

Conway Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132800
Local Authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	294028
Inspection dates	18–19 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Lynn Bappa

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	441
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Stephen Piper
Headteacher	Miss Hilary Flaherty
Date of previous school inspection	15 April 2002
School address	Galloson Road London SE18 1QY
Telephone number	020 8854 0897
Fax number	020 8331 0003

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	18–19 July 2007
Inspection number	294028

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Conway Primary is a larger than average primary school serving an area of high socio-economic deprivation. It is part of an Excellence in Cities cluster. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average. Over three-quarters of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Over half the pupils speak English as an additional language. These figures are much higher than average. The main languages spoken, other than English, are Panjabi, Urdu and Nepalese. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is higher than average. Mobility rates are very high, with many pupils joining or leaving the school during the school year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Conway Primary is a satisfactory school. It has some good features. It is a happy and harmonious place. Pupils enjoy lessons and other activities, behave well and make good progress in their personal and social skills. By the time they leave the school, they have become well-rounded individuals. There is a strong commitment towards making every child feel valued and fully included in every aspect of school life. These aspects are praised by parents, one of whom commented 'I feel that Conway has a wonderful family feeling and is truly concerned about the development of its pupils'.

Although standards are well below average overall, achievement is satisfactory. Children join the Nursery with very modest skills, particularly in communication, language and literature. They make a sound start to their education. Standards by the end of Year 2 are well below average. Standards by the end of Year 6 remain well below average overall, except in mathematics where attainment is in line with national expectations and pupils achieve well. The school is aware that more remains to be done to raise standards in English and science.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some good features. Recent improvements to teaching have accelerated progress in some lessons, particularly in mathematics, but have not had time to have an impact on national test results in English and science. The curriculum is satisfactory with good provision for enrichment and extra-curricular activities. Creative approaches to planning subjects other than literacy and numeracy are being developed, although this work is at an early stage and more remains to be done to ensure that pupils benefit from a rich and innovative curriculum.

The headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher, senior leaders and other staff and governors. There is a real sense of determination to do better. The recent and successful drive to raise standards in mathematics provides a clear indication of the school's satisfactory capacity to improve. It has put into place a series of intervention programmes and initiatives designed to raise standards. Senior leaders now need to draw breath and evaluate the impact of their work on pupils' achievement. Self-evaluation and strategic planning are satisfactory and the school has correctly identified priorities for improvement. However, there is insufficient rigour in using assessment data to track pupils' progress and ensure that all groups of pupils achieve as well as they can.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and learning so that it reflects the school's best practice.
- Evaluate the impact of recent interventions and initiatives on pupils' achievement.
- Make more rigorous use of assessment information in order to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can.
- Plan a richer curriculum with an increased focus on subjects other than English and mathematics.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

When children enter the Nursery class their standards are much lower than those seen in most schools. Many speak little English or have restricted experiences and skills that represent significant disadvantages. They make satisfactory progress in relation to their low starting points. By the end of Year 2, standards are well below average overall, although pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards in English and science by the end of Year 6 are well below average. Pupils achieve well in mathematics and standards are in line with those expected nationally. The teaching is stronger in mathematics so that an increasing proportion of pupils are reaching or exceeding the standards expected for their age. There are some pockets of under-achievement in science although the school has begun to tackle this. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) and art is an area of strength across the school. Higher-attaining pupils make satisfactory progress during their time in the school. Support provided for pupils with learning difficulties, and those for whom English is an additional language, enables them to gain the basic skills they need to help them make satisfactory progress in their learning. Vulnerable pupils, including those who arrive during the school year, also make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Children learn to co-operate with each other in the Foundation Stage and develop positive attitudes to their learning which are subsequently maintained across the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is fostered through a well planned programme of assemblies, visits and other events. The school has worked hard with parents to ensure that their children come to school regularly and on time and, as a result, attendance has improved, although it is still below average. Bullying is rare, dealt with well, and exclusions are low. There is good racial harmony in this diverse community. Pupils say that the school looks after them well and they know who to go to if they are worried. The school council is active and its views are valued. Pupils participate well in sport and music and make a good contribution to the wider community. They have a good understanding of healthy eating and the importance of exercise. The pupils' satisfactory progress in basic skills, combined with their well-developed social skills, prepare them soundly for the next stage in their education. As one Year 6 pupil said, 'When I came to this school in Year 3, I saw only faces I didn't know. Now I am really sorry to go'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, because, although there are strengths in teaching, practice is inconsistent. In the best lessons, often in mathematics, there is a good emphasis on developing basic skills in exciting and practical ways that motivate pupils and enable them to achieve well. Teachers are good at establishing positive relationships, managing behaviour and motivating pupils to do their best. They use a good range of resources, including interactive white boards, to motivate and engage pupils. In other lessons, expectations of what pupils can achieve are not sufficiently high, with fewer opportunities for pupils to learn independently.

