



# Smithy Street School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 100941  
**LEA** Tower Hamlets LEA  
**Inspection number** 276428  
**Inspection dates** 4 October 2005 to 5 October 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Christopher Gray AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Smithy Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		London
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		E1 3BW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	02077027971
<b>Number on roll</b>	306	<b>Fax number</b>	02077028169
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Ms Ros Coffey
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15 January 2001	<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Barbara O'Carroll

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 4 October 2005 - 5 October 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 276428
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is of average size for its type. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is very high. Most of them are at the early stages of learning English. Most pupils come from homes whose socio-economic circumstances are much less favourable than average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average. The percentage of pupils on the special educational needs register is below average, though the proportion of those with statements is average. Children's attainment on entry to school is well below average.

## 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 which gives good value for money. Inspectors agree with the school's verdict that it provides a good standard of education. Provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. From a low starting point, children make exceptional progress in their personal development and acquisition of English. This continues across the school, where pupils' personal development and behaviour are outstanding. The school gives excellent care and guidance to its pupils. The school is well led and managed and teaching is good. Standards are broadly average overall by Year 6. They are best in English, showing the success of the school's work in developing pupils' language skills. School records show that progress in mathematics and science is good overall, but the teaching of mathematics is not always well focused in all classes. The school's self-evaluation process is good, but development planning could be sharper if more measurable targets were included. The school has improved well since the last inspection, especially in standards of attainment, and has a strong capacity to make further improvements.

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

\* help teachers to base their day-to-day planning for mathematics more closely on their assessment of what pupils already know\* sharpen the school's development planning by including measurable targets against which the plan can be evaluated

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children enter the school with low skills, especially in spoken English. The first language of most is a dialect which is not written and lacks some abstract concepts. They make good progress throughout the school and reach average standards overall by Year 6 and above average standards in English, thus meeting their challenging targets. This represents good achievement. Standards are higher now than at the last inspection and the results of the 2005 national tests show that pupils have made good progress in all three subjects. Standards by Year 2 remain well below average but school records show that progress is good. Writing is the weakest area and the school is working to raise standards here, as it has done effectively in Years 3 to 6. Nearly all pupils are from the same minority ethnic background and the very few who are not achieve at similar rates, as do pupils with learning difficulties. There is some variation in the performance of boys and girls in different subjects from year to year, but there is no pattern of significant difference.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and wellbeing are outstanding. Pupils' social and moral development are excellent as is shown in the very orderly and happy atmosphere.

Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and behaviour is also outstanding. Cultural and spiritual development are promoted very well and as a result pupils have a very good understanding of different faiths and cultures. Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy coming to it. They understand the need to keep safe and their outstanding behaviour contributes to their safety. Pupils know what it is to be part of a community. They are confident that they have a voice in the school and give examples of where they have had an influence - for example, in choosing playground equipment. Attendance is average. The school works hard with parents to dissuade them from trips overseas in term time, though it is this which keeps authorised absence at a bit above national levels.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

All adults and pupils work together well to create a good atmosphere for learning throughout the school. Teachers and assistants are skilled in developing pupils' English language skills. Most assistants are bi-lingual and explain unknown concepts. Good support is given to pupils with learning difficulties. The standard of care and quality of learning experiences provided in the Foundation Stage are outstanding. Teachers' planning is detailed and effective for literacy. Planning for science is increasingly focusing on practical activities. Planning in mathematics is less effective in some classes because it focuses too much on what the teacher will do and not enough on what pupils are intended to learn. Teachers do not always evaluate pupils' learning in one lesson before deciding what they need to move on to. The effect of this is that, although teachers are giving different work to pupils of different abilities, tasks do not always represent the most appropriate challenge.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school considers curriculum provision to be good and inspectors agree. The good range of visits and extra activities on offer is highly effective in promoting pupils' enjoyment and personal development. Helping pupils to speak, read and write English is a top priority. Teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their speaking skills. Literacy skills are taught thoroughly. The school uses visits to places such as museums to give exciting reasons for writing. The school has maintained high standards in creative subjects. It has made a good start on linking subjects to make pupils' learning more interesting and relevant. The school has strong and well established partnerships with employees of the Royal Bank of Scotland, to help develop pupils' mathematics, reading and ICT skills. These partnerships are very good for pupils' personal development because they provide valuable opportunities for older pupils to learn, first hand, about work in city institutions.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Child protection procedures are secure and all staff are aware of the procedures to follow. Appropriate checks are carried out on all staff before they are appointed. The school has outstanding relationships with parents and other agencies to involve them in pupils' progress. Relationships between pupils and all staff are very good and because of this pupils feel safe and secure. They know that they can go to any member of staff with problems and they trust them to help. Pupils are confident that bullying is not an issue in the school. Teachers generally give good feedback on how well pupils have done in their work and so enable them to improve and make good progress. Pupils are clear about healthy lifestyles, including diet and exercise. School lunches are healthy and appreciated by the children. Pupils are particularly vocal on safety issues, quoting examples of how the school has taught them skills which could save a life. Parents hold the school in high regard and know that their children are safe and well cared for.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

This school is led and managed well. The local community holds the school in high regard. The head and deputy work extremely effectively as a team. They provide a strong sense of direction and focus on improving pupils' achievement and personal development by providing a rich and varied education. There is an exceptional commitment to pupils. Governors are proud of the school's success. They analyse the standards pupils reach and, if necessary, challenge the school to do better. The school's self evaluation is good and has led to good improvement since the last inspection. Senior staff have a strong capacity for further development. There are good systems in place for checking on how well the school is doing and identifying areas where it can do even better. Staff have a very clear picture of each pupil's standards and progress. This information is used profitably to help teachers focus on improving the attainment of groups of pupils, though greater consistency needs to be achieved in the teaching of mathematics. Development planning lacks clear, measurable targets, so the gauging of effectiveness is not as precise as it might be. Funds are used efficiently and resources are deployed well, for example, to employ a good number of bi-lingual teaching assistants, who provide very good value for money. The considerable financial investment in the new ICT suite means pupils have access to up-to-date software to support their learning. There are good and beneficial links with parents, other agencies, the local mosque, synagogue and church which support not only pupils but their families.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspectors enjoyed visiting your school this week and want to thank you for the very friendly way you welcomed them and shared your work with them. One of the things that inspectors liked best was your excellent behaviour in all parts of the school and how polite you are.

You and your parents said how much you enjoy school and you feel happy and safe there. When many of you begin school, you are just learning to speak English. All adults at the school do their best to help you with your English, and you reach good standards of speaking, reading and writing by the time you are eleven. The school is good at teaching you about many ideas and customs different from your own, so that you are beginning to learn what life in modern Britain is like. You know a lot about how to keep healthy and told us much about how you stay safe. Teaching is good in your school and the headteacher and her deputy are good leaders. All the adults in the school care very much about you.

You do well in all subjects, but your teachers could help you to do as well in mathematics as you do in English, by giving you work which follows on better from what you already know. You can help your teachers by telling them if your work is too hard or if you do not understand. The headteacher and those in charge of your school write a plan every year for how to make it better. Inspectors have asked them to keep a tighter check on how well the plan is being carried out.