

Fitzjohn's Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100026
Local Authority	Camden
Inspection number	335477
Inspection dates	10–11 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Wendy Forbes

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 of pupils on the school roll	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Deborah Townsend
Headteacher	Rob Earrey
Date of previous school inspection	July 2007
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Age group	3 -11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. The inspectors observed 12 lessons, visited classrooms on a learning walk to sample displays, behaviour and resources, attended assembly and held meetings with governors, staff and a group of pupils. They observed the school's work, the start and end-of-day provision, and examined pupils' books and school documents, including the school development plan, school improvement reports, governing body minutes and safety records and assessment information. They analysed 90 questionnaires returned by parents and 110 pupil questionnaires. Inspectors looked in detail at the following:

- the work the school is doing to eliminate variations in attainment between different year groups and across key subjects
- how effectively teaching and the curriculum are meeting the needs of all learners, particularly high attainers
- how effectively leaders and managers have been in ensuring improvements in writing
- the effectiveness of assessment strategies, marking and pupil tracking systems in raising achievement across the whole school
- how effective the school has been in improving punctuality and attendance
- the impact of the leadership team and the governing body in driving through improvements to eradicate identified weaknesses.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized, popular and oversubscribed school. Pupils at this one-form entry school represent a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. A high percentage start school at an early stage of learning English. The percentage of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. These include pupils who have speech and language difficulties. The school has received a number of awards including Healthy Schools.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school where every child really matters. It has been very successful in creating a caring and supportive environment for its pupils. They respond positively and clearly enjoy their school, taking part enthusiastically in the many learning opportunities on offer. Parents particularly value the outstanding level of care, guidance and support provided for their children. Questionnaires confirm parents' very positive views of the school. As one parent said, 'This school nurtures, encourages and understands the needs of the individual child.' At the heart of this good school is the drive and determination of the dynamic headteacher, well supported by staff and governors, to provide the best possible education for its pupils, creating a happy school where everyone works hard for every child. Well-motivated pupils strive to achieve the best they can. Pupils appreciate their school and say things such as 'Our teachers make learning fun and we have a great time at school.'

Pupils get off to a flying start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and, because of outstanding teaching, curriculum, assessment, and leadership and management, most make at least good progress towards their early learning goals. Good teaching and a well-planned curriculum, enhanced by an excellent, creative range of enrichment activities, are significant factors in ensuring pupils continue to make good progress throughout the school. By the time Year 6 pupils leave school, standards are above average in English, mathematics and reading, and high in science. However, the attainment of more able pupils, particularly in writing, is not as high. This is because teachers do not always put their good lesson planning into practice, to ensure that pupils of all ability groups, particularly the most able, are consistently challenged to do well in lesson activities. Standards in many other subjects, including music, art, drama and information and communication technology (ICT), are above national expectations. Pupils enjoy high quality music and drama, as seen in the exemplary dramatic performance of a local writer's play given by Year 6 pupils as part of an assembly celebrating pupils' talents.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Relationships throughout the school are warm and cordial. The headteacher sets the tone by exhibiting a high degree of concern for all pupils, especially the most vulnerable. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy. All pupils spoken to confirmed that they felt safe in school. Behaviour is good in classes and during playtime. Despite the school's sterling efforts, both punctuality and attendance remain satisfactory. This is due to holidays being taken in term time and the frequent lateness of pupils who regularly miss the start of the school day.

Governors work in very close partnership with the headteacher and staff, providing a

good balance of support and challenge. The school's self-evaluation procedures are robust and leaders have a clear and effective commitment to improving provision and raising standards. These factors show that the school has a good capacity for sustaining further development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing by ensuring that all pupils, but particularly the more able pupils, are consistently provided with tasks that are challenging and closely matched to their levels of ability.
- Reduce the proportion of pupils who are late or miss school by developing a range of initiatives and incentives to promote good attendance and punctuality.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Standards are above average, as shown in 2009 National Curriculum tests and assessments and pupils' current work. It is clear from the lessons observed during the inspection that pupils develop good learning habits and attitudes as they move up through the school. They enjoy learning and collaborate effectively when working in pairs and groups. In the majority of lessons, pupils listen attentively, respond keenly to teachers' questions and participate in discussions, and many express their points of view clearly with confidence, drawing appropriately on the subject matter of the lesson to support their opinion. Pupils make good progress in all subjects, except more able pupils in writing, where progress is satisfactory. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good because of the well-targeted support they receive from teachers and assistants.

