

Nightingale Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102126
Local Authority	Haringey
Inspection number	323589
Inspection dates	28–29 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Selwyn Ward

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)	396
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 Neil McAllister
Headteacher	Ms Doda Panayiotou
Date of previous school inspection	22 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Bounds Green Road Wood Green London N22 8ES
Telephone number	0208 888 3736
Fax number	0208 888 9092

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average, although the number of pupils has fallen since the last inspection. Around 90% of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Approximately 40% of the pupils are of Black British, African or Caribbean heritage, and a quarter of the pupils are from families who have come to Britain from other European countries. Half the pupils are learning English as an additional language, with a high proportion at an early stage of learning the language. An above average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, particularly for speech and language or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Not all of the pupils stay at the school from the start of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Mobility is high, with relatively large numbers joining and leaving the school part-way through their primary education. The school is part of the Improving Schools Programme (ISP), which is a government initiative aimed at raising standards in English and mathematics in schools where standards have been low. In addition to its last inspection, the school had an Ofsted monitoring visit on 14 February 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Nightingale Primary provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The headteacher and leadership team have had some notable successes. In particular, they have made changes that have transformed Early Years Foundation Stage provision. What was previously inadequate is now a strength of the school, because the faster start given to children in Nursery and Reception is beginning to raise standards as children move on to Year 1. Improvement has been slower through the rest of the school. Standards have remained below average in the Year 2 and Year 6 tests, though they are beginning to rise, notably in mathematics. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall, but more able pupils do not all do as well as they should because they are not always given work that challenges and extends them.

A number of pupils join the school with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, yet the behaviour in lessons is mostly good because teachers manage their classes well. There remain quite high levels of short-term exclusions however, which is why behaviour and personal development are satisfactory overall. Nonetheless, the way in which pupils increasingly listen intently both to their teacher and to each other shows pupils' improving personal development. Parents remark on how their children grow in confidence and self-esteem. Pupils are happy at school. As a parent commented, 'My child comes home each afternoon with a happy face and lots of stories about the lessons.' The children enjoy the extended opportunities they have for sport, art and music. However, despite their enjoyment of school, pupils' attendance is poor. The school works hard to discourage avoidable absence, but there is still too much valuable schooling missed, for example, through family holidays in term time. More could be done to draw parents' attention to the strong link between their children's attendance and their progress and attainment. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Welfare arrangements are strong and support is carefully tailored for the many pupils who need extra help with their learning.

Teachers routinely set out 'learning objectives' at the start of each lesson, but often these really only describe the tasks that the pupils will be carrying out. That means that pupils do not always have a clear enough understanding of what it is that they should be learning. The wide variation in the quality of teachers' marking means that pupils do not all have a clear enough picture of exactly what they need to do to move their learning on. These are points that have been identified by the school's leaders in their monitoring of teaching and learning. Although this monitoring is accurate, school leaders do not routinely record the points for development, and they do not always follow these up so that subsequent observations home in on whether or not things have improved. Nonetheless, school leaders have a generally accurate view of most aspects of the school, although their assessment of its overall effectiveness has been overly positive. Their success in turning around Early Years Foundation Stage provision and the slowly rising progress in the classes for older pupils show the school's satisfactory capacity to improve. A notable strength of leadership and management in this school is the strong partnership that they have built with parents and the local community. Parents point to the way initiatives, such as a recent course run for them, have helped them to give their children more positive support at home. The opportunities that pupils are given to learn about their own and other cultures help to promote the harmonious relationships at Nightingale Primary between pupils from diverse backgrounds.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved considerably since the last inspection. This is the result of good leadership and management, and systematic tracking procedures that help children to build on what they learn and to make increasingly rapid progress, especially in the Reception year. Good teaching enables children to overcome barriers to their learning and development, so that, as a parent explained, 'My son has really thrived at Nightingale.' There is a good mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Children are given stimulating opportunities to acquire early literacy and numeracy skills. As a result, they eagerly count and use numbers, whether they are at the sand tray or in the home corner. They enjoy spelling out the sounds of letters around the room and then using the letters to write their names. Adults in the Nursery do not always use questioning to encourage the children to think their ideas through. Nevertheless, from their starting point, which is well below that expected for their age, the children make good progress to attain broadly average standards by the end of the Reception year.

