



Elmhurst Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102719
Local Authority Newham
Inspection number 286469
Inspection dates 19–20 October 2006
Reporting inspector Bernice Magson

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Upton Park Road
School category	Community		Forest Gate
Age range of pupils	4–11		London E7 8JY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8472 1062
Number on roll (school)	880	Fax number	020 8470 8046
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Graham Lane
		Headteacher	Mr Shahed Ahmed
Date of previous school inspection	28 October 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Elmhurst Primary School is situated in Forest Gate, a culturally diverse area of London. The school serves an area of high social deprivation with some families housed in temporary accommodation. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the usual times is high. Almost all children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and most speak English as an additional language. A few pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities. The school has the 'Artsmark' award and 'Healthy School' status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Elmhurst Primary School is an outstanding school with many strengths. The headteacher, staff and governors share a common aim to create a school in which all pupils can succeed. Parents have an overwhelming appreciation of the leadership provided by the headteacher and recognise the high quality of provision that the school offers. As one parent commented 'The school is going from strength to strength' and others praised the improving standards and better play provision.

This is a happy school, where all cultures are celebrated and valued. Pupils all get on well together and are confident and self-assured. New arrivals quickly become part of the school community because of the warmth of the welcome and excellence of the school's arrangements for newcomers. There is obvious pride and sensitivity among pupils as they undertake roles and responsibilities around the school. The School Council are pleased that their actions are influencing the school's development, such as in the recent changes to school menus at lunchtimes.

Standards are improving each year in English, mathematics and science. From exceptionally low starting points on entry most pupils attain average standards by Years 2 and 6. Pupils' overall achievement is outstanding and the majority of pupils who spend the whole of their school life at Elmhurst attain standards well above those expected for their age. However the school has identified that some more able pupils are not yet achieving the standards of which they are capable by Year 2. Strategies are being introduced to eradicate any under-achievement.

Teaching and learning are outstanding. In Years 1 to 6 teaching is outstanding because teachers are skilled practitioners with excellent subject knowledge. Specialist teachers provide a greater depth to pupils' learning in performing arts, history and sport. In the Foundation Stage teaching is good. Throughout the school learning is rapid. All teachers make very good use of problem solving activities to consolidate pupils' learning. Often, teachers and their assistants work together as a team using their own expertise to make lessons more meaningful. Although teachers set challenging targets for learning many pupils have a limited understanding about how to improve.

The curriculum has excellent breadth and depth and is well-balanced. Special events enhance learning on a common theme, such as Refugee Week or Black History. Very good efforts are made to strengthen pupils' knowledge of their local community. There is an excellent range of strategies which support and extend learning for pupils identified as gifted and talented or have learning difficulties and disabilities.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher and all other leaders and managers undertake an intensive scrutiny of the school's performance to ensure that its innovative and creative approach is successful. All pupils are fully included in the life of the school and this is central to its vision. The school has an excellent capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards of some more able pupils by Year 2
- Increase pupils' understanding of how they can improve their own learning

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. They make excellent progress in relation to their exceptionally low starting points and high levels of family movement in and out of the area. Test results in 2006 and predicted targets for the current Years 2 and 6 shows that standards are in line with the national average overall. Results are improving as more pupils attain higher levels. Programmes to raise standards in reading have proved effective and almost half of Year 6 attained the higher Level 5 in reading in 2006. Differences in the performance of minority ethnic groups and of boys and girls match the national picture. There is evidence of excellent progress by gifted and talented pupils and those with learning difficulties and disabilities. The school is now working to raise standards of some more able Year 2, particularly in writing and mathematics. There are very good examples of the school's creative curriculum raising standards in other subjects. In music, for example, all pupils play the violin and can read music by Year 5.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Cultural differences are valued and celebrated very effectively and this is an integral part of the school's family ethos. Relationships between pupils are excellent. They say that disputes and cases of bullying are rare and quickly resolved. Peer mediators ensure that break and lunchtimes are happy experiences. Pupils are friendly, polite, behave very well and act very responsibly. They have a very good understanding of healthy lifestyles, make healthy choices and understand how to stay safe. Pupils told inspectors they think school is 'fun' and their attendance is above average. They make a very good contribution to the school, often through the School Council, and contribute regularly to charities and the local community. Pupils' positive attitudes and competent basic skills prepare them well for secondary school and future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Most teaching is outstanding and enables pupils to learn very effectively. Teachers plan imaginative experiences which are lively and interesting. Lessons have meaningful

