

# Copenhagen Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100401
<b>Local Authority</b>	Islington
<b>Inspection number</b>	323270
<b>Inspection dates</b>	30 June –1 July 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alison Storey 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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	231
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Philip Stevens
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Lindsey Jackson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 May 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Treaty Street London N1 0WF
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7837 5597
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7837 4894

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	30 June –1 July 2009
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

Copenhagen is an average-sized school serving an inner-city area close to King's Cross. Most pupils are from minority ethnic groups. About one quarter have Bangladeshi heritage and around one in five pupils are from a Black African background. The majority of pupils speak English as an additional language. There are 19 languages spoken in the school, the main ones being Bengali, Somali and Albanian. More than half the children are at a very early stage of learning English when they enter the Early Years Foundation Stage. Nearly two thirds of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, about four times the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than that found nationally; most commonly, these pupils have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties; specific learning needs; or speech, language and communication difficulties. However, the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.

Early Years Foundation Stage provision is made through the school's Nursery, which children attend on a full-time basis, and the Reception class. The school manages before- and after-school care for its own pupils, and those from neighbouring schools, and a range of after-school clubs for pupils from Year 1 upwards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Copenhagen is a good school with high ambitions for its pupils and itself. A real sense of purpose starts with the headteacher and governors, based on a clear philosophy about what constitutes high-quality education and a commitment to meeting the needs of the local community. All aspects of pupils' development are highly valued and there is a determination to make learning enjoyable and meaningful and to provide the best for the pupils and their families, offering them opportunities they may not otherwise have.

This vision is widely understood and shared by all staff. All pupils are well cared for and the vast majority of parents are very appreciative of the school's work. Staff work effectively within the school, and with others, to meet pupils' needs, particularly where they require additional support. As a consequence, pupils' personal development and well-being are good and in some aspects, outstanding. They have extremely positive attitudes to school and an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles, which, to their delight, has recently been recognised by the Healthy School Award. Behaviour is good. Pupils show respect for others and work and play together harmoniously. The older pupils take great pride in looking after the younger pupils at lunchtime and in helping them as part of the 'Little People' club.

The curriculum and opportunities for learning are seen as going well beyond individual subjects or the confines of the four walls of a classroom. A themed approach builds on pupils' knowledge and experience and creates meaningful links between subjects. The school capitalises on the wealth of experiences on offer by virtue of being on the doorstep of many of London's attractions. It is no wonder that pupils' enjoyment of school is outstanding!

Achievement is good. A combination of the exciting curriculum and predominantly good teaching helps pupils to succeed and stands them in good stead for the future. Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those expected for their age and a majority are at an early stage of learning English. They make good progress in their early years at the school, but still move to Year 1 with below-average skills. Data for the current Reception class indicate standards are improving, although children's mathematical skills remain notably lower. Pupils continue to make good progress during the rest of their time in school, so that, by the time they leave at age 11, standards are broadly average. However, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level for their age is lower in mathematics than in English and science. The proportions of pupils reaching the higher levels in all three subjects are lower than those found nationally because pupils are not always challenged enough in lessons.

A strong senior team has been built, where the roles are clearly defined and work is shared, particularly with regard to the provision of extended services. New teams have been created to lead different aspects of the school's work. They are increasingly involving the staff with responsibilities for leading subjects or other areas of work in debate as to what is going well and how improvements can be made. However, because many leaders are relatively new in their positions, some of them still need support to develop their roles fully, particularly in monitoring and evaluation. Nevertheless, the school's successes so far, its honest appraisal of its current position and its focused plans for the future mean that it is well placed to continue its journey from good to great.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The opportunities children and their parents have to visit the school before they start, and the linking of each child to a member of staff as their 'special person', helps everyone to get to know each other and to form good relationships. Children are well cared for. They learn how to keep themselves safe and healthy, as demonstrated by the children choosing to put a hat on to protect themselves during the heat wave at the time of the inspection! In turn, children take responsibility for jobs within the classroom and help each other, for example by giving out snacks.