What the school should do to improve further

- Set work in all lessons that is matched to pupils' different abilities and particularly so that more able pupils are challenged and extended.
- Ensure that pupils understand what it is they are expected to learn and that all are given specific guidance through marking that sets out how they can improve their work.
- Help to raise attendance levels by illustrating clearly to parents the impact of absence on their children's attainment and progress.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by recording points for development when lessons are observed and more rigorously following these up on subsequent observations to check that improvements have been made.

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

Although pupils have not all made steady progress, their achievement is satisfactory and their key literacy and numeracy skills prepare them appropriately for the next stage of their education. Standards, which have been below average, are beginning to rise. In the Year 2 assessments initiatives such as ISP have started to increase the number of pupils attaining the nationally expected standard in mathematics. Few exceed this standard to attain the higher level, however. Although the school has followed various educational schemes to boost standards in writing, these have been less effective and writing standards have remained low. This is due, at least in part, to some teachers not having been fully trained in how best to use these programmes. With children making notably faster progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, current standards in Year 1 are, in turn, on the rise. In the Year 6 national tests standards fell sharply in 2007 and pupils in that year did not make the progress that they should have made. Measures taken in response to these poor results were successful in sharply raising standards in 2008, so that pupils surpassed the low targets set for them. Current standards in Year 6 are broadly average. Pupils with speech and language difficulties, and those with social, emotional and

behavioural difficulties, are helped to make similar progress to the others in their classes. The same is true for those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English, including those who join the school part-way through their primary education.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils are friendly, welcoming and polite. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Those pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties increasingly learn to control their behaviour, so that behaviour in the large majority of lessons is good. Pupils are attentive and listen well to their teachers and to each other. Around the school building they are generally polite and friendly and treat each other with respect. That some poor behaviour remains, however, is evidenced by the relatively high number of short-term exclusions. Pupils say that in the playground there is much 'dissing and cussing' and not all express confidence that playground squabbles are dealt with promptly by staff. Pupils have a good understanding of the need for exercise and a healthy diet and they enjoy the responsibilities they have within the school, including those for developing an ecologically sound vegetable garden. Their concerns for the wider community are reflected in their support for several charities, including a project to collect contributions for children in Africa. Pupils enjoy school, but their attendance remains inadequate because too many pupils are taken out of school for holidays in term time. Though pupils show a growing pride in their school, many take insufficient pride in the presentation of their work. In some cases untidy presentation spoils some work, and can itself be the cause of errors, for example in arithmetic.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The last inspection found a sharp variation between key stages in the quality of teaching and learning. That is no longer the case. There are examples of very effective teaching in both the older and younger classes, with lessons which are conducted at a brisk pace that engages the pupils and motivates them to work hard and to try their very best. Teaching assistants are used well to support those who need extra help with their learning, but they are not always deployed as effectively as they could be when the teacher is talking to the whole class. Although there is a very wide range of ability in each class, teachers do not all take enough care to match work to different pupils' abilities. When all are given similar work to do, the more able pupils are not challenged enough. Teachers routinely set out a 'learning objective' at the start of each lesson, but too often these just list the activities to be carried out. This means that pupils do not always know what they should be learning and so are not always clear about the progress that they are making.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

