

Kensington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102727
Local Authority	Newham
Inspection number	308103
Inspection dates	3–4 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Robert Lovett HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	409
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	83
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ghouse Fazaluddin
Headteacher	Ms Harinder Pardesi
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2003
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Kensington Avenue Manor Park London E12 6NN
Telephone number	020 8470 2339
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school situated in a culturally diverse part of Newham. There are about 24 different home languages spoken by pupils and on admission many are in the early stages of learning English. A large majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, the largest being those of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision includes a Nursery where children attend on a part-time basis. The EYFS consists of the Nursery and two Reception classes.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

On arriving in the school visitors receive a warm welcome from staff and pupils alike. One is struck by the wonderful art and the high quality of displays in corridors and classrooms. Both contribute to the sense that this is a well ordered and cared for school, where everyone takes pride in their community. Most parents express positive views about the school and the progress it has made. However, a few would like better communications and are unclear about how their views are taken into account. Some correctly believe that more could be done for the most able pupils. Pupils are polite, helpful and friendly and say they feel safe and enjoy their lessons. As one said, 'I like learning and teachers do everything they can to make it enjoyable'. They move around the many stairs and corridors of the large Victorian building calmly and sensibly. They enjoy the opportunity to contribute to the life of the school and willingly assume responsibilities such as helping out in the dining hall.

Standards are average and during their time in the school pupils make satisfactory progress. Because provision is improving children in the EYFS are making good progress. The school anticipates this will begin to raise standards throughout the school but realises the quality of teaching needs to be consistently good if standards are to rise further. In the past, standards in English have been too low but as a result of the school's focus on improving writing skills standards have risen significantly. Marking is good at telling pupils where they are doing well and in celebrating success. It is less consistent in telling pupils what they need to do to improve further.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and the school's monitoring suggests the proportion which is good is increasing. Relationships are good and pupils are enthusiastic learners who are eager to be involved in lessons and to answer questions. Pupils particularly enjoy the opportunity to learn through practical experience and to enhance their communication skills through working with partners and through discussion. However, too few lessons exploit practical and collaborative learning opportunities sufficiently. If standards are to rise further, and the community's high ambitions realised the quality of teaching will need to be consistently good.

One of the most significant improvements since the last inspection is the much greater stability of staffing. This has enabled the headteacher to review and revise the management structure. While those who are new in post are very enthusiastic it is too early to judge the impact these new leaders and managers might have. The school has a number of improvement plans in place but these are not always clear enough about how the impact of the school's work is to be measured, nor are they explicit enough about raising standards. This makes it difficult for the school to monitor its progress and evaluate which actions are most effective. It also makes it difficult for the school to be held to account. While both the school's leadership and the governing body have the school's best interests at heart, communication between them is not as good as it should be and this has hindered the school's progress. For example, the school development plan and its statutory targets for Year 6 in 2010 have yet to be approved by the governors.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children are given a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes. For most, English is not their first language and their skills in communication, language and literacy are well below those expected for their age. By the time they enter Year 1, the majority of children reach levels comparable with other children of their age. This is due to good teaching which develops speaking and listening skills well so that children build their vocabulary and gain confidence in communicating. They learn to link letters to sounds which aids their reading and writing development. In personal and social development their progress is even better. By the end of the EYFS, most children achieve the expected goals. This is because adults build children's self-esteem, praise their efforts and expect good behaviour. They help children to understand the need for getting on with each other and create clear systems and routines for children to follow. Children feel safe and secure, they enjoy the activities on offer and mix well together. They take on responsibility, help with tidying up and begin to develop an understanding of the world around them. The EYFS manager ensures that the good practice seen in the Nursery extends to the Reception classes. There are good arrangements for children starting school which enable them to settle quickly, and positive links with parents. The school has rightly identified the need to improve links with Year 1 to ensure children settle quickly and to expand the outside resources.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure the school development plan, subject action plans and the school's self-evaluation are more specific in linking actions to expected improvements in standards.
- Improve communications across the school community.
- Improve pupil progress through raising the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good.

