

# Torriano Junior School

## Inspection report

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Unique Reference Number	100023
Local Authority	Camden
Inspection number	323214
Inspection dates	30 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Keith Williams

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

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Type of School	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	239
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Luca Salice
Headteacher	Mrs Bavaani Nanthabalan
Date of previous school inspection	12 December 2005
School address	Torriano Avenue Kentish Town London NW5 2SJ
Telephone number	020 7424 0202
Fax number	020 7284 4367

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school. He investigated: how well current pupils are achieving and the extent to which Year 6 are on track to reach their targets; how well staff use ongoing assessment to promote learning; and the extent to which pupils understand their personal targets. Evidence was gathered from: the analysis of pupils' progress; scrutiny of their work; observation of lessons; parents' questionnaires; and discussions with the headteacher, staff, the chair of governors and pupils.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Pupils at this average sized junior school come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, the largest groups being those of White British, Black African and other White heritage. The proportion learning English as an additional language is much higher than usual. A well above average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than in most schools and this includes a well above average proportion who are in receipt of a statement of special educational need. In the main, pupils' needs relate to moderate learning and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The school has a number of national awards. The school hosts an after-school club that is managed by the local authority.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This outstanding school ensures that pupils make excellent progress in their all-round development. Key factors in its success are high-quality leadership and teaching and impressively positive attitudes and behaviour. The inspirational headteacher provides a very clear and ambitious vision for the school that focuses on enabling all pupils to reach their potential. Staff, governors and pupils share this drive to achieve excellence. All aspects of the school's work are evaluated thoroughly and areas for development are tackled determinedly, often using imaginative and inventive solutions. Staff hold pupils in the highest regard and do all they can to ensure that they can learn in a safe, stimulating and supportive environment. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive. One reflected the views of many in reporting, 'Fabulous leadership and committed staff make Torriano into a wonderful place for children to learn, grow and understand...the richness of education and breadth of other activities make Torriano into a model school.'

The school's innovative approach to planning the curriculum typifies the way that staff strive to provide interesting and exciting work. The approach is very much focused on promoting pupils' personal development, particularly their role as citizens of the future. Each year pupils consider a 'key question', for example, pupils in Year 3 explore, 'What makes me a caring and active citizen?' The result is a thought-provoking programme that promotes pupils' multicultural understanding, and links subjects together in a meaningful and exhilarating way. Consequently, pupils make excellent progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They expand not just their knowledge, skills and understanding, but also gain in confidence and self-esteem. They thrive, becoming very well motivated and independent learners who work hard and are eager to please. Pupils enjoy school enormously and make the most of all that it provides. They appreciate the excellent range of activities that enrich their learning, in and out of lessons, and enjoy expressing their views (as do their parents) in the school's online forum. All pupils are taught Italian, reflecting the local area's heritage, and Years 5 and 6 learn French. Healthy lifestyles are promoted very successfully. Sport and music feature strongly and also provide opportunities for pupils to compete with others or perform to wider audiences. The global focus of the curriculum supports the school's aim to promote community cohesion very successfully, and pupils speak articulately about their understanding of 'local, national and international' issues. The exciting education offered helps the school promote good attendance. Pupils enjoy the rewards for attending regularly and a close check is kept on absences but, despite the school's efforts, a few pupils do not attend regularly.

The cross-curricular approach to planning is not at the expense of the core subjects. Literacy and numeracy, for example, are planned and taught exceptionally well, and this planning builds very successfully on the well-developed skills that pupils bring when they first join the school. As a result, pupils make excellent progress and standards are well above average. They are very well prepared for their future economic well-being. High expectations and a supportive environment are crucial to this success, and they are a potent mix. Teachers plan lessons well so that tasks are interesting, meaningful and tailored to pupils' individual needs. They set clear objectives for what pupils should learn and discuss 'success criteria' with them or, sometimes, ask pupils to decide for themselves how their success will be judged. Teachers question very thoughtfully so that, for example, the more able pupils are challenged to extend their thinking. This precise questioning enables teachers to build up a picture of who is understanding the work and who needs extra help. Because they find the work interesting and supportive, pupils join in discussions willingly. A consistent feature is that almost all pupils put up their hands to answer questions, safe in the knowledge that their contributions will be valued by teachers and any misconceptions will be handled sensitively. Teachers provide detailed written and verbal feedback for pupils and set them challenging targets for their learning, and older pupils set targets for themselves. As a result, pupils have a very clear idea of how they are doing and how they should improve.

