

Singlegate Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102647
Local Authority	Merton
Inspection number	323671
Inspection dates	19–20 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Lynne Kauffman

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)	239
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	Ms Katy Willison
Headteacher	Mrs Nathalie Bull
Date of previous school inspection	7 December 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	South Gardens Colliers Wood London SW19 2NT
Telephone number	020 8395 8737
Fax number	020 8543 7129

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Singlegate Primary School is a popular and oversubscribed school of average size. The school educates pupils from many different backgrounds. Many speak English as an additional language and, in total, 19 different languages are spoken by pupils. The school has an Early Years Foundation Stage, which is made up of a Nursery and a Reception class. The proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have declined recently but are still above average. A high proportion of families claim free school meals. The school operates after school and breakfast clubs, which are run by the governors. The school has retained the Basic Skills Quality Mark for the second year and has a distinction in London's Environmental Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Singlegate Primary is an excellent school that prompts outstanding achievement from its pupils within a harmonious community. Links with pupils' families are especially strong and ensure that learning does not stop at the school gates. Parents feel particularly well supported; one parent explained, 'This school has given us (my family) our life back.' Parents are proud of the way the school works in tandem with them. One parent encapsulated others' views by saying, 'Children at this school are a wonderful example; I have never met a more polite, enthusiastic, courteous and confident bunch.' Inspectors agree, because pupils' behaviour and attitudes are outstanding. The school is a calm place where pupils feel safe and confident because they know what is expected of them. Relationships are very friendly and respectful.

Pupils do well because of the excellent leadership and management that looks for solutions rather than problems. The school has raised standards since the last inspection. In addition, the quality of leadership has been strengthened. Leaders are reflective and ambitious and use the whole community when seeking out areas for school improvement. The governing body have an excellent working knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. They challenge the headteacher and staff with probing questions and often seek the views of the 'School Engine' (school council). The school's sustained drive to raise standards through thorough effective analysis, monitoring and evaluation indicates a continuing excellent capacity for improvement.

Children's skills and knowledge on entry to the Nursery are very low compared with those expected for their age. As a result of excellent teaching that meets all their needs, pupils leave at the end of Year 6 with above-average standards, which represents excellent achievement. Pupils receive outstanding academic guidance and staff set challenging targets for pupils to meet. Pupils' opportunities to evaluate their own and each other's work, and decide how to improve, are variable. They are best in Years 5 and 6, but limited in other classes. Teaching and learning are very impressive and lead to pupils' very good progress. There is consistency in the quality of lesson-planning, highly effective use of teaching assistants and rigorous tracking that consolidates pupils' progress. These especially strong features demonstrate the school's mission statement of consistency through 'One school - One Dream - One Vision'.

Pupils have admirable self-discipline that, together with the purposeful and creative curriculum, prompted comments from the majority of pupils. One said, 'We love school.' One pupil explained to her mother that she loved school so much that she 'can't understand why teachers can't go to school at the weekend'. All children have a clear understanding of how to stay safe and they know about the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The school's best SEAL practice (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) is shared with other schools by a DVD that has been produced about Singlegate's work. This open and enabling school fully deserves its excellent local reputation.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision for this age group is outstanding and reflects the very effective leadership. There is a clear emphasis on updating staff training, which has a successful impact on the overall effectiveness of the provision. Children get off to a very good start because of the thoughtful induction procedures and the approachability of staff. Staff give children's well-being and

welfare a high priority. Consequently, they feel safe, happy and secure. Close liaison between parents and the school ensures strong family links that are valued by parents. A parent commented, 'We are impressed by how we are able to get involved as parents.'

Children make excellent progress from their often very low starting points. Careful monitoring to track children's progress, exceptional teaching and very high-quality support results in children working securely within the levels expected for their age by the time they join Year 1.