A small proportion of the 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

Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 so that by the time they leave Year 2 standards are average. In the 2007 national assessments, when compared with other schools, pupils did best in writing and least well in mathematics. Standards in writing are higher because teachers are linking letters and sounds effectively and are beginning to develop pupil's early writing skills. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 there is a particular focus on the communication skills of those pupils in the early stages of learning English and as a result they make good progress. Standards in Key Stage 2 are average with fluctuations between year groups reflecting the make up of the classes. Most pupils make satisfactory progress overall and make most progress in science. Boys and girls achieve equally well.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because they receive appropriate support. While pupils who speak a first language other than English make rapid progress when they first join the school, they make satisfactory progress overall.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy learning. Corridors and classrooms are bright and well cared for and reflect pupils' pride in their school. Pupils are considerate towards each other at break and lunchtime and walk sensibly to assembly and lessons. Behaviour is good because there are high expectations which are shared by pupils and teachers. Pupils say that any incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with quickly and effectively. The school is rigorous in monitoring attendance. It celebrates and rewards good attendance and timekeeping in schools assemblies. Preparation for future economic well-being is satisfactory, and there are regular opportunities to use ICT across the curriculum. Pupil's skills in working collaboratively in pairs and in groups are less well developed. Pupils are well informed about healthy lifestyles and the traffic light system at lunchtime means that they know which lunches are the healthiest. Older pupils have a good understanding of the dangers of smoking and alcohol. Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a particularly good understanding of each other's beliefs and traditions. The Student Council makes a positive contribution to the school community and pupils respond well when they are given responsibility to act as lunchtime or garden monitors. The school makes a positive contribution to the local community for example through language support work for parents, joint working with local primary and secondary schools and visits to a range local places of worship.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. All teaching seen was at least satisfactory and about half was good. Pupils in all classes are eager to contribute to lessons and enjoy learning hugely. They listen to adults and each other with care and respect. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work, particularly when the pace of teaching is brisk. While the use of assessment information is improving, work is not always sufficiently well matched to what pupils, particularly the more able, can do. Although the development of speaking and listening skills is a school priority, in some lessons insufficient use is made of opportunities for pupils to discuss their work. Some marking of pupils' work is very good and tells pupils how well they are doing and how to improve their work further, but this is not consistent across the school. As a result, while almost all children know what their targets are many do not know what they have to do to achieve them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Curriculum planning ensures satisfactory coverage of numeracy, literacy and science although there are insufficient opportunities for practical and problem solving activities in science and mathematics. The development of pupils' artistic talents has a positive impact on their enjoyment and self-esteem as shown by the high quality work on display. Good links are made between art and other subjects. For example, during the inspection, Year 5 pupils represented the work of Patrick Caulfield with ICT software. This enabled them to explore the artist's work and also evaluate the effectiveness of computer programs. A good start has been made in creating links across subjects which the school is keen to develop further. Personal, social and health education helps pupils to understand and value their relationships with others. The cultural diversity of

the school and wider community is recognised and celebrated. Pupils' skills and interests are extended by a good range of after school clubs and visits. While those with specific needs and particular talents are given additional support the impact of additional provision for these pupils is not effectively evaluated.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides a supportive environment for pupils who say that staff will help them if they are worried or upset. Pupils also say that the school has taken effective action to reduce bullying. They know that they can use the bully box to report any concerns. Their well-being is also supported through an effective programme of personal, social and health education in which they learn to value and celebrate diversity. Effective support is in place for the large number of pupils for whom English is an additional language and for those who arrive at school other than at the normal time of admission. A manager has recently been appointed to monitor and develop this provision. Academic guidance is inconsistent. The majority of pupils know their targets but many are unsure what they need to do to meet them. The governing body has confirmed that the overdue annual review of its Child Protection Policy will be completed as a matter of urgency. The school conforms to statutory requirements in respect of safe recruitment procedures.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Many of those responsible for leading areas of provision such as Ethnic Minority Achievement and mathematics, are new in post. While they have high aspirations it is too early to see the impact of their work on raising standards. The senior leadership team provide good day-to-day management. There has been steady progress since the school was last inspected. Standards have risen, particularly in English and in the EYFS, attendance has improved and staffing is much more stable. However, strategic management is not as strong as it could be and some staff say that during the current transition to a new structure their roles and lines of accountability are not clear enough. The use of monitoring and tracking data is underdeveloped so that the impact of what the school does in respect of some groups of pupils is unclear. However, it tracks the progress of individuals well. The school achieved its challenging targets in English in 2008 but not at the higher Level 5 in mathematics or science.

Communication between the school and the governing body is not as good as it should be. This has resulted in some of the governing body's statutory responsibilities, including the regular review and implementation of policies not being fully met. While most parents are very supportive and have considerable confidence in the school a few say that communication between home and school could be improved.

The development plan for 2008-2011 has yet to be agreed by the Governing Body. The school consulted widely on its content and key actions in the plan are appropriate. However, too few of the planned actions have measurable targets explicitly linked to raising standards. Those that have raising standards as a focus are too general and lack measurable targets so that it is difficult to hold the school fully to account. Some subject action plans also lack sufficiently clear and measurable success criteria linked to pupil progress.

The school is an integral part of the community and makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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 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?	3

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

17 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kensington Primary School, London, E12 6NN

Thank you for making my colleagues and I so welcome during our visit to your school. You were very helpful in answering our questions and keen to tell us the things you like best. What we heard helped us get to know the school much better.

You go to a satisfactory school, which means it is doing as well as most similar schools. We also think the school has some real strengths and does some things very well. Here are some of the things your school does well.

- You told us that you enjoy school very much and that behaviour is good. We could clearly see this in lessons, as you move around the school and on the playground.
- Because you enjoy learning you have positive attitudes to your lessons and you are eager to learn new things.
- You said the school was a place where you felt safe and valued as an individual. This is an aspect of the school which is strong. We agree the school is very good at encouraging friendship, responsibility and tolerance.
- Art is a particular strength, with some very high quality work on display.
- The youngest children settle well and make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes.

We have also identified some ways the school can improve.

- We have asked the school to be clearer about how well it expects to do so that the governors and everyone else can better judge the school's progress.
- So that they can help you improve, everyone connected with the school is eager to know what's going on. We have asked the school and governors to keep in close touch with each other and with your parents and carers so that everyone can contribute to the school's improvement.
- Teaching is satisfactory, which means that your teachers are doing the sort of things we would expect to see. However, we all want to see you doing better so we are asking the school to make sure that all teaching is at least good. You can play your part by listening carefully, working hard and telling your teacher if you find your work too easy (or too difficult!) and letting them know if you finish quickly.

I hope you have a lovely Christmas holiday.

Yours faithfully

Robert Lovett

Her Majesty's Inspector