



Sir John Heron Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 132789
Local Authority Newham
Inspection number 294025
Inspection dates 6–7 March 2007
Reporting inspector Martin Beale

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	School Road
School category	Community		Manor Park
Age range of pupils	3–11		London E12 5PY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8514 9860
Number on roll (school)	475	Fax number	020 8514 9862
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Dr Eve Gregory
		Headteacher	Mrs Rani Karim
Date of previous school inspection	9 September 2002		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 6–7 March 2007	Inspection number 294025
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Sir John Heron is a large primary school with a part-time Nursery. It opened in September 2001 and the current Year 6 classes are made up from pupils who either joined in Year 3 or are new to the country. It is situated in an area where many families experience considerable social and economic disadvantages. The well below average attainment on entry is further affected by high pupil turnover. The majority of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and over three-quarters are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of the pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is similar to the national average. The school is funded for 16 pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) within mainstream classes.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that deals well with its many challenges. Parents very much support all that it does for their children. The school has come a long way since its opening and is a well-established part of the community. The school has an accurate view of its strengths and the action needed to build on its progress. Resources are used well to provide good value for money. For example, the investment in high levels of support staff contributes very considerably to learning. The school's successes indicate that it is well-placed to take the next steps in its development. One key to this success is good leadership and management and the clear vision of the headteacher. She has high aspirations for the school and all pupils. Staff and governors share her vision and pull together well as a team.

The youngest children make a good start in the Foundation Stage. Their learning and language needs are carefully identified and developed through the rich curriculum and good teaching. They make good progress and, though a below average number reach the expected goals by the end of Reception, this number is increasing. Teachers across the school deal well with the very wide range of attainment, levels of English language and previous schooling of pupils in their classes. Effective teaching and learning are the basis for the pupils' good achievement. Pupils progress well, even if at the school for only a short time. Standards are broadly average by Year 6, but vary widely with the different characteristics of each year group.

The recent action to improve literacy by broadening the range of writing styles expected of pupils and focusing better on how to apply basic skills is leading to improved achievement. Numeracy has received less attention until recently and similar improvements are not yet visible. Teaching here does not consistently challenge the most able and does not build skills effectively from year to year. In general, pupils with particular talents are not challenged consistently and there are limited programmes to enrich their experiences.

The language needs of new learners of English are carefully identified and effective support provided. They are rapidly able to take part in activities and become increasingly fluent so that many become some of the highest attaining pupils in the school. Pupils with learning difficulties also make good progress as their needs are rigorously identified and carefully met. Every effort is made to include pupils with PMLD in lessons and activities while recognising that this might not always be appropriate. Very effective links have been forged with a wide variety of agencies to help meet their very challenging needs. Their achievement is also good, even if their attainment is very low.

Pupils support each other happily in lessons and around the school and thoroughly enjoy school. Their personal development and well-being are good and are promoted through an effective curriculum that builds links between subjects. Parents and pupils greatly appreciate the good care, support and guidance that focuses sharply on ensuring the pupils' welfare and guiding their academic development. Pupils say they feel safe, well cared for and that there is always someone to turn to if they have a problem. They

have an excellent understanding of how to adopt healthy lifestyles and increasingly choose healthy food options. Pupils develop a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities. They contribute to the school through the various councils and play a considerable role in the community through their commitment to improving the environment. Their good teamwork and personal development allied to the good development of basic skills gives the pupils a sound basis for the next stage of their education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement in mathematics by ensuring lessons consistently challenge more able pupils and develop skills systematically as pupils move through the school.
- Enrich the learning and development of the most able pupils and those with particular talents more consistently by providing greater challenge in lessons, extending their thinking and broadening their experiences.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage from well below average attainment on entry, although a considerable number do not reach expected goals by the time they enter Year 1. Challenging targets are set for pupils and a wide range of strategies employed for these to be achieved. Pupils make good progress in the rest of the school. Year 2 test results improved from the school's opening up to 2005 when they were close to the national average, but fell to exceptionally low in 2006. This particular group had a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, high numbers at an early stage of learning English and many mid-phase entries. These test results still represented good progress for the pupils given their starting points. The 2006 Year 6 test results were the first set for the school and were from pupils who joined in or, in many cases, after the start of Year 3. Results were close to the national average in each subject, with more able pupils doing slightly better in science than English and mathematics. These results represented good progress for this group of pupils, particularly in science where pupils' learning benefits considerably from learning through investigations and research.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils have good attitudes, are motivated and engaged in their learning. They clearly enjoy school, and say how much they like research projects and educational visits. Their enthusiasm is reflected in improved and above average attendance. Pupils' good behaviour is helping to develop a positive atmosphere in school, although a small number do not always have the self-discipline to cope when not taught by their normal teacher. They are confident that their views are listened to and that they have a role in the school's development. They describe how playground arrangements have changed in response to younger pupils' concerns about behaviour and the important role they

