory. It is relevant to pupils' needs and backgrounds and enhanced well with a good variety and range of clubs, which many attend. Excursions, local business links and a range of extra-curricular opportunities contribute positively to the pupils' enjoyment, achievement and a sense of belonging in the community. They help pupils develop positive attitudes towards diversity in society and good respect and understanding for others. The pupils say they have lots of responsibility, 'just the right amount'. In Year 3 they can be 'buddies' to those in Year 2 and can volunteer to be helpers or to be a monitor. In all years, there is plenty of encouragement to work together and support each other.

The school provides better for information and communication technology than at the time of the last inspection, as well as for English, mathematics and science. The school recognises that provision for other subjects is not as good and is developing plans to improve the overall coordination of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:

Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils and parents appreciate and understand the caring, supportive ethos, which leads to a very harmonious atmosphere for learning. The school tracks progress effectively to identify what pupils need to learn next, based on what they can already do. The school supports all the pupils well in understanding how to stay safe and avoid hazards. They indicate there is no bullying in school, but if incidents do occur pupils know what to do. There are clear procedures and sanctions to deal quickly with any unacceptable behaviour. The school uses outside agencies effectively to ensure they support pupils so they can make progress, including those who are vulnerable or have been identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities. The school encourages healthy living, through good diet and exercise. It provides water bottles, sells physical education kits at a subsidised price, and pupils run a fruit 'tuck shop'.

Leadership and management

Grade:

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Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Pupils

Thank you for your warm and friendly welcome when we inspected your school. It was great to meet you and see how helpful and polite you are. Your hard work is enabling you to reach higher standards than before. As a result of this we agreed with the headteacher that the school's effectiveness is satisfactory, with several good features and some things that are outstanding.

You should be very proud of the kindness and respect you show towards each other and of the work you do to care for the environment. These are just two examples of the ways in which you make an excellent contribution to your community. It is good that you are learning how to be good learners. We think this is because the adults who work in the school are good learners themselves. The senior staff encourage this by doing an excellent job of working out what needs to be done and then taking effective action to achieve it.

There are two things we have asked the school to do to be even better. One is to help you reach higher standards in the other subjects, not just English, mathematics and science. The other is something you must help with yourselves. It is important for the school's attendance to improve, so please make sure you come to school regularly and never take time off unless you really have to.

With best wishes for success in the future,

Alan Frith

Lead Inspector