School leaders are in the process of reorganising the curriculum so that subjects are linked together more creatively and to ensure that pupils are better helped to build on what they have learnt before. These arrangements remain at an early stage, however. This limits the opportunities pupils have to build and apply their literacy and numeracy skills through other subjects and does not offer pupils the chance to learn about topics in much depth. Nevertheless,

pupils have the benefit of some very good facilities, including a large dedicated art room and a computer suite large enough for whole classes to be taught together without pupils having to share equipment. The school has earned a Sportsmark award for the sporting opportunities afforded to pupils, some of whom achieve notable success in competitions against other schools. Another notable feature at Nightingale is the opportunity given to every pupil in Year 4 to learn to play the violin or guitar.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Nightingale caters well for the welfare of its many vulnerable pupils as well as for their families. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning English are generally well supported. Staff help those new to the school and sometimes new to the country to settle in, often 'buddying' them with a child who speaks the same language to help introduce them to English and to the school's routines. There is similarly good support for those pupils who need extra help with their learning, especially for some of those with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Despite the many good arrangements for pupils' well-being, some pupils say they do not feel that playground incidents are dealt with adequately by adults. School leaders share the concerns voiced by several parents about the need for the playground to be resurfaced to eliminate the potholes and puddles. Pupils have targets to identify what they need to focus on to improve their work, but they do not all routinely refer to them and not all know what their targets are. Marking varies widely in quality. The best helps pupils by setting out the next steps in their learning, but in some classes some marking merely acknowledges the work has been done. The school has taken action to tackle its high absence rates; this has had some success, but it has been limited by the number of parents who continue to take their children out of school during term time.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership team has been restructured and leaders are beginning to have more impact on standards, making use of a range of national programmes and initiatives and drawing well on support from the local authority. However, some of the targets for the future could be rather more challenging, particularly in regard to the expectations of more able pupils. Parents have noticed changes for the better. As one commented, 'The headteacher has a very good relationship with the children and a lot of things have improved.' The improvement in the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage has been impressive. The headteacher, governors and leadership team have also responded well to parental concerns over the number of temporary teachers that followed from a period of extended staff absence. They have ensured greater stability by appointing a permanent member of staff to cover when class teachers are away. These improvements and the high-quality work being done to promote community cohesion by developing constructive partnerships with parents and the wider community, show the key strengths of the leadership and management. What is not as strong is the rigour with which initiatives are followed up, for example in the recording of leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning and in the speed in which planned curriculum changes have been introduced. This limits the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation. Governors are supportive of the school and have a good understanding of the school's important role as a hub of the community, but

they do not do enough to challenge school leaders over achievement and standards to help accelerate the pace of improvement.

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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 ¹ 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

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?	3
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	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	4
The behaviour of learners	3
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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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**

11 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Nightingale Primary School, London, N22 8ES

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. Nightingale is giving you a satisfactory education.

We were impressed by how interested you all are and how much you know about all the different countries and backgrounds your friends come from. You also get to do lots of interesting things in art, music and sport.

We were pleased to see how good the behaviour was in most lessons, but we were sorry to hear that there are playground incidents that worry some of you. Always tell a teacher or another adult if there are playground arguments that need sorting out.

The headteacher and staff have helped to make some great improvements in the Nursery and Reception years, so children get off to a faster start. Improvement has been slower, though, for those of you in the older classes. You do reasonably well, but standards are below average and we would like to see you making faster progress. We have asked teachers to make sure that they are not setting some of your work that is too easy. We have also asked that when staff come in to visit each other's lessons, they make a note of ideas for changes that might help you to learn faster, and that they then look to see whether changes have been made next time they come in to a lesson.

Although your teachers set out learning objectives for each lesson, these do not always make it clear what you should be learning. When your books are marked, you sometimes get helpful comments that show you how to improve your work, but that is not always the case. These are things we have asked the school to improve in order to help you make better progress. You can help too, by making sure you know your targets and doing your very best to achieve them.

Of course, one reason why some of you do not do as well as you could is because you miss too much school. We have asked staff to make it even clearer to your parents how much better children do when they do not miss lessons.

Our very best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Selwyn Ward

Lead Inspector