The classrooms are welcoming, interesting places to be and routines are well established. Provision for children's learning and personal development is good. Senior leaders are clear on what constitutes good Early Years practice and what still needs to develop, particularly in the Nursery, as children are being admitted at a younger age. Activities are, rightly, less teacher-led or directed than they were, with many more opportunities for children to choose from a selection of activities and to develop their skills to work either independently or with other children. Children experience a range of activities both indoors and outside in all the areas of learning and make good use of limited outdoor space. In the Reception class, the daily teaching of phonics, and focused early reading and mathematical activities, are helping to develop the levels of basic skills children have when they move to Year 1. However, the improvements seen this year have not been as strong in mathematical development, and calculating in particular, as in language and literacy.

Regular observations give staff a clear picture of what the children can do, which they use to plan the next steps in learning. Parents are encouraged to contribute to these assessments by sharing with staff what their child does at home. New systems are helping to keep track of each child's development over time and to identify those who need additional support as well as those who have the potential to be higher attainers.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in mathematics throughout the school.
- Ensure that the pupils capable of reaching the higher levels are suitably challenged.
- Develop the roles of staff leading subjects or other areas of work, particularly in monitoring and evaluation.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level for their age is broadly in line with that found nationally, although it tends to be lower in mathematics than in English at the ages of seven and 11. While the higher standards in English can be attributed to a greater amount of teaching time allocated to developing literacy skills, the school's own recent monitoring of mathematics has also identified a need to review the teaching of mental mathematics and problem solving.

Nevertheless, most pupils make good progress over their time at the school, because teaching and learning are good overall, there is regular tracking of how well each pupil is doing and a good range of additional support is available for pupils who have emotional and behaviour needs or learning difficulties, and those learning English as an additional language. There are

variations but, with changes to the curriculum and improvements to reviewing pupils' progress, these are being evened out. Boys are making better progress than they were because the curriculum engages them in learning, although their standards remain lower than girls' because there is still ground to make up. While recent data indicate that those capable of reaching the higher levels are making the same progress as other pupils, their needs are not always fully met in lessons, which is why the numbers reaching the higher levels are below average. The school is aware of this. All teachers are currently involved in a training course focused on meeting the needs of higher-attaining bilingual pupils and plans are already in place to develop teaching and learning.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. They respect each other's faiths and develop a good knowledge of different cultures, including those represented in the school. They are, rightly, proud of all they do in the local community and the help they can give to those in the wider community who are less fortunate than they are through their charity work. School council members take their responsibilities seriously and enjoy having an influential voice in bringing about change in the school.

Pupils are keen to emphasise that they both feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe. Attendance is improving but remains just below average because a small but notable minority of families take extended trips abroad or do not bring their children to school regularly. Importantly, though, attendance is better among the older pupils, who are responsible for getting themselves to school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are frequently good because teachers develop good relationships with their pupils and plan lessons to capture their interest, with opportunities for them to be actively involved in tasks, share ideas and tackle problems with their classmates. Lessons focus on what the pupils should be learning and teachers share this with the pupils so that they understand the purpose of what they are doing. There is a brisk pace to lessons and a good balance between the teachers talking and their using questioning to draw out pupils' ideas. Support staff are used effectively to support those who need additional help in lessons, while pupils appreciate the extra help they get through homework club or booster classes.

Where learning is sometimes not as good, it is often because, although activities are differentiated, there is insufficient challenge throughout the lesson for the higher-attaining pupils.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The development of the school's integrated curriculum successfully meets its aims to make learning meaningful and memorable, so that it engages all learners and prepares them with the skills they need for the future. Each topic usefully starts with what the pupils already know

and is enriched by use of the local area as a resource and visits within London and beyond. For example, Year 6 work on 'Moving On' started with their imminent move to secondary school and brought in a range of subjects by considering how to plan a route around London, rites of passage, changes to their bodies and how artists depict different stages of life.

