

Avenue Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102710
Local Authority	Newham
Inspection number	286466
Inspection dates	23–24 April 2007
Reporting inspector	Barry Jones

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	571
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr M Choudhury
Headteacher	Ms J M Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2001
School address	Meanley Road Manor Park London E12 6AR
Telephone number	020 8553 5682
Fax number	020 8478 5172

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

Avenue is a larger-than-average inner-city primary school. It serves a very diverse community that is much more disadvantaged than most. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is higher than in most schools. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language are higher than in the great majority of schools. Attainment on entry to the school is well below average. Nearly one half of the pupils are of Bangladeshi heritage but more than 30 languages are spoken. The proportion of pupils who join during the school year varies from average to very high in different year groups. For instance, only a half of the pupils who took national tests in Year 6 in 2006 were at the school for the tests taken in Year 2 in 2002. The school has experienced falling rolls in recent years but is now recruiting to its capacity.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Avenue provides a good education in very challenging circumstances. Its pastoral provision is strong and consequently pupils' personal development and well-being are good. This is a thriving community whose values are securely based on respect for different beliefs and cultures. It is helped to do this through the strong, effective partnerships that it has fostered with a range of external agencies. The school works hard to involve parents and makes a very positive contribution to promoting community cohesion.

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage. They make good progress socially and academically as a result of good teaching and the well planned curriculum. Standards at the end of Year 6 are generally below average. Pupils who have been in the school for four years or more consistently make good progress and attain average standards. The teachers have a good knowledge of pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses and they use this information well to provide appropriate support when needed. Standards in Year 6 tests fell to well below average in 2006. This was because the school's resources were very stretched due to the unusually very high numbers of pupils needing support. Consequently, a minority of these pupils, mainly boys, underachieved but this was not identified using the school's own analysis. The school has since strengthened its tracking of pupils' progress and the information shows that progress has been accelerated and achievement is now good again. Teaching is good and is supplemented well by additional support for pupils who have English as an additional language. Teachers make very effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) and this adds to pupils' interest in lessons. However, in some lessons the planning does not take sufficient account of the wide spread of ability and some pupils make slower progress as a result. The curriculum is good and the wide range of activities is valued by the pupils. Consequently, they enjoy school and this is shown by their good attendance and positive attitudes and contributes to their good learning.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides strong leadership and she is ably supported by her senior leadership team. They set good role models which underpin the caring ethos of the school. Senior managers have responded to the dip in results in 2006 and the strategies devised are effective in raising standards. The school now has a wealth of data that is used well to support individual pupils. It is not used sufficiently rigorously, however, to monitor the performance of particular groups. This is recognised and is being addressed by the school. Together with the good provision already in place, this means that the school is well placed to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the use of assessment by teachers to ensure that work is well matched to the needs of individual pupils
- Improve the analysis of data to monitor effectively and evaluate the progress of groups of pupils in the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards at the end of the Foundation Stage are average for personal and social development, physical and creative development and below average for communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Given the low

