

Lee Manor School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100693
Local Authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	323327
Inspection dates	11–12 February 2009
Reporting inspector	David Scott

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)	398
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Richard Frost
Headteacher	Ms Ali Carter-Moore
Date of previous school inspection	8 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Leahurst Road Lewisham London SE13 5LS
Telephone number	020 8852 0852
Fax number	020 8297 2898

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

At Lee Manor School, the proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is above that found nationally, and the proportion of pupils with behavioural, emotional and social learning difficulties is also above average. Just over half of pupils, a much higher proportion than that found nationally, come from ethnic minority backgrounds. Of these, a small proportion, just below average, have a home language other than English. The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage through Nursery and Reception classes. The school has achieved the Activemark and Healthy School awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Lee Manor is a good and improving school. This judgement reflects accurately the school's own honest evaluation of its work, as well as that of the overwhelming majority of parents. 'Lee Manor is a school with great potential', noted a parent, echoing the views of many. The headteacher's vision for the school is shared and supported by all staff, and builds on the quality of provision identified at the last inspection.

A particular strength of the school is the way that pupils, staff and parents pull together to reach their common goals. As a result, good personal development supports pupils' learning successfully. Pupils of all ages and across all groups make good overall progress and reach broadly average standards by the end of Key Stage 2. In 2008, the provisional test results for Year 6 confirm a steadily improving picture. Pupils with behavioural, emotional and social learning difficulties also make good progress, and reach standards in line with their peer group because of the high levels of individual attention they receive.

Pupils' attendance has improved and is now above national figures. This demonstrates their increasing enthusiasm for attending school. They have a good understanding of healthy eating, and all ages relish the fruit and vegetables at break times. Organised games at lunchtime and off-site visits enable pupils to participate well in physical activities. Many pupils make a difference to others within the school community, not least because of the active school council. Through events and fund-raising for local and overseas charities, pupils contribute to the wider community. They are prepared well for the next stage of their education through their appreciation of how to live in a diverse community and the good progress that they make in basic skills.

The spiritual, moral, cultural and social aspects of pupils' development are good. The very wide range of cultures and traditions within the school allows pupils to get to know and understand others within a secure environment. They feel very safe, both in lessons and around the well-kept site. The good curriculum with its themed events, such as science week and environment day, helps them to understand the use of technology in the world of work and its effect on ecosystems.

Since the last inspection, good leadership and management have very successfully developed classroom practice, so that teaching and learning are predominantly good. Well-considered training opportunities have helped staff to develop their expertise in improving pupils' writing, for example. However, the monitoring role of middle leaders is not as well developed as it should be, as some are relatively new to their responsibilities and have not had time to impact fully on pupils' achievement. Teaching and learning are good overall, but the quality of feedback to pupils, especially through marking, does not always signpost the next steps, or challenge the more able, particularly in mathematics. The modest, hard-working and quietly determined headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and senior leadership team, has brought about significant improvements and demonstrated the school's good capacity to improve. They have fostered a strong, caring team spirit where the whole community is valued and respected. There is a strong partnership with external support agencies, which has enabled the school to help successfully not only its pupils but also their families, promoting their sense of belonging within the local community. This has been strengthened still further by the school's well-designed and informative website.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage because the excellent relationships between staff and parents help children to settle quickly. They join the school with a range of skills that are below those expected for their age. The early years team effectively nurtures the children's social and emotional development. A stimulating curriculum, high-quality care, and a secure environment support them exceptionally well and contribute to their personal development. They learn to cooperate with each other well, developing good attitudes to their learning. Assessment is used well to identify the children's individual learning needs rapidly, irrespective of when children start the school. There is a good blend of adult-led activities and opportunities for children to choose for themselves. Teachers are careful to identify those with little knowledge of English who are able learners. As a result, all groups of children, including the most vulnerable, make good progress. This is due to the sharp focus given to the steady acquisition of essential skills for learning that many lack when they join the school. Children enjoy school, and this was evident in their excitement in making musical instruments and newspaper puppets. Provision for the outdoors curriculum is less developed in the Reception classes than in the Nursery, but the school recognises this as an area for improvement. Children make good progress, and by the time they leave Reception, they reach standards which are in line with those expected for their age.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the capacity of middle leaders to manage their areas of responsibility, through coaching and training.
- Ensure that all academic monitoring and marking matches the best, so that pupils know their targets and how to reach them.
- Raise standards by improving the quality of teaching and learning to that of the best, particularly in the level of challenge for more-able pupils, and especially in mathematics.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are broadly average and improving, and pupils achieve well. Fluctuations in standards arise because of the school's rapidly changing population. For many, their starting points in the Nursery and Reception class are below average. Pupils' communication skills are a particular weakness when they join the school. The 2008 provisional test results for Year 2 indicate an increase in standards in writing, and a more modest one in reading and mathematics; pupils reached broadly average standards overall.

Overall progress is good, as a result of good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. Progress is slower in mathematics than in English and science. The school recognises that to improve progress in mathematics, there should be a greater emphasis on helping pupils to understand and apply their knowledge of mathematics, particularly in real-life problem-solving situations.

