

Lyndhurst School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100802
Local Authority	Southwark
Inspection number	307489
Inspection date	11 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Michael Pye

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	330
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Frankie Henry
Headteacher	Mr Nicholas Hammill
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2004
School address	Denmark House Grove Lane Camberwell London SE5 8SN
Telephone number	020 7703 3046
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school, and investigated:

- the standards and achievement of pupils in mathematics and reading, particularly those of boys, and pupils of Black heritage
- how well pupils behave
- how well teachers plan work for pupils and whether pupils know how to improve their work.

The inspector gathered evidence from an analysis of information and data about pupils' achievement provided by the school, observations of parts of lessons, scrutiny of parents' questionnaires and other documents, and discussions with the headteacher, other managers, and pupils. The inspector did not investigate other aspects of the school's work in detail, but found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These judgements have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

This larger than average primary school has a high number of pupils entitled to free school meals. There are 37 different languages spoken by pupils, reflecting the wide range of pupils' ethnic backgrounds. There are well above the average number of pupils from ethnic minority groups. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is average, and mainly consists of pupils with speech and language difficulties, or with behavioural, emotional and social problems. There are a number of pupils on the autistic spectrum. There is a specialist, dyslexia resource unit in the school which has been nationally recognised (OCR). It currently trains adults to a nationally recognised qualification in supporting pupils with specific learning difficulties. The school has been nationally recognised through the Healthy School Award and the Activemark.

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. It combines above average academic standards and good achievement levels with a high quality of pupils' personal development and pastoral care. It places a very successful emphasis on welcoming and involving all pupils in school life. The majority of parents rightly recognise this as a strength of the school. One parent wrote that the school 'has a real sense of community and warmth. Children are encouraged to be the best person they can be'. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher has successfully provided the school with this very clear vision of inclusion. The very effective dyslexia unit, for example, is having an extremely positive impact not only on the teaching of those pupils, but also elsewhere in the school, and local area.

Levels of entry into the school vary year on year, but overall are below average. In the 2007 national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils attained average standards. Year 6 pupils in the previous two years attained above average standards. Currently, Year 6 pupils are on track to attain above average standards in English and science. Standards in mathematics are average and improving. This continues to be a whole school focus. A consistent factor is that pupils achieve well. There is no significant difference in the achievement levels of the various pupil groups, including boys and pupils of Black heritage. Good management by the deputy head of the special needs area helps ensure the good progress of the pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities.

Pupils achieve well because they bring positive attitudes to their work and receive consistently good teaching. Teachers plan activities, particularly practical, hands-on experiences that meet well the different learning styles of pupils. This is a consequence of effective training from the very experienced unit manager, and other senior colleagues. Positive relationships in lessons result in pupils who are keen to learn and wanting to get involved. Year 3 pupils for example, demonstrated enthusiasm, great enjoyment and an acceptance of challenge, when smelling and giving their opinions of various shower gels, as a part of an Olympic Games market research exercise. Opportunities are sometimes missed in lessons for teachers to further challenge pupils by making clear to them what level of work is expected of each individual. The pupils are motivated well by the pace of lessons, and some good use of interactive whiteboards. There are some inconsistencies between teachers in the extent to which they plan work that sufficiently challenges all pupils in the class. Consequently, on these occasions, progress slows for some pupils.

The personal development of pupils is outstanding. In lessons, they settle quickly to work, concentrate well and are independent learners. They want to do their best, as seen in pupils' attention to detail when making good pencil drawings of human bones. Pupils have a detailed knowledge of how to stay healthy and keep safe. Whilst a minority of parents expressed some concerns about behaviour, pupils' behaviour is good. This reflects some very positive work done by the school, for example, in ensuring that pupils experiencing emotional difficulties have strategies and opportunities that aid their self-control. In various ways, pupils make an excellent contribution to the community. Besides acting as school councillors and monitors, the pupils have played music and sung in the community, and contributed artwork to public displays. Their good basic skills coupled with numerous opportunities to work in teams, and activities such as producing and editing radio programmes, prepare them extremely well for later life. The external funding for the radio station is one example of the excellent range of partnerships that the school forges on behalf of learners.