The wide range of opportunities provided to celebrate pupils' ethnic and cultural backgrounds and positive relationships are key to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils say they are treated as individuals and feel special. Pupils make a very positive contribution to life in and out of the school, as seen in the influential work of the school council and in the many opportunities provided for pupils to raise funds for special projects, such as a school they support in Ghana.

Good outcomes in English and mathematics, pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and the good progress they make all help to ensure that pupils are well prepared for their secondary education and later life. However, a small, but significant, group of pupils consistently miss learning activities at the start of the school day due to lateness or do not attend school as regularly as they could because of holidays taken in term time. Pupils' excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles extends beyond the classroom door into the garden area where the growing, cooking and eating of vegetables promotes pupils' awareness of the need for a healthy diet. Many say how much they enjoy the activities provided to help them keep and stay fit. Behaviour is good throughout the school, characterised by general helpfulness, courtesy and good manners. Pupils say they feel safe and know that teachers will help and support them with any worries they may have. Pupils say that bullying is a rare occurrence

and any issues that cause concern are swiftly dealt with by adults. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the opportunities provided to forge links in the wider community, particularly their involvement in music and dramatic performances.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	2
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	3
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good. This is because of excellent relationships, a well-planned curriculum and high expectations. Pastoral care is a strength of the school and this has a positive impact on the good outcomes for pupils, particularly the promotion of courtesy, good manners and respect, which is clear throughout the school. Outstanding support and carefully drafted individual plans for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities enables pupils to make good progress.

Pupils have individual learning targets for improvement and many are involved in the assessment of their own learning. Pupils' work is regularly marked and enhanced by the individual verbal feedback provided by teachers, which pupils say is helpful because it tells them how they can improve their work. Regular assessments are used effectively to identify any potential underachievement by individuals or groups, so that support can be put into place swiftly. Although teachers' good subject knowledge and their understanding of pupils' needs ensure that they plan well for different ability groups, not all teaching consistently challenges pupils in practice, particularly the most able in writing. As a result, the attainment of these pupils is not as high as it could be. The good curriculum is enriched by well-planned cross-curricular links, specialist teaching in French, art, sport, music and drama, an excellent range of enrichment activities and a good range of well-attended extra-curricular clubs. Pupils say they enjoy a wide range of school visits, visitors and

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

events and are enthusiastic about opportunities not only to perform but also to write their own scripts and music for performance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's vision has been instrumental in creating an ambitious staff team, united in driving school improvement. The headteacher is imaginative and creative, and has ensured that resources are used well to provide a stimulating environment in which to learn. Parents value a wide range of excellent opportunities to be actively involved in shaping the life of the school through dialogue about the school with staff at regular 'class teas', feedback in parental questionnaires and fund-raising. As one parent said '... the school is not afraid to listen to our views or act on them ...' Exceptionally well-developed support systems within the school are complemented by an excellent range of partnerships with outside specialists to support the needs of vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Prudent financial management and targeting of resources have ensured that the school gives good value for money.

Effective systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the work of the school and there is an effective plan for further development. Good use of pupil assessment data and monitoring information to set challenging targets has brought about improvements in English and mathematics. However, this has not yet ensured that all pupils, particularly the most able, do as well as they could, especially in writing. The school has made good progress towards identifying and establishing improvements to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunity to do their best and that no pupil is subject to any form of discrimination.

