



Wykeham Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101518
Local Authority Brent
Inspection number 286092
Inspection date 15 February 2007
Reporting inspector Christopher Gray

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Aboyne Road
School category	Community		London
Age range of pupils	3-11		NW10 0EX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8450 8425
Number on roll (school)	416	Fax number	020 8450 8425
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Colin Adams
		Headteacher	Mr Everton Sharpe
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is much larger than most primary schools. A much higher proportion of pupils than found in most schools come from ethnic minority backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is higher than in most schools, though the proportion with statements of special educational need is lower. Pupils' attainment on entry is low and many come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school gives its pupils a satisfactory and improving standard of education with some good features. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They behave well and show a good understanding of the widely varying cultural backgrounds that make up their community. Pupils are keen to learn and do well and their parents agree. The school has good links with outside agencies to support pupils' learning and has won the confidence of parents. This is shown by the huge response to the parents' questionnaires, which were nearly all very supportive of the school's work.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, though it varies at different stages in the school. Foundation Stage children make good progress and reach standards that are near to expectations because of good provision for their needs. The standards reached by Year 6 pupils in the 2006 national tests were broadly average overall and these pupils made good progress during their time in the school. Standards in the current Year 6 are average and show that these pupils are achieving well. Progress accelerates in Years 5 and 6, partly because teachers teach English, mathematics and science as specialist subjects, with pupils put into three ability groups. However, pupils in Years 1 to 4 do not achieve as well as this because teachers do not ensure that there is a good match of work to the abilities of the pupils.

The care, guidance and support given to pupils are good and help them develop into responsible and thoughtful people as they grow up. Detailed systems have been introduced to track pupils' progress termly, but this information is not used consistently by teachers when they plan for pupils' daily learning.

The curriculum is satisfactory in meeting pupils' needs and has strengths in what it offers pupils outside the classroom. Pupils love martial arts clubs and having their own swimming pool. Subjects are linked together well so that pupils use a range of skills in lessons.

Leadership and management are satisfactory with developing strengths. Senior leaders have a clear view of strengths and weaknesses in teaching, but a large staff turnover in the current year has hampered their ability to eliminate inconsistencies. The decision to use both deputy headteachers to support teachers was a wise one and is beginning to improve pupils' progress. This shows that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate, but plans for improvement lack easily measurable targets. This means that senior managers cannot accurately evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives. The current plan is overdue for updating.

What the school should do to improve further

- Achieve greater consistency in the quality of teaching to enable pupils to make more even progress
- Enable teachers to plan for what pupils need to learn next by making better use of their knowledge of what pupils can do already
- Sharpen the process of planning for school improvement so that it is produced regularly and with clear targets for evaluating its success

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, though there are pockets of good progress where the best teaching takes place. Foundation Stage pupils make good progress, especially in their personal development. The pupils who took the 2006 national tests in Year 6 achieved broadly average standards from standards that were slightly below average when the pupils were in Year 2 in 2002. This represented good progress, as is shown by the value added measures in English and mathematics. However, standards by Year 2 have declined overall since 2002 and the school's tracking data show that pupils currently in the school are making only satisfactory progress overall from Years 1 to 4. The main reason for this is inconsistency in teaching, brought about by a large turnover of staff and the appointment of a number of less experienced teachers. This in turn has meant that the strongest teachers have moved from their own classes to support colleagues. The large number of minority ethnic groups in the school achieve at similar rates to others, as do pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their behaviour is very good in most lessons and they show much enjoyment, though this wanes if they are kept on the carpet for too long. Pupils appreciate their teachers; one said this is because 'they push you to get a good level'. No exclusions have been made for nearly two years. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory. It falls a little below average because of sickness and because some parents take their children on extended visits to families abroad.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. One pupil said, 'It is interesting to find out about other people's backgrounds because you learn how they feel.' Another explained that this is important 'so you won't hurt them'. Pupils know how to keep safe and healthy. They enjoy exercise, especially martial arts. They understand which foods are good for them and why, but they do not like having to eat food they do not care for at school lunch. Pupils insist that the school council is valuable because it can 'change the school's future.' Pupils' standards in English and mathematics mean that their economic well-being is developing satisfactorily.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, as the school has identified. Most teachers are very good at behaviour management and this produces a good atmosphere for learning in most lessons. Some of the best teaching takes place in Years 5 and 6. The grouping arrangements work well and enable pupils to make good progress. The good skills of

teaching assistants are used well to facilitate this. Teaching is also good in the Foundation Stage.

Teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 to 4. The school's monitoring shows that good teaching takes place sometimes in most classes, but that the quality of teaching is inconsistent in these years. Teachers do not always plan to meet the differing needs of pupils in their class. Planning and pupils' past work show that pupils of differing abilities are too often given the same work. Marking of pupils' work is good in some classes, but other teachers make infrequent use of comments to help pupils to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with strengths in its enrichment. It meets the needs of pupils satisfactorily, but it does this better in some classes than in others. Provision for pupils' personal development helps them reflect on the world around them. In the Foundation Stage, good emphasis on personal skills helps children settle quickly into school routines. This is aided by the good links made between subjects, which add interest to pupils' learning. Provision for literacy and numeracy are satisfactory overall and good in Years 5 and 6.

The curriculum is enriched by a good range of clubs and visits. All pupils spoken to attend some sporting activity after school and they understand that this helps them to keep fit. They learn that certain substances are dangerous and are beginning to balance the desire to ban things with the need for personal freedom: 'you must see it for yourself' said one pupil.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support given to pupils are good. Procedures for child protection are thorough and meet statutory requirements. Almost all pupils and their parents say that children are safe and happy in school. Bullying is not seen as a problem; if it happens, pupils are clear about what to do and express confidence that adults will deal with it properly. Assessment procedures are thorough and are used well to direct extra support where it is needed. Older pupils know their targets and how to reach higher levels, but this is not so in all classes.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The core leadership team works well together and good use is made of their different expertise. They monitor teaching and learning and collectively have a broadly accurate view of strengths and weaknesses. Many governors are actively involved in the school's work. The school improvement plan contains relevant priorities, but the monitoring of it is not sufficiently rigorous.

It has not been updated for some time and so does not have the most recent priorities for improvement. Actions contain criteria for evaluating success, but these are not always expressed in measurable terms, so that it is sometimes not possible to judge whether successful action has been taken. All statutory requirements are met. The budget still has a larger than recommended carry-forward, though it is being appropriately spent. The school works well with parents, outside agencies and the Education Action Zone - for example, in the improvements made to teachers' and pupils' information and communication technology skills.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ 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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for showing me such good manners and making me feel so welcome when I came to your school. I enjoyed my visit and was sorry not to have time to meet more of you. Thank you too to those of you who let me look at your work. I remember one person who told me about how she uses her writing targets: 'They stop my stories being boring', she said.

You all told me how much you enjoy school. Some of the things you like best are your teachers and having your own swimming pool. You behave very well and I was pleased to see how older children take responsibility for younger ones. Your school council works hard to try and make the school even better. You take plenty of exercise and know which foods are good for you, though you said you don't like all of them.

Your school is giving you a satisfactory standard of education. Adults look after you well and make sure that any problems you have are sorted out. You make good progress when approaching your tests in Year 6. However, when you are younger, the progress you make is sometimes slower. We have asked the adults to make sure that all your lessons are as good as the best. This is to make sure that the work you are given is not too easy or too difficult. One other thing we have asked the school to do is to make changes to the school plan that it makes for its future.

I hope you continue to enjoy your schooling at Wykeham Primary.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Gray
Inspector