The inspiring environment motivates children to become engrossed in what they do. Activities are linked to different topics, so that all six areas of learning are included and learning is relevant to each child's need. Observation and records of children's involvement in activities are thorough but do not always allow children to work problems out for themselves. The newly developed outdoor learning area contributes greatly to the very high-quality play-based learning. For example, children learn all about growing and harvesting vegetables.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend opportunities for pupils to review and assess their own and each other's work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards have improved year on year since the previous inspection and the vast majority of pupils are making exceptionally good progress from their often low starting points. This is because teaching, learning and assessment work together to track and target where pupils need to improve. For example, the pupils currently in Year 6 are well on track to attain well above-average standards from starting points that were significantly below average at the end of Year 2. The same picture of improvement is mirrored in the performance of the younger pupils. The school's tracking data show that pupils in Year 2 are well on track to attain high standards in reading, writing and mathematics in 2009. Pupils are achieving their challenging targets. Those pupils who find learning difficult and those who speak English as an additional language are making similar outstanding progress to other pupils. The second award of the Basic Skills Quality Mark acknowledges the schools' consistent strengths in promoting literacy and numeracy.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are a real strength of the school because every pupil is valued as an individual and, in turn, they feel total confidence in the staff. Relationships are excellent. The school's strong management of pupils' behaviour and the emphasis on moral and social values contribute to pupils' excellent attitudes and respect for others. This was illustrated well during an assembly on 'feeling good'. Pupils sing in a joyful and uplifting way, reflecting their outstanding spiritual development. High-quality artwork, as well as work on many different subjects, is a powerful testament to the pupils' positive self-esteem, interest in learning and confidence. The pupils' awareness of protecting the environment was celebrated through their distinction in London's Environmental Award. Pupils have gone on to develop a bio-station to enhance this work.

Pupils understand why they need to eat healthily and the School Engine (school council) has produced a healthy eating flyer to advise parents about the best food for lunch boxes. Pupils enjoy lessons that encourage fun and fitness; for example, children tested their heartbeat after

running frantically on the spot for two minutes so they understood how exercise works the heart. Feelings and emotions are successfully explored. Attendance is good because pupils love to be at school and they happily follow school rules. The School Engine makes many suggestions which are acted on. For example, members have produced an improvement plan for the girls' and boys' toilets. Pupils' strong basic academic and personal skills, together with their excellent teamwork, ensure that they are thoroughly prepared for the next stages of their lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

All groups of pupils achieve extremely well because the teaching is of outstanding quality. Excellent planning, using lively starters to lessons, engages pupils immediately. Relationships are exemplary and, as a result, pupils work extremely hard and learn at a very good rate. Topics are very clear and build on what has gone before, taking very good account of pupils' differing needs. Learning is particularly effective when teachers give pupils very good opportunities to learn independently and use their initiative. Pupils are very clear about what they are to learn and settle quickly to individual and cooperative tasks. Marking is very effective in praising high-quality work and equally teachers highlight areas where pupils could improve. On a very few occasions the pupils spend too long on the carpet listening to instructions and explanations, so progress is not as rapid. Pupils reflect on their learning most successfully in Years 5 and 6 but, in the school as a whole, this is not yet consistent enough.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum brings learning to life. For Years 5 and 6 it is exceptionally varied, and it challenges learner's creativity exceptionally well. The whole curriculum is organised and ensures that pupils reach a high level of excellence and have plenty of enjoyment. Good use has been made of support from the local authority to aid developments. All classrooms are bursting with brilliant examples of pupils' work. Fantastic corridor and classroom displays celebrate pupils' pride in their work. Teachers have easy access to excellent, well-organised resources that stimulate learning. Whole-school events such as 'We love reading' illustrate the successful emphasis on basic skills and communication. Art demonstrates a rich range of cultural experiences. Effective drama, music and French give opportunities for pupils to express themselves as performers. Pupils' confidence has brimmed over with the introduction of the SEAL personal development programme. This has helped many pupils gain confidence in taking a leadership role in class discussion, participating in whole-school responsibility and taking more responsibility for their own learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