Governors are hard working and very supportive of the school's work. They take their monitoring roles very seriously. They challenge the school and are aware of areas of relative underperformance. The school has developed good provision for global and cultural development within its community cohesion policy. Pupils' good understanding of international as well as local communities is promoted well, through links forged with a range of communities such as a school in Ghana, which pupils raise money to support. The school is now developing opportunities to increase pupils' understanding of schools and communities in Britain. Measures for safeguarding pupils are good and all statutory requirements relating to child protection are met.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a flying start in the Nursery. Fun, smiles and laughter pervade throughout children's life in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Outstanding leadership and management and a strong partnership with parents ensure that individual children's needs are quickly identified and appropriate support provided to help children achieve their potential. Parents appreciate the 'extra mile' staff go to ensure that children settle well into school. Pastoral care is a strength of provision. As a result of outstanding teaching, curriculum, pastoral care and carefully planned activities, children make at least good progress towards their early learning goals in most areas. However, children make relatively slower progress in their creative, as well as personal, social and emotional development, which the school is already working hard to address. Every child really does matter in both the Nursery and the Reception classes. Day-to-day assessment of children's achievements is rigorous, with planning adapted to meet the needs of children as a result of tracking and monitoring progress. Children behave really well for their age.

Adults interact well with children, successfully encouraging them to talk about what they are doing. Children could be seen engaged in articulate conversation with a visitor from a Jewish synagogue and later giggling with excitement, painting, role playing and constructing models. Learning through play is well managed and the school is developing outdoor activities to complement excellent indoor provision. Such is the excellent balance of adult-directed and child-initiated activities in promoting children's personal development and learning skills. Children collaborate well together, as seen in their work with 'talk partners', which helps to ensure that children quickly become independent learners who are eager to learn.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Taking into account:	2
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school, particularly in their praise of the headteacher and staff, the excellent pastoral care and support provided for pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the way good behaviour is promoted. Parents and carers who returned questionnaires or who spoke to the inspection team were overwhelmingly positive about the school, its work and its impact on their child's learning and well-being. Overall, parents' and carers' views reflect the inspection findings. A very small number of parents expressed individual concerns about aspects of the school, but there was no pattern or trend. Inspectors found no evidence to substantiate any individual concerns, although these were summarised and reported to the school without identifying any individual.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fitzjohn's Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 90 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 212 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	70	78	18	20	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	63	70	26	29	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	46	51	41	46	2	2	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	43	44	49	4	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	52	58	35	39	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	48	53	39	43	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	51	43	48	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	44	49	37	41	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	47	52	36	40	3	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	44	49	38	32	5	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	43	48	39	43	3	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	63	70	24	27	2	2	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	66	73	22	24	1	1	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.



14 December 2009

Inspection of Fitzjohn's Primary School, Camden, London NW3 6NP

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We were delighted to meet so many of you, including Key Stage 2 pupils and the many other pupils who spoke to us. We were very impressed by your politeness and good behaviour and particularly delighted to watch your dramatic performance in assembly. I am delighted to tell you that you go to a good school. There are many things that are great about your school. These are some of the things that really stood out:

- Your good behaviour and the positive way you all work so well together.
- The above average standards you reach in English and mathematics and the high standards you reach in science.
- The excellent provision for the very youngest children.
- You really enjoy your learning and the fun activities which your teachers plan for you.
- Your wonderful music and drama performances.
- Your help in supporting children less fortunate than yourselves in other countries such as the school you support in Ghana.
- You really enjoy taking part in extra clubs and special activities the school organises for you.
- Your headteacher and all other teachers, teaching assistants, staff and governors are determined to give you the best education possible.

While your school is good, there are some things that the school could do better:

- Find ways to make sure that those of you who sometimes find parts of writing lessons a bit too easy are challenged to reach even higher standards.
- Encourage all children to arrive at school on time and to attend more regularly.

We really enjoyed being in your school and hope that you will continue to work hard and enjoy everything your school offers.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Forbes
Lead inspector

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