The school tracks pupils' progress very carefully, and accurately, and uses the results thoughtfully to identify any pupils at risk of underachieving and to hold teachers to account. A wide range of well thought-out strategies is used to give pupils a boost when necessary. Teaching assistants contribute very well to this excellent provision, particularly in the support given to pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and to those at an early stage of learning English. In addition, very good use is made of outside agencies and organisations to provide a rich and varied programme for pupils identified as gifted or talented. The outcome is that pupils of all backgrounds and abilities achieve exceptionally well. Almost all, including those with moderate learning or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, go on to reach the nationally expected levels at the end of Year 6 and, in 2008, provisional results show that the proportion reaching the higher Level 5 was significantly above that found nationally. Measures showing the value added by the

school were among the top 10% nationally in 2008. Potentially vulnerable pupils receive excellent support so that they, too, achieve very well. Staff take every step to secure pupils' health and safety. Risks are monitored closely and very robust steps are taken to check on the suitability of adults to work with children. Pupils report that they feel safe in school, partly because of good site security but mainly, they say, because staff 'are kind and look out' for them.

The school has maintained its excellent effectiveness since it was last inspected. Despite this success, complacency is not tolerated. Rigorous self-evaluation, based on the close monitoring of teaching, learning and pupils' progress, and careful analysis of the impact of important elements such as the curriculum and the programme for community cohesion, is used to form challenging plans for improvement. As a result, the school continues to go from strength to strength, pupils' progress has accelerated since the last inspection, standards are higher and teaching is better. This successful track record shows that the school is very well placed to continue to improve. In the words of another parent, 'I am proud to have my children attending such a diverse and inclusive school'.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Raise attendance levels among the few pupils who are persistently absent.

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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

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

### 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	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 interest of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<sup>1</sup> 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.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

<sup>2</sup> IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

## 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?	1
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

## Letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection.

20 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Torriano Junior School, London, NW5 2SJ

Many thanks for being so friendly when I visited your school recently. A special thank you goes to those of you who met with me to share your views and opinions. You gave me lots of helpful information and I am writing to tell you what I found out.

Many of you and your parents told me how pleased you are with your school. You are right to be very proud because it is excellent. There are many reasons why you are doing so well. Firstly, your headteacher, senior staff and governors lead the school extremely well. They know exactly what needs to be done to make sure the school continues to be excellent. Secondly, your teachers, teaching assistants and all the other adults who work in school do an excellent job. They make sure lessons are interesting and challenging, keep a close check on how well you are learning, give you the help you need and make sure that the school is a safe and clean place to be. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, you behave really well, think about others as well as yourselves and try your best in everything you do.

I was very impressed with your work in lessons. Because you concentrate and work really hard, you are doing very well. You told me how much you appreciate the help you get from staff, particularly the way they encourage you. I could see that you enjoy playtimes just as much as your lessons and I was delighted to see how well you get on together. Your school is a very pleasant place to be!

Even though your school is excellent, your headteacher, staff and governors are determined that it will get even better. Because you enjoy school very much, most of you come to school regularly. However, a few of you have too much time off. I have asked the staff to continue to work with your parents to try to improve this. I know that you will want to help - remember, you can only learn well and achieve your best if you attend regularly.

I am sure that you will all keep working hard and enjoying everything you do. I wish you good luck for the future.

Yours faithfully

Keith Williams  
Lead Inspector