The programme for pupils' personal, social and health education makes a good contribution to their personal development and safety. Year 5 pupils really appreciate the opportunity they have to learn first aid and other skills, while the daily fitness sessions, and indeed learning how the first Greek Olympians trained, help to develop the pupils' keen awareness of the need for exercise. Wednesday afternoon activities for older pupils, and the range of out-of-school activities on offer as part of the school's extended services, give pupils the chance to pursue their interests and develop their skills in a variety of areas.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Staff provide high levels of care, guidance and support for their pupils. Procedures are securely in place to ensure pupils work and play in safe surroundings, and parents comment positively on the security of the school site. Before- and after-school care and learning programmes for parents provide much valued support for families. The school has well-established systems for caring for and supporting pupils, including excellent links with a range of outside agencies and specialist professionals, from whose expertise individual pupils benefit. It works hard to promote good attendance and has had some success in reducing the number of poor attenders.

Marking is regular and usually provides good advice to pupils about how they can improve, although not all staff routinely check to ensure pupils have responded. Targets help pupils understand the next steps in their learning, but are not as effective as they could be because they are not routinely referred to in lessons.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The commitment to ensuring all pupils achieve as well as they can manifests itself in the regular monitoring of teaching and learning, discussions about pupils' progress and the setting of targets to ensure that there are high expectations of what pupils can achieve.

The school works hard to engage all groups in the life of the school and involve parents in their children's learning, for example a Somali-speaking project worker in the Early Years Foundation Stage helps parents contribute to the assessments of their children. A great deal is done to value pupils' backgrounds and to develop their appreciation of their place within the school and in the local and wider communities, although the school recognises that more could be done to develop their understanding of life in Great Britain outside London. A check is kept on whether provision for pupils and their parents is meeting needs, for example by monitoring attendance at parents' evenings or school events and by using more formal evaluations of its extended services.

The governing body is strong, knowledgeable about the school and instrumental in its strategic planning. It has every confidence in the headteacher but, equally, values external advice to verify its views. A strong team has been built at senior level and the new deputy headteacher brings useful expertise to support the headteacher in further developing teaching and learning.

The school knows itself well and identifies the right priorities for development but, as part of its quest for continuing improvement, is considering how it can refine its monitoring systems to ensure it focuses on gathering the information it needs to evaluate the impact of its work rigorously. The headteacher acknowledges that this needs to include more formal evaluation of the impact of its policies and support for leaders at other levels to develop their roles so that they have a clear picture of the quality of provision in their area and the impact it is having on outcomes for pupils.

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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?	2
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### 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?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

14 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Copenhagen Primary School, London, N1 0WF

It was lovely to meet you when we came to visit your school. Thank you very much to all of you who spoke to us in lessons, around the school, in the playground and in the special meetings we had. It certainly helped us to find out more about the school.

We know that you really enjoy being at Copenhagen and you are right when you say it is a good school. The youngest children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes and, because lessons are interesting, with lots of learning outside the classrooms, and teaching is good, you all make good progress. Just as importantly, staff take good care of you, ensure you are safe and encourage your personal development. As a result, you behave well, play and work together harmoniously, take pride in helping others (including the younger pupils) and have an excellent understanding of how to keep yourselves healthy. The staff told us they are proud of you, and so they should be!

Of course, there are always things that can improve and, before we left, we talked to your headteacher and other adults about how to make your school even better. First, we asked them to make sure pupils of all ages do as well in mathematics as they do in English. Second, they need to make sure that those of you who are capable of doing even better are challenged enough. Third, we said that some of the lead teachers who are fairly new to their responsibilities need some more training to help them do their job really well.

I hope you will help by continuing to be as well behaved and enthusiastic about school as you were when we were there. If you are one of the pupils who do not attend as regularly as you should, please ask your parents to make sure you come to school more often so that you do not miss valuable learning!

With best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Alison Storey

Her Majesty's Inspector