links between subjects which strengthens pupils' knowledge and skills. In most lessons pupils are thrilled to learn. In Year 4, for example, pupils were seen to jump with joy as they created a 'human number line' of positive and negative numbers. Teachers regularly test pupils' performance and implement 'catch-up' programmes to ensure that no one gets left behind. There are excellent lessons for gifted and talented pupils, including sporting, musical, artistic and dramatic opportunities. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are very well taught using carefully structured educational programmes and teaching assistants are very well directed to support individuals and groups. Teachers have identified that pupils should review their work more carefully so that they understand how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding and innovative. There is an intensive programme to teach phonics, and drama provides excellent opportunities for learning in speech and communication. The curriculum is very well-planned to link subjects through specific themes. There is a very good emphasis on local history and the creative arts. An extensive range of visits and specialist visitors promote pupils' social and academic development very effectively. Pupils enjoyed the visit of a local poet, for example. Sporting activities take place regularly, enhanced by use of facilities in the new sports hall. Activities out of school and at lunchtimes add significantly to pupils' experiences and encourage them to become avid learners, such as in African drumming, basketball or recorder groups. All pupils can take part. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, those at a very early stage of learning English or the gifted and talented are given structured and imaginative support by teachers and teaching assistants. Sensory and mobility rooms support some pupils very well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The pastoral support, care and guidance of pupils is a strength of the school. Teachers know all children very well and plan effectively to meet their needs. They are working well to help pupils review their own work so that they have a better understanding of how to improve. Learners at risk are identified very early and effective arrangements are put in place to assist them. Vulnerable pupils are supported very well, for example there is a breakfast club. There are very good links with parents, carers and external agencies. Excellent provision is made for gifted and talented pupils. Clear and thorough systems are in place to ensure pupils settle happily or transfer smoothly to secondary schools. Arrangements for health and safety, first aid and risk assessment are very good. All statutory checks are completed appropriately. The building is bright, clean and maintained to a high standard.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher has clarity of vision and an outstanding ability to drive this school forward. Teachers, parents, governors, cleaners and site manager support his aims and appreciate that their contribution is vital to the development of the school. The headteacher makes excellent use of expertise within the school, community and nationally in his efforts to create a vibrant and exciting learning environment. Integral to the school's vision is the commitment to raise standards for all pupils, regardless of race, gender or need. The school has an excellent ability to measure its own effectiveness. In reading, for example, the progress of each pupil is monitored daily so that weaknesses are eradicated with 'catch up' programmes. All adults are vigilant in their efforts to ensure that they achieve the best value for each pupil. Development plans are sharply focused and very effective because of very good financial management. The school has an excellent capacity to improve further.

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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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 making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school. We were pleased that you invited us to join with you to celebrate 'Black History' and the festival of 'Eid.' Inspectors thought that your contributions in assemblies were excellent. We agree with you that your school is outstanding.

What we really liked about your school is:

- You are polite, well-behaved and have good manners
- You enjoy school, play together very well and care for everyone
- Lessons are exciting and you work very hard
- All grown-ups work hard to make sure that school is an exciting place to be.

To make your school even better we have asked your teachers to:

- Encourage some more able children to do harder work in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2
- Make sure that you all know how to improve your work.

Best wishes for the future

Bernice Magson

Lead inspector