

# Plaistow Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	132812
<b>Local Authority</b>	Newham
<b>Inspection number</b>	316023
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Nathan

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)	391
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 Iain Hale
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Neil Carpenter
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 October 2003
<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>	Junction Road Plaistow London E13 9DQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8548 5620
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8586 2965

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 November 2008
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This large primary school opened in 2002. It serves a very diverse community with over 90% of pupils coming from a wide range of ethnic minority groups. Many pupils speak English as an additional language with about 20% at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils who join and leave the school at other than expected times is well above average. This is partly due to the amount of temporary housing in the area. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is double the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. These pupils have literacy, speech and language, or emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school is part of a federation of schools in the local area who work together on a range of community and educational issues. There is Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision in Nursery and Reception with about 40% of children joining the school in Reception.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Plaistow is providing a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. Pupils are making satisfactory progress overall and standards are rising, particularly in the EYFS and in Years 1 and 2. There are some good aspects to the work of the school. There is a calm and positive atmosphere and behaviour is good. Pupils' personal development is strong and they clearly enjoy school and the enrichment opportunities on offer. The school knows the social needs of its pupils well and this leads to a very caring environment. The cultural and racial harmony and the school's knowledge of its community are clear strengths.

Pupils join the school in Nursery and Reception with very low attainment compared to what would normally be expected for their age. They make good progress in the EYFS. This is due to the good quality of provision and the care and support from adults. Despite this good progress, standards are low when children transfer to Year 1. Pupils continue to make good progress in Year 1 and Year 2, particularly in writing and mathematics. Progress in reading is not as strong and the school has now prioritised reading as an area for improvement. Guided reading is recognised as an area for development across all year groups. By the end of Year 2, standards are below the national average. In 2008 standards were low in mathematics and in English in the Year 6 national assessments. This was partly because a considerable number of pupils who took the tests were new to the school since Year 2, with many arriving speaking little English. School data for Years 3 to 6 show that pupils achieve satisfactorily from their starting points. The school recognises the need to accelerate progress in mathematics and English, particularly for boys.

The headteacher and his deputy have a clear idea of what they need to do to improve the school. They know that they need to ensure that subject coordinators and class teachers are fully accountable for accelerating pupil progress. A number of subject coordinators are new to their posts and have introduced some changes. A new handwriting policy is in place, as is a scheme to support reading, but it is too early to see improvements resulting from these. Capacity to improve is therefore satisfactory. Considerable care is taken, through regular meetings with teachers, to monitor progress in personal development, writing and mathematics, but this has not been the case with reading. A range of effective support is provided to pupils to assist them if they are learning to speak English or have other learning needs. Effective steps have been taken to address the issues raised in the last inspection. Parents are generally supportive of the school. As one parent said, 'I have always found the staff and the headteacher very approachable and helpful.' The senior leadership has appropriately prioritised pupils' personal development. The school has achieved a Healthy Schools Award. Pupils uphold the school's five 'Golden Rules' and do not tolerate racism in any form. Pupils make a good contribution to the wider community through raising money for charities such as the British Heart Foundation.

Teaching is satisfactory overall although there are strengths in some year groups. In good lessons, pupils are challenged and there are high expectations of what they can achieve. Objectives are clear and pupils enjoy learning. In some lessons, however, learning activities do not always match pupils' needs and this means that pupils do not make good progress. Assessments made on pupils' needs do not always have sufficient impact on the curriculum, or on teaching. The curriculum is enriched by a range of after-school clubs and trips, and the school has achieved the Activemark for sport and the ICT (information and communication technology) Mark. The curriculum, however, does not always provide pupils with sufficient challenge to improve.

Pupils who arrive at other than usual times integrate well into school life and routines. Pupils with speech and language difficulties, behavioural and specific needs receive effective targeted help from school staff and from outside agencies. Good links are in place with the local secondary school and with local primary schools which are enhanced through the local federation of schools. This provides activities for families in the neighbourhood, but has had less impact on pupils.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children enter the Nursery class with levels of knowledge and skills that are very low for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy, emotional development, and calculations. They make good progress because of effective teaching and learning in relevant and meaningful ways. For instance, in the Nursery, they were learning about shadows and making electricity circuits as part of their theme 'Light and Dark'. Relationships are strong. Staff are caring and enthusiastic. This results in children learning happily alongside each other in a very safe and secure environment. Outdoor facilities have notably improved and this is having an impact on children's enjoyment and physical development. All staff have a clear idea of strengths and areas for development, and this is evident in improvement planning. For instance, they are adapting the curriculum to meet children's needs with a focus on developing communication, language and literacy and social skills.

In Reception, children benefit from a variety of language activities including learning about letters and the sounds that they make, listening to songs and challenging questioning during 'guided reading'. This is beginning to impact well on their progress. A systematic process of assessment feeds into planning to meet children's learning and development needs. This is not yet sharp enough to provide good challenge for children of varying abilities. Parent partnerships are good. The school has made deliberate efforts to involve them through a wide range of initiatives, for instance by carrying out home visits and parenting classes. Children's skills are low by the end of Reception. This is because many children enter Reception from other settings with very low levels of language, social skills and calculation ability.

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

- Raise standards in English and mathematics by ensuring the curriculum fully meets the needs of all pupils, particularly in reading.
- Ensure that all leaders and managers are fully accountable for pupils' standards and progress, particularly for boys.
- Ensure that there is greater consistency in teaching and learning by ensuring that expectations of pupils are always high and that learning activities better match pupils' abilities.