now play as peer mediators or in 'Friendship Teams'. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils reflect on key issues that are relevant to their lives. They understand themselves and the world in which they live and explore different cultures and values. They learn about decision-making and how to make the right choices when faced with a problem.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Many lessons are taught well and learning is becoming more secure as the school and new teachers become established. Skilled questioning and the very effective use of 'talk partners' helps the pupils to understand new ideas and gives them confidence to participate in lessons. Learning is supported by effective planning matched well to the ability of most learners. However, more able pupils are not consistently challenged, particularly in mathematics. Lessons are brisk and teachers adopt interesting methods and activities to add to the pupils' enjoyment. Teaching assistants are knowledgeable and skilled and play a very significant part in the progress of the pupils they support. Pupils are mostly clear about the purpose of the work they are doing but are not always sure precisely what is expected of them and how to know if they are successful. The creative use of interactive whiteboards enhances learning greatly in some classes, but this resource is not used effectively throughout the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the academic needs of most pupils; however, it does not provide sufficient planned programmes to enrich and challenge the experiences and thinking of pupils who have particular talents. Innovative features such as 'P4C' help pupils to develop an understanding of their rights and responsibilities by encouraging questioning and justifying opinions. Research projects which link areas of the curriculum make learning investigative, active and more meaningful. The personal, social, health and citizenship programme raises the pupils' confidence and self-esteem and makes a significant contribution to developing environmental awareness. Carefully planned programmes meet the needs well of pupils with learning difficulties and those new to learning English. The creative arts play an important part in school life and community activities. For example, the Newham Arts Festival enriches the curriculum further and allows learning to be active and alive. The pupils' experiences are considerably enriched by the popular educational visits, the wide range of much valued extra-curricular activities and opportunities for singing, dancing and playing musical instruments.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

All pupils are treated individually and have very good relationships with the adults who teach and support them. The school fulfils requirements for safeguarding children and has robust child protection procedures. Health and safety arrangements are well established and result in pupils feeling safe. Medical and first aid procedures are thorough, particularly for pupils with PMLD. A strength is the way in which children new to the school are welcomed and settle in quickly. A Year 6 pupil who had joined the school three years ago with no English commented that, 'on the first day you feel very new but on the second day you feel you've always been here'. The progress of pupils is tracked closely and pupils are becoming aware of how they are getting on through the setting of targets. Marking is evident in many books but the guidance does not consistently help pupils to see what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Much of the school's success stems from the perceptive and committed leadership of the headteacher. She is ably supported by two acting assistant headteachers in a restructured leadership team, whilst waiting for a new deputy to take up post. Staff morale is high. Teachers feel well supported, strongly motivated and part of a successful team. The school development plan effectively drives the vision to bring about necessary improvements. Teaching and learning are kept rigorously under review and action is taken to improve the performance of all staff. The roles of newly appointed subject leaders are in the early stages of development and are supported by guidance from more experienced leaders and local authority advisors. Governors fulfil their roles well. They have a good overview of the school's performance and challenge the senior staff to do even better.

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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?	2
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	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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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.

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	2
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	2
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

I am writing to thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school. You were all very kind, helpful and showed how proud you are of your school. We enjoyed talking with you and your teachers and watching you learn. There are many aspects of your school that we liked. You, your parents and teachers are right in thinking that you go to a good school with good leadership from the headteacher and senior staff.

You make good progress during your time at Sir John Heron, even if you are only at the school for a short time. You thoroughly enjoy school, attend regularly, work hard and behave sensibly. You settle in well when you join at whatever stage. The care and support you receive is good, particularly when you find learning difficult or are new to learning English. You make sensible choices to show that you very clearly understand the importance of diet and exercise for a healthy lifestyle. You take your responsibilities seriously and make a considerable contribution to the life of the school.

Your teachers and governors are trying hard to make the school even better. There are two areas where we judge that improvements could be made. We feel that many of you should be achieving higher standards in mathematics. Those of you capable of high standards need to be challenged more consistently in lessons and through other planned activities. I feel sure you and your teachers will work hard to make this all happen.

We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin BealeLead inspector