

Eldon Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101987
Local Authority	Enfield
Inspection number	307867
Inspection dates	1–2 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Peter Sudworth

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	552
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Bob Eves
Headteacher	Ms Julie Messer
Date of previous school inspection	14 June 2004
School address	Eldon Road Edmonton London N9 8LG
Telephone number	020 8807 4763
Fax number	020 8803 3724

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This much larger-than-average junior school has almost double the percentage of pupils who have learning difficulties compared to the national average and a much higher percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. Just over three fifths of the pupils speak a language other than English as their first language. However, only a very small number of these are at an early stage of learning English. Four fifths of the pupils are from ethnic minorities.

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. Pupils achieve well in a happy environment. They reach broadly average standards from below average starting points. This is because teaching is good and the curriculum is well organised with good attention to English, mathematics and science. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their education and develop into mature young people with a zest for life and for learning. As one pupil said, 'As well as learning, we have fun.' They are very keen to do their best. Their very good attitudes in lessons and their tremendous enthusiasm for the extra activities support their good progress. They talk with much pride about their school, the very good relationships among themselves and between staff and pupils. Pupils know that exercise and a good diet are important for good health and understand how to keep themselves and others safe. They take part readily in daily exercise and make healthy food choices. Pupils themselves engage well in local community activities for example, their regular sporting activities with other schools.

Parents overwhelmingly agree that the school has many good features and feel that the pupils get a good start in life. As one parent writes, 'Pupils are well motivated due to interesting, well structured activities which allow them to explore and learn in a very creative, caring environment.' Staff care deeply for the pupils and take a very genuine interest in each one. There is a good team spirit and a desire to provide the best for each individual pupil. Staff very largely succeed in this aim. Very careful oversight of, and provision for, pupils who find work more difficult and those who speak little English enable these pupils to make similar rates of progress to other pupils. Part of the school's ethos is, 'If we don't deal with pupils' learning needs, the need will be there for ever.' This maxim motivates successful action to help pupils get over their difficulties.

Staff know how well each pupil is progressing. Nevertheless, pupils do not always know well enough themselves how they can improve their work. This is because marking and the scrutiny of pupils' work lack consistency across the school. For example, staff do not make sure that pupils' always present their work neatly enough and that handwriting is of a good enough quality. When some staff monitor pupils' work, they sometimes miss important features that could be improved, such as when pupils write down incorrectly their 'tricky' spellings that have to be learned.

The school is very well led with a clear focus on raising standards and a positive 'can do' culture. Governors are strongly committed to its work and to enhancing even further the provision for both pupils and the families in the area. The school very accurately assesses its own strengths and areas for development and then takes action to improve. These factors, together with the commitment of the staff, provide it with a good capacity to improve further. For example, pupils' writing skills, particularly boys, have not been as strong as other areas of work. In response, staff have made the stimulus for writing activities more appealing to boys, changed the teaching arrangements and boys' writing has improved. Speaking skills are also weaker because pupils have a limited range of vocabulary. Staff have increased the times they read stories to pupils. There are some signs of improvements in these aspects as a result, but the school recognises that further work is required. This fully inclusive school prepares the pupils well for their future education and is never complacent.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' speaking and writing skills, particularly boys' writing skills, so that standards improve further in English.
- Ensure that the quality of marking and scrutiny of pupils' work are more effective in helping pupils to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Attainment on entry is improving, but was well below average when the older pupils joined the school. Most pupils make good progress in reaching broadly average standards by Year 6. Able pupils do well. In 2007, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level was almost the same as those nationally. Some groups of pupils, such as Asian and Black Caribbean pupils, attained more highly than similar groups nationally. Turkish girls do not always attain highly enough, especially in mathematics. Boys' attainment in English has lagged significantly behind that of the girls. However, the school's strategies, such as providing writing tasks that appeal more to boys' interests is bearing fruit and their progress is now accelerating. Pupils who initially have difficulties in reading and writing and those whose first language is other than English make good progress. This is because they receive individual attention and regular tuition that promote their confidence and skills very effectively. Nevertheless, writing and speaking skills remain areas for further improvement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils show excellent levels of respect for one another's cultures and beliefs. Behaviour is good. As one child stated, 'Every one tries hard to be friendly and kind to each other.' Pupils work very well in lessons and are most attentive. They display firm views on justice and fair play. Pupils contribute extremely well to the school's orderly community through their various duties, such as running the school's healthy tuck shop. They make very mature suggestions to create orderly playtimes. They suggested outside musical instruments and benches, which are used well. Pupils have an excellent understanding of, and practise, healthy and safe living, such as daily exercise and sensible food choices. They contribute very well to various charities and the choir sings locally. They are extremely well versed in environmental matters and the school has won several awards. Pupils transfer to secondary school as confident and well-motivated individuals and well prepared for the next stage of their education. Their attendance is above the national average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Some teaching is outstanding and in these lessons, pupils do not want to stop working. Teachers have very good relationships with all pupils, manage them very well and structure lessons effectively. They match the work very effectively for pupils' different needs and capabilities, utilising the good skills of the teaching assistants extremely well. Teachers occupy pupils purposefully and so they make good progress. Good questioning engages pupils' interest. Lots of opportunities for investigation in science and mathematics promote their problem-solving