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**

Standards, as measured by national assessments at the end of Year 2, have recently improved. This is mainly because improvements in the quality of teaching have quickened the pace of learning. Standards are still below the national average but pupils are making good progress

overall, particularly in writing and in mathematics. Standards in reading are not as high, however, and progress not as strong. This is because the curriculum previously in place did not fully meet pupils' needs. This is now being addressed by the school. Standards at the end of Year 6 are low. This is partly due to the number of pupils who arrive at school after the usual point of entry, a considerable number of whom speak little English. There are also many pupils with language and learning difficulties who make satisfactory progress with their learning. Standards are beginning to rise and school records show that pupils' progress is satisfactory given their starting points. Boys do not achieve as well as girls in the school, particularly in English. The school has plans in place to address this by ensuring that the curriculum is more relevant to boys' interests and ways of learning.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils understand the importance of healthy lifestyles and know that if you 'eat well, you will stay well'. This is helped by the 'Healthy Heads' tuck shop run by the school council, and regular exercise. Pupils know how to keep safe, and demonstrate this through their awareness that 'People can trick you on the Internet, so be careful', and their responsible conduct. They say that bullying incidents are rare but are dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils develop good citizenship skills through acting as 'peer mediators' who help resolve problems that might occur between pupils at lunchtime. School councillors are developing a school magazine as their next contribution to improving the school. They have good attitudes to learning to help prepare them for secondary school, but this strength is counterbalanced by their satisfactory progress in literacy and numeracy. Most pupils attend school regularly, but attendance rates are marred by some parents who take their children away for family holidays in term time.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Pupils like their lessons and, for example, say, 'Our teachers make what we have to learn interesting and give us lots of encouragement.' Strengths in teaching include good behaviour management, which ensures that even the most challenging pupils are occupied during lessons. Pupils are given many appropriate opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. However, there is still not enough good teaching to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The main reason for this is that tasks are not always pitched at the right level, especially in English and mathematics. Activities given to individual pupils do not always fully take into account their stage of development, their next steps in learning, and how teaching will quicken progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum enables pupils to make satisfactory progress. It makes a good contribution to their personal development, particularly through themed weeks such as Health Awareness week. Recent improvements to the curriculum in Year 1 have ensured that it is better suited to pupils' needs and their stages of development. These have eased pupils' transition from the EYFS ways of working to those required by the National Curriculum. In the rest of the school,

the curriculum does not ensure that pupils are consistently provided with achievable challenges. Assessment of pupils' work does not always lead to the curriculum being changed to meet pupils' learning needs. Teaching assistants are receiving training so they can better support pupils learning to read. Curriculum strength lies in topic work, which links different subjects together and fosters creativity. Recent examples include 'Respect for Religions', 'Recycling' and a 'Roald Dahl' week. Sometimes these involve visits out, or an interesting visitor coming to school to help motivate the pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school cares well for the personal needs of the individual. Pupils feel valued and safe and say, 'This is a school for everyone and...we belong together'. Robust procedures are in place for child protection to ensure pupils' safety. Strenuous steps are taken to monitor and tackle any unauthorised absence. This is affected by the distance some children travel to school and the holidays that some parents take during term time. Pupils with physical disabilities are well integrated and looked after very well. Although pupils' progress is monitored well, the guidance they receive on how to improve has a variable impact on the pace of learning. For example, marking is inconsistent and only in the best cases does it celebrate what is good and show pupils how their work can be improved. Although pupils are set targets to help boost learning, these are not always as clear as they might be.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher and his deputy work well together. They have clearly identified priorities for development through their evaluation of what the school needs to do to improve. Challenging targets are in place this year to improve standards, which senior leaders and governors know they need to do. Subject leaders and class teachers, however, are not consistently accountable for pupils' attainment. For example, progress in reading is not being fully monitored. A number of subject coordinators are developing their roles with support from senior leaders. They have introduced some new initiatives to improve teaching, but monitoring systems for subjects are not fully in place. There is a strong commitment to equal opportunities and this is reflected throughout the school, for example in its commitment to cultural diversity. The school knows its community well and has done a lot of work with its federation partners to support community cohesion. There has been a focus on working with families in the local area, and three family workers are now in place. This has resulted in more parents coming into school and supporting school events. A strong core of governors support the school effectively while other governors are developing their understanding of their roles.

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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 <sup>1</sup> 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

<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	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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	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**

10 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Plaistow Primary School, London, E13 9DQ

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors to your school. We really enjoyed meeting you and your teachers and talking to you about your school. Everybody was very friendly. We think your school looks after you very well and makes sure that you get help when you need it. You clearly enjoy your school trips and school clubs, and you have a good attitude to learning. You also get on well with your teachers and your behaviour is good. We were particularly pleased that you feel that there is no place for racism in your school.

We think that you are being given a satisfactory level of education, and if you carry on working hard, as you are at the moment in English and mathematics, your school will continue improving. You need to do more in English and mathematics lessons to make sure you do better in these subjects. Your teachers need to take more responsibility for how well you do. They need to improve their teaching to make sure they always get the best out of you. They particularly want to help you with your handwriting and reading.

We really enjoyed the healthy food at lunchtime and your politeness and friendliness around your school.

Thank you all again.

Yours faithfully

Peter Nathan

Lead Inspector