Many pupils, particularly new arrivals to the country, lack fluency in English when they join the school, and this has depressed past test performances at Key Stage 1 in English, especially in writing. However, the leadership team has recognised this and has identified a number of ways forward to support pupils through providing stimulating practical activities, such as the use of drama on which to base writing. As a result, standards in writing are rising.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning; this is reflected in the harmonious and inclusive relationships that prevail at the school. Pupils say that they feel safe and are happy to be at school. They understand the clear guidelines for good behaviour and the consequences of inappropriate actions. Although occasionally the flow of learning is slowed by the behaviour of a few individual pupils, the vast majority work well together in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect.

Pupils appreciate the importance of staying healthy, and readily take part in sports and other physical activities, reflecting their commitment to fitness. They know how to choose healthy lunches and are aware of the benefits of a balanced diet. The school council provides pupils with an influential voice that has brought positive changes around the school. For example, new outdoor playground equipment has recently been provided. Pupils enjoy the buddy system at break times. In the wider community, pupils' contribution is good, through a range of fund-raising activities and charity events such as those supporting Macmillan Cancer Care and Comic Relief. Pupils' standards and progress in acquiring basic and social skills ensure that they are well prepared for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils are well motivated to learn because of the warmth and concern that teachers and support staff show for each of them. Classrooms are welcoming, and staff plan especially well to include opportunities for speaking and listening. This caters very effectively for those still developing their English language skills, who are well supported by teaching assistants. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and they know how to inspire confidence and enjoyment. Lessons are well structured, and teachers clarify what pupils are meant to learn from the outset. Relationships in classrooms between pupils and staff are characterised by mutual respect and good humour. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong, and they explain ideas clearly to pupils. This enables pupils, to an increasing extent, to reflect on their own progress. Despite these good features, however, teachers do not always challenge the most able successfully enough, especially in mathematics. Introductions to some lessons are over long, which leaves less time for pupils to work independently.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The well-planned curriculum allows all pupils to be fully included in learning activities. The expressive arts are a particularly strong feature of school life. Singing is often heard, and music played in lessons lifts pupils' spirits. All pupils from Year 3 and above have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. Pupils' understanding of environmental issues is developed successfully through the school's commitment to ecology, and particularly by its innovative use of an outside classroom consisting of a pond, a garden, and recreational areas cultivated by parents in partnership with the local community. Learning is further enriched by contributions from outside speakers and visits to places of interest, such as farms, museums and galleries. A real strength of the curriculum is the linking of such trips to topics of study. For example, a

visit to a local Roman villa enlivened the study of life in Roman times in pupils' history project. A range of out-of-hours sports, led by coaches from a local Sports Academy, contributes very well to pupils' positive attitudes to keeping fit and healthy. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology (ICT) resources, although the interactive nature of whiteboards is not yet fully exploited. Pupils relish the opportunity to study French from Reception onwards, and enjoy residential trips to France.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school cares for its pupils well, and they in turn support and care for one another. As one parent commented, echoing the view of many, 'Lee Manor has a wonderfully supportive and inclusive feel.' Pupils feel safe at school and report that there is always someone they can turn to if they have a problem. The well-understood routines of school life create an orderly and safe community. The school has robust systems for safeguarding and risk assessment. The school has good systems for working with vulnerable pupils and those with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties.

Although systems to support pupils' personal development are well established, the academic guidance that pupils receive is less effective. Marking is regular and generally helpful, but does not always signpost pupils' next steps in learning. Some pupils are vague about their own targets and are insufficiently involved in assessing their own and one another's work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's clear vision for taking the school forward is shared wholeheartedly by all staff. Governance is good. Governors visit regularly, challenge and support the school well, and are highly committed to helping the school develop and improve. The school has an accurate view of its strengths and areas for development, for example improving performance in literacy, mathematics and marking. Staff are very appreciative of the genuine opportunities afforded them in the good professional development activities. Members of the leadership team form a cohesive group who complement and support each other and the school well.

A small minority of parents expressed concern regarding poor behaviour. Inspectors found the overwhelming majority of pupils to be polite and well behaved at all times.

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
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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?	2
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 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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	2
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	3

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 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**

27 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lee Manor School, London, SE13 5LS

Thank you very much for making us welcome and for being so friendly when we visited your school recently. We did enjoy our visit. We were very pleased to hear from you how much you enjoy school and to see how well you work in lessons.

You go to a good school that not only helps you to learn well, particularly in English, but also looks after you well and gives you a really good start. We were very impressed by the way you work well together. There are many things that are good about your school, but we would like to single out your teachers and support staff who encourage you both in lessons and in the interesting clubs. You say grown-ups are always willing to listen if you have a problem. You enjoy fresh fruit and vegetables and know how to choose healthy, appetising meals. The school is run well by your hard-working headteacher and staff. They try hard to make sure that you have the best possible education.

Before we left, we talked to your teachers about how the school could do even better. They agree with us that staff need to do some more work with you to help you make better progress in mathematics so that standards will be as high as they are in English. We also suggested that your teachers need to ensure that they help and challenge everyone in their class to achieve the very best for themselves, by giving clear advice on how to improve your work. You should be able to manage this quite well because your standards are already beginning to rise.

We would like to wish you and your school every success for the future, and we hope that you continue to attend well, work hard and cooperate fully with your teachers.

Yours faithfully

David Scott

Lead Inspector