Marking is usually up-to-date but does not always help pupils to understand what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils are set targets for their learning in some subjects but they do not always know what they are and how they can help their learning. In the Foundation Stage, pupils have good opportunities to be actively involved in their learning although there are missed opportunities to reinforce phonics skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory in both the Foundation Stage and in the main school. In Years 1 to 6, the main focus has been on literacy and numeracy but there is too strong an emphasis on these in the timetable. Teachers are beginning to make some good links between English and mathematics and other subjects, such as art and history, but these are generally under-developed. There is a good programme for personal, social and health education. The provision for gifted and talented pupils is enhanced through successful innovations such as philosophy lessons in Years 4 and 5 and through a good variety of enrichment activities. Classroom resources in some areas, such as the Foundation Stage and the library, are looking a bit 'tired'.

The school provides a good range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities. These include opportunities to learn to play Asian musical instruments and residential visits for older pupils. Regular trips provide first-hand learning experiences and promote pupils' social development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good overall. The school makes good provision for pupils' well-being and works successfully to build good relationships with parents. Every pupil is known and treated as an individual. The school has good arrangements for safeguarding pupils. The school works well with outside agencies. The learning mentors and the 'Place2Be' provide good support for pupils who need extra help with their learning or behaviour. As one parent commented, 'The Place2Be is a great resource, both for sorting out problems and unhappiness the children might have with friends and also on a longer term basis'. Children settle quickly into Nursery because of the warm welcome they receive. Induction procedures for those pupils arriving during the school year are thoughtfully planned.

Academic guidance is satisfactory. Procedures for keeping track of pupils' progress have improved. The use of assessment data to identify and track patterns in the progress made by different groups of pupils is not robust enough, however.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher's leadership has steered the school effectively through a difficult period that included several staff changes and a deficit budget. The school takes good account of parental opinion and responds well to suggestions made by them. Governors are supportive and have a growing understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The headteacher and staff have tackled the issues raised in the previous inspection report satisfactorily. Provision for ICT has improved, for example. The role of subject leaders is developing. They do not all have a sufficiently clear picture of provision

in their area or of exactly what needs to be done to raise standards in their subject. The school runs smoothly and there are clear and well-understood daily routines.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

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?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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.

Annex A

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

10 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Conway Primary School, London, SE18 1QY

Thank you for making us so welcome and sharing with us your thoughts about your school. We particularly enjoyed talking to the school council members and those pupils who brought their work to show us. You obviously enjoy lessons and activities, and contribute much in making the school successful. We think that yours is a satisfactory school that is getting better. Your behaviour, positive attitudes to work and play and the ways in which you care for one another are good. The headteacher and all the staff have obviously worked hard to improve the school. They certainly believe that all of you can achieve well, so it's up to you to prove them right and help the school move from being satisfactory to good in all parts of its work.

We have asked your teachers to make a few improvements to make the school better. We think your teachers have worked hard to make lessons better so that you learn more quickly. This has already happened in mathematics where you make good progress. We have asked them to carry on doing this so that you achieve well in all subjects, particularly in English and science. Your teachers have introduced lots of new ideas to help you learn better. We think they need to spend time now on looking carefully at whether these new ideas have worked. You may have some good ideas to help your teachers with this. The third thing we have asked them to do is to improve the way in which they check on your progress to make sure all of you do as well as you possibly can. Finally, we have asked your teachers to make sure that you do lots more interesting work in all subjects.

I hope that you continue to enjoy your time at school and wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Lynn Bappa