

# Essex Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102763
<b>Local Authority</b>	Newham
<b>Inspection number</b>	308112
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Horwood

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

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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	897
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr H Islam
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs R Cowan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 February 2002
<b>School address</b>	Sheridan Road Manor Park London E12 6QX
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8472 0322
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8471 0857

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This very large primary school is situated in a relatively disadvantaged part of London. The vast majority of pupils come from minority ethnic groups with the larger numbers from Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian backgrounds. A large majority speak another language at home and enter the school speaking little or no English. Over a quarter of pupils are refugees or asylum seekers. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is relatively low. Around a quarter of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school has expanded in recent years and considerable building work has taken place resulting in improved facilities for the younger pupils.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This good school has improved rapidly over the last two years. Following a difficult period during which there were many changes in staffing there is now a settled situation. The current headteacher provides very good leadership and she has built a team of capable staff who are working enthusiastically and effectively providing good overall leadership and management.

Good care, support and guidance, including outstanding pastoral care, help pupils to settle quickly in the school and they all make good progress from what, for most, is a very low starting point. One parent said how proud she was of all the progress her child had made over the years and many said how enthusiastic the teachers are. Pupils achieve well because the teaching is consistently good and lessons are enjoyable with a strong emphasis on role-play. They benefit from a good curriculum, which is adapted well to support their language development needs. By the end of Year 6, pupils are now reaching standards that are broadly average compared to national standards and above the average local standards. However, assessment data is not used consistently in different classes to set meaningful and challenging targets. This is recognised by the leadership team and they are planning to revise the whole school system to set more individualised learning targets.

Pupils in the school are very happy and thoroughly enjoy both the lessons and the other activities provided for them. Pupils mainly take the healthy options at lunchtime and most who bring their own lunch include healthy food. They also enjoy fruit during the day and participate in sport activities. There is an effective school council and all pupils have sufficient confidence to raise any concerns directly with the adults in school. The school works well with the local community and pupils help support a multi-cultural community by sharing their experiences with their families. The multi-faith assemblies are an outstanding demonstration of this. Pupils feel safe in the school where good behaviour is now normal practice. The paired working and good personal development as well as their good progress in key skills ensure pupils are well prepared for their future. Pupils' personal development is good and they leave the school well prepared for secondary school.

All leaders in the school, together with the governors, share the same vision of achieving excellence. Systems are in place to monitor and track pupils' progress but these are not used consistently across the school to ensure they are sufficiently challenging for all pupils. There is a clear and accurate knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the areas for development identified. However, some administrative records and summary performance data are not easily accessible for managers to maintain a good overview. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and has a good capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children enter the Nursery with very low levels of attainment and few have had the opportunity to play in a structured way with other children. They make good progress in both the Nursery and the Reception classes but standards are still below expectations when they move up to Year 1. The teamwork of staff in the Foundation Stage is strong and they plan well together for maximum practical activities in all areas of learning with a strong emphasis on developing language skills. Children enjoy the 'free choice' activities but they do not always take on new experiences to extend their learning sufficiently. The Foundation Stage is well managed and

provides a happy, age-appropriate and safe environment and the children thoroughly enjoy their experiences.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Use assessment data consistently across the school to ensure meaningful and challenging targets are set to increase progress and raise standards.
- Refine record keeping systems to allow summary data to be more easily accessible for audit and to enable managers to get an effective overview.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children enter the Nursery with skills that are well below expected levels. A large majority have very little knowledge of the English language. Many children leave or join the school at times other than during the Foundation Stage and those who join tend to have lower skills, as they have often not been in education before and most are at an early stage of speaking English. Examination of the school's tracking data confirms the good progress seen in lessons throughout the school. All pupils make at least good progress and some make very good progress, although from a low starting point. Standards have varied in past years but systems put in place by the current management team enable them to give effective support. School data for 2007 shows that the standards in Key Stage 1 were below average but by the end of Key Stage 2 were broadly average. This is consistent with standards currently seen with the current Year 2 and Year 6 groups. Standards achieved by those who have stayed in the school for their complete education are higher on average than for those who joined later. Whilst in Key Stage 1 there are some variations in performance by different groups, this mainly reflects language difficulties and, by the time they reach Year 6, the effective support has removed any variations.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a key factor in pupils' good personal development. The cultural diversity is celebrated well, for example, with pupils learning about each other's faiths during assemblies celebrating the various religious events. A harmonious community exists where behaviour is consistently good and pupils feel safe to enjoy their education. Pupils say they enjoy lessons because they are fun and there are good opportunities to discuss and share ideas. They take part in sporting activities such as Yoga and football, appreciate the school's healthy eating policy, have a good awareness of community needs and are actively involved in fundraising and promoting racial harmony. The school council are proud of their role and say they are listened to. Pupils conscientiously take responsibility, such as the Year 6 pupils supporting the younger ones. By the time they leave school, pupils are mature and sensible and their basic skills are close to expected levels. The school actively encourages good attendance that has improved steadily and is now good.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Enthusiastic teaching motivates learning and adds to levels of enjoyment. Relationships are good, teachers build pupils' confidence well and have high expectations, often demonstrated