starting points of the pupils this reflects good progress. Standards in reading have been low in Key Stage 1. This has been recognised by the school and progress has been accelerated through a range of initiatives. The school has consistently continued to add value in Key Stage 2 in every year up until 2006 when value added by the school was below average overall. However, in this year group over one quarter of the pupils joined the school in Years 5 and 6. A significant proportion of these pupils came from overseas and spoke little English. They received effective support and made good progress in English language skills. However, there was insufficient time for them to make up ground in other subjects and consequently their attainment in the national tests was exceptionally low. Consequently, the school did not meet its targets in 2006. This masks the good progress still made by the pupils who had been at the school throughout Key Stage 2. Fewer pupils have joined the school at a late stage this year. Together with extra support provided for pupils, the school is now back on track and pupils are making good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is nurtured through a programme of well thought out assemblies, visits and other events. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong. They are well behaved and there is racial harmony in this very diverse multi-ethnic community. They are confident that the few incidences of bullying will be handled effectively and sensitively by adults. The pupils record that the way they look after one another is a strength of the school and consequently they feel safe there. As one pupil said, 'If someone is in trouble, someone always helps them'. The school council is very active and its views are valued. For instance, its ideas have been adopted to improve playground facilities, the quality of dinners and to help formulate a school travel plan. Pupils participate well in sport and have a good understanding of healthy living issues. They make a good contribution to the wider community including raising significant sums for charity. 'Citizenship week' involved all year groups and was well planned in conjunction with other schools. Pupils have good ICT skills but less developed numeracy and literacy skills means that their preparation for the secondary school is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school and Foundation Stage. Teachers manage behaviour well so that there is a positive learning climate in classes. The objectives of lessons are made clear to the pupils from the start so they know what they should learn. Support staff are good at helping those with learning difficulties or disabilities so the pupils make good progress towards their targets. There is also good support provided for pupils in the early stages of learning English which helps to accelerate their progress, particularly in speaking, listening reading and writing. Teachers assess the pupils frequently. However, assessments are not being used to ensure that tasks in all lessons are matched closely enough to the needs of pupils of different abilities. Teachers plan their work conscientiously and provide good visual prompts, texts and resources that help to focus pupils' learning and extend their thinking. In the Foundation Stage, good use is made of role-play, art and physical activities in both indoor and outdoor areas. This stimulates learning and successfully develops the children's knowledge of the world around them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is adapted well to reflect the multi-cultural school community. For instance, there are events such as 'cultural week', 'refugee week' and 'Black history month'. A recent initiative is to have a 'language of the term'. This raises the profile of pupils' first languages and is commented on positively by pupils. The provision for personal and social education is strong and contributes significantly to pupils' good personal development. In the Foundation Stage, the development of the whole child is at the heart of the curriculum. The school rightly affords a high priority to promoting good literacy and language skills and is piloting initiatives to improve reading standards further. Analysis of pupils' responses in tests has identified some weaknesses in aspects of mathematics and a new policy has been developed to rectify this. The school is improving the links between subjects by developing a more topic-based approach and is already successfully using ICT across the curriculum. The school has identified the need to provide more challenge for its most able pupils. It has initiated extra classes for gifted and talented pupils but it is too soon to judge effectiveness.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care and support are good. A strength is the quality of care that is given by individual teachers. This is very much appreciated by pupils and their parents. Families are supported through meetings with parents, classes for parents, work with the Bengali Achievement project and targeted support for specific families. There are good induction procedures for new arrivals in the school including allocating them 'buddies' and support from a learning mentor. Pupils who are learning English, or have little previous experience of school, receive good support from the 'kickstart' teacher. These arrangements are working well. New pupils are made to feel welcome by the school family and know who to go to if they have a difficulty. The school is very inclusive and all pupils are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the school. Academic guidance is satisfactory and improving. The rigorous monitoring of individual pupils' progress means that they receive support when needed. However, not all pupils know what they have to do to improve. Overall, care, guidance and support are good.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management promote good quality care and have fostered very good relationships with parents and the wider community. As a result, the parents say that they are consulted well and appreciate the work of the school. Resources throughout the school are of good quality and are managed well. However, the school's ability to resource support for new arrivals and other pupils with needs has been severely stretched over recent years. This was due to the high proportion of pupils joining the school in the upper years with little English or from disrupted backgrounds. This has been compounded by falling rolls and the need to adjust resources accordingly. The headteacher has steered the school very well through these difficult times. The situation has stabilised now. The school has responded vigorously to the dip in performance in Year 6 tests and the measures taken are effective in raising achievement. Subject leaders contribute well to raising standards in their areas. They are working well together to develop the curriculum further by establishing more links between different subjects in order

to add to pupils' understanding. The monitoring of pupils' performance is improving although it is not yet good. The school does not have a clear picture from its own data of the performance of particular groups, including those who join the school late. This apart, the school has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Governors are very supportive of the school but have not been sufficiently challenging.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	2
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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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	2
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?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
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	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

2 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Avenue Primary School, Meanley Road, Manor Park, London, E12 6AR

Thank you for the help and cooperation that you gave us when we inspected your school. You are proud of your school. You told us that it is a good school and we agree. You say that you all get along together regardless of background. This is shown by your good behaviour and that yours is a warm and welcoming school. This helps to make the many new arrivals at your school to settle well and join in the life of the school. You enjoy coming to school and like having many chances to join clubs and to go on visits. Some of your school councillors met with us and they feel that their views are valued. The council has helped to decide on equipment for the playground and voted for healthy school dinners.

The things that we liked particularly about your school are that:

- you do well in your work
- you receive good teaching
- the school takes good care of you
- you respect one another's beliefs and cultures
- the school is well led.

There are two ways in which we have asked the school to improve further.

- Teachers should plan work that will make each of you think.
- The school should check on how well all the different groups of pupils in the school are doing.

We wish you continuing success in the future.

Barry Jones Lead inspector