The excellent curriculum provides pupils with a very wide range of experiences. It recognises very well the diverse cultures of pupils in school, such as in when they use computers to produce repeating African patterns. The pupils' speaking, listening and editing skills are very well exercised through their radio interviews and subsequent broadcasts. Pupils make the most of the various sports, foreign language and music clubs. Learning is made more real to pupils, and enjoyment promoted, when pupils carry out the journey and live the life of a Second World War evacuee.

Pupils' emotional needs are also very well met. Good learning mentor arrangements are in place. The effective management of special needs helps ensure that pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are identified early, their progress monitored carefully and that appropriate support programmes are in place. Learning support assistants work well with individuals and small groups. Consequently, these pupils achieve well. All pupils have learning targets in literacy and numeracy. However, some teachers' marking does not consistently show pupils how to improve their work.

Leadership is good. Management responsibility is very well shared through project groups, which all staff can join. They research, trial and report on possible school initiatives. These have a positive impact on the school's performance. For example, in the use of assessment data to set targets in mathematics, and in improving the curriculum through encouraging more links between subjects. The role of subject managers requires further development. Some subject managers do not have a good enough understanding of standards and are insufficiently involved in tracking pupils' progress across the school. Action plans would also benefit from more identification of a starting point against which the success of any changes can be judged. Governance is outstanding. Governors bring a very wide range of experience into the school, and complement this by training, for example, in the interpretation of assessment data. They monitor the school very well through regular visits. There is a good capacity to improve the school.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The children enter the Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge below those expected for their age. Good teaching contributes to the good achievement of children, and most meet the early learning goals by the time they leave Reception. In particular, relationships are very good, and children thrive in a stimulating environment. Very appropriate attention is paid to raising the self-esteem of children and ensuring that they settle well. Consequently, the children's personal development is excellent. They play together well, are polite, and increasingly are able to determine their own approaches to learning. The curriculum provides a very wide range of activities, with particularly good use made of the large external area. One parent wrote, 'My daughter as recently started in the Nursery. I have been very pleased with the way she has settled and with the range of activities she has already been involved in'. Some curriculum and teachers' planning is not sufficiently focused on setting work that appropriately challenges the different abilities of the children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all teachers plan work that consistently challenges the different abilities of pupils, and that they make clear the next steps in pupils' learning.
- Ensure that all leaders have sufficient opportunities for tracking the standards and progress of pupils across the school.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

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?	1
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?	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 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	1
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

19 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lyndhurst School, London, SE5 8SN

Thank you for being so keen to talk to me during my recent visit to your school. I enjoyed meeting you and hearing your views. I agree with you that you go to a good school. I also feel that it does many things in an outstanding or very good way. Your headteacher has made sure that you feel welcome in the school and that you are all included in what the school offers to its pupils.

I also believe that you develop as young people extremely well. You told me that you enjoy school; teachers make the lessons 'fun', and 'interesting'. You are rightly proud of how you work on behalf of the school and local community. Your charity work is one area, but also I saw evidence of the work of your school councillors and the playground zone leaders. Well done!

A small number of parents felt that behaviour could be better, but you told me that behaviour is good and that the school deals quickly with any problems. I agree that your behaviour is good and that the school looks after you extremely well.

Most of you make good progress in your work because you are keen to learn and you receive good teaching. Also, you have an excellent range of activities to do which keep your interest and help you to enjoy school. The school radio is really good, and activities such as the evacuee and Victorian days look fun and help you to learn.

I have asked the school to look at two things:

- That in all lessons you are challenged to do your best, and that you have a clear idea about how to improve your work. (You can help by telling your teachers when you find the work too easy or too hard.)
- That the adults in charge of subjects have good opportunities to look at how you make progress across the school.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Pye

Lead Inspector