strategies effectively. Staff's skills in using modern technology to present lessons are developing rapidly, as are their skills to use computers in different subjects. Marking is satisfactory, but not always as helpful as it might be in helping pupils to improve. They do not always ensure that pupils present their work neatly enough. Staff are extremely willing to try new strategies. These are often successful, for example in boys' writing, and this is leading to boys' greater success.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Staff plan the curriculum flexibly over a two-year period and make it relevant to pupils' own experiences and background, such as Black History Week. It mostly meets requirements with a good emphasis on the basic subjects, but geography is not as strongly developed as other subjects. Very good provision for personal, social and health education contributes very well to pupils' outstanding personal development. The provision for pupils who have difficulties in English, mathematics and science, or who speak little English, is very good. Special weeks with imaginative choices, such as the recent 'Flower Week', add a liveliness and enjoyment to the range of work pupils undertake. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities with sport and music having a high profile. Visits to a range of museums, such as the Geffrye Museum, and visitors help pupils to understand their learning more fully. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily in different areas of learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff take excellent care of all the pupils so that they feel very secure and safe. The procedures for child protection are very thorough with regular training to update staff. Support for vulnerable pupils is exemplary with a strong focus on pupils' emotional needs. The school has excellent links with external agencies and has been instrumental in planning a 'virtual children's centre', soon to be operative on the school's site. The school works very hard to make links with parents so that home and school work closely together. The staff work very well as a team in understanding pupils' individual circumstances and responding to these.

Analysis of the progress that different groups of pupils make is very thorough. The information is used very well to plan extra help where this is needed. However, pupils are not yet well enough aware individually of how they can improve their work or what they must do to get to the next level in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and deputy headteacher form a very good working partnership and give a strong lead and sense of direction. The new assistant head has a clear overview of the curriculum and contributes well to the leadership team's work. These factors are leading to continuous improvement. There is a very clear vision for the school's future development. Self-evaluation is outstanding, accurate and very honest. The senior management team is supported well by the governing body, which is very well led and with a very good core of governors. Governors contribute well to the school development plan, which has a clear focus on raising standards

further. Some governors have specific subject or aspect links, which enable them to have a good knowledge of the school.

Year and subject leaders have a clear understanding of their roles. They report on their responsibilities regularly and maintain a careful oversight of individual pupils' progress. However, marking and scrutiny of pupils' work are not yet rigorous enough in identifying and pursuing issues that could help improve pupils' attainment further, such as imperfections in the spelling systems and in ensuring that pupils always present their work neatly enough. Leaders at all levels set a good atmosphere within the teams so that there is a very good sense of harmony and much endeavour.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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?	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	1
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	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

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	1
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

11 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Eldon Junior School, London, N9 8LG

Thank you very much for your help, for sharing your work with us and talking to us about your school when we visited. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit. You attend a good school. We were very impressed with your development as young people. This is an outstanding feature of your school. You get along so well together and show much respect for one another. You contribute to the school very effectively by the roles that you fulfil. We do not often see musical instruments outside at playtimes but what a good idea, and one that you suggested yourselves. Your attitudes in class are very good and you make good progress as a result. You reach standards that are expected for your age. You exercise regularly and have an excellent understanding of living safe and healthy lives.

The overwhelming majority of your parents are very happy that you attend Eldon Junior School because it has so many good things about it. The teachers make your lessons interesting, but they do not always make sure that your work benefits from their marking and their monitoring across the school. Your writing and speaking skills have been the areas which you can improve most, particularly those of the boys. The staff have been working to improve your skills in these areas but more could be done. We have asked the staff to give these matters further attention.

The school is very well led and managed and the governors are keenly involved. You have a good range of work to do and many opportunities for participating in extra-curricular activities. The staff take excellent care of you and work very well together as a team.

Thank you once again for your welcome and your helpfulness. We wish you well for the future and hope that you will lead successful and happy lives. Congratulations and 'well done' for your part in contributing to the good school that you attend.

Yours sincerely

Peter Sudworth

Lead Inspector