All staff assign a high priority to the care of all learners. As a result, pupils are confident in seeking help when they have problems and they feel safe. Valuable links to external agencies and support services extend the outstanding care provided for pupils in the school. The school shows a very strong commitment to including pupils from all backgrounds, abilities and learning needs. Effective policies underpin the school's safe and secure environment. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are clear and robust. Teachers know their pupils well and track their progress

with meticulous care. All staff use rigorous and well-tried procedures to monitor the academic and pastoral progress of pupils; the school puts emphasis on the importance of balance between these two elements of pupils' development to match society's changing demands. During the inspection it was clear the impact of strategies for pupils' peer and self-assessment were stronger in the upper school. The school has developed close links with local upper schools to prepare pupils for their secondary schools.

The good after school club and breakfast club are growing in use. The clubs are managed by the school and monitored by the governors. Children come to the after school club with energy to continue learning because of the wide variety of practical activities on offer. However, the club is based in the library, which lacks the space the club needs to expand. Relationships are good and the qualified play leaders encourage teamwork and completion of activities. All provision for care and welfare meets requirements. The club's planning illustrates a broad range of creative work. The club have access to the secure outdoor spaces. Risk assessment is in place. Well-planned provision for breakfast and tea has an emphasis on healthy eating. Parents expressed positive views on the clubs' organisation.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The quality of leadership and management has moved forward dramatically since the last inspection. Under the excellent and dedicated leadership of the headteacher, responsibilities have been distributed across the staff. The school is in an excellent position to improve further. The school mission statement 'One school - One dream - One vision' puts an emphasis on dreams and aspiration for all pupils. Direction provided by the dynamic senior leadership team focuses on the school's common purpose to develop happy, reflective pupils who will grow to be well-balanced citizens of the future. Pupils show empathy and consideration for other beliefs in countless different ways and this contributes greatly to the school's good promotion of community cohesion. The excellent inclusion record ensures that all pupils have equality of access to all school activities. Parents are valued and involved as volunteers. For example, grandfathers and fathers were involved in a story-telling afternoon. Community activity is exciting and staff use every opportunity to involve the school's neighbours. Community cohesion developments are getting stronger.

Staff are helped to develop professionally and the close involvement of all friends of the school in shaping its future creates a sense of collective ownership and the desire to be persistent in driving up standards and achievement. The school has excellent procedures for reviewing and checking its work, resulting in outstanding self-evaluation that is a detailed and honest reflection of the needs of the school community, and ensures the involvement of the wider community.

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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?	1
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	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

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?	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

01 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Singlegate Primary School, London, SW19 2NT

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. You were so friendly and helped us to see how much you were enjoying school. We were amazed at the wonderful displays of work that you are so proud of, and enjoyed talking to you about the things you like best in school. Some of you told us: 'Singlegate is a brilliant school.' You and your parents are right to say that Singlegate is an excellent school.

We saw that you all behaved extremely well and had lots of enthusiasm in lessons to do your best. All of the staff work very hard to make sure you are well cared for and feel safe, especially when you go on trips like the Year 6 trip to France. You know what to do to be healthy and the exciting extra-curriculum work inspires you to be very fit. Your teachers enjoy making your lessons fun and interesting. They help you to work together and appreciate each other's beliefs so that you understand each other's cultures. We think your school has excellent leadership and management that sets high standards for you to reach.

We have suggested something to make your school even better.

- In Years 5 and 6 pupils, have good opportunities to check their own progress. We have asked your teachers to use this excellent idea across the school so that you can all assess your own work and decide what to do to improve.

We know that you will continue to work hard and help your teachers make your school even better. We wish you every success in the future, especially Year 6 as they prepare to go to their new school. Good luck!

Yours faithfully

Lynne Kauffman

Lead Inspector