through high quality and well-directed questions. They display firm classroom management to encourage good behaviour and positive response. There is a good focus on language development often through role-play, which pupils really enjoy. Activities are matched well to pupils' needs, with support staff working well to support pupils appropriately. Pupils make good progress because teaching is good. A Key Stage 1 pupil said 'I like hard work'. There is some inconsistency in using marking to advise on how to improve and pupils need to become better at self-evaluation.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is motivational and engaging. It has improved since the last inspection and now meets requirements. There is a high emphasis on the promotion of language and basic skills, which are areas of initial weakness for most pupils. Teachers plan a wide range of good practical activities to make learning meaningful as well as enjoyable. High quality opportunities for role-play and drama are strong features of the curriculum to maximise opportunities for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills and to develop socially. There is a well-planned personal, social, health educational and citizenship programme fully integrated into the timetable. Whilst gifted and talented pupils receive appropriate support in lessons, the curriculum is not yet extended to increase opportunities for them. The good range of extra-curricular clubs is well attended and many of these, for example gardening, are designed to give pupils opportunities not available to them at home. Visitors, visits and residential journeys are all appropriate to the needs of the pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The pastoral care for pupils is outstanding with the school focussing on the needs of each individual. From the time they arrive, their social needs are identified and monitored with the family being fully involved wherever possible. Because many pupils arrive unexpectedly, and often mid-term, the school has developed very good procedures to ensure this takes place. Safeguarding systems are all in place and meet requirements. The care for vulnerable pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, is very well planned with effective links with external agencies. A strength of the school is that it knows and understands the needs of pupils' families well and provides them support where possible. Support and guidance for pupils is good because rigorous systems track how well every pupil does. Those with specific needs are identified early and good support is provided, so that they make good progress. Pupils are given targets in literacy, numeracy and science but not all pupils are clear how to use these. The school is aware of the need to ensure these are meaningful to all by moving towards a more personalised approach to individual target setting. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language settle quickly into school because of the very good procedures in place to assess and help them.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

This very large school manages to operate as a harmonious family because of the good teamwork of staff built up under the very good leadership of the headteacher. She has ensured that all levels of leadership and management within the team are good and have the appropriate skills

to help raise standards in the school. Good support is provided for all staff, especially newly qualified teachers and those new to the school. Good attention is paid to professional development. Teacher expertise is valued and shared, good practice identified, areas for development identified and worked towards. Governors, who are very able and enthusiastic, say that since the arrival of the current headteacher they have a new lease of life. They are now fully involved with the school, are given more information, and are able to both support and challenge the school. All leaders share the same vision for the school to become outstanding and self-evaluation is well used and accurate. This has enabled systems to be put in place to raise standards, although these are not yet fully embedded to ensure consistent use across the school. Tracking and record keeping systems are rigorous but are not sufficiently 'fine-tuned' to easily provide summary data to help the leadership team get a quick but accurate overview of outcomes including progress, incidents, attendance, and behaviour.

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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?	2
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 <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 disabilities make progress	2

### 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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	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 the 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?	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.

## Annex A

**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 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	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

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

18 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Essex Primary School, London, E12 6QX

Thank you for making us so welcome at your school. We enjoyed being at your school, meeting with you and your teachers and talking with you during the day.

Yours is a good school that has improved over the past few years. The school has many strengths including:

- Teachers are really keen and make lessons fun.
- You have lots of chance to join in activities in lessons to help you learn.
- You behave well and you respect each other as well as all the adults.
- You develop a really good understanding of each other's cultural background.
- You are making good progress as a result of good teaching.
- The school cares for you in an outstanding way to keep you safe and happy.
- The headteacher and senior staff lead the school well.

We have asked the school to help you make even more progress by setting you individual targets in your work. We think it important that these procedures are used in the same way in all the classes. We have also asked the school to look at how record systems, both in the office and in the classroom, can be modified to make them easier to check and to summarise the information.

Yours sincerely

John Horwood

Lead Inspector