

Aldersbrook Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102823
Local Authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	355266
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Madeleine Gerard

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	576
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs A Higgins
Headteacher	Ms M Mann
Date of previous school inspection	6 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 30 lessons or parts of lessons, taught by 15 teachers and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. They observed the school's work, and looked at work in pupils' books, tracking data showing pupils' attainment and the progress they are making and the school's development plans. They also considered the 100 responses to the questionnaire received from parents and carers, and the 100 responses to the questionnaire received from pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How effectively pupils' progress is being tracked and assessment information used so that all groups of pupils are suitably challenged to make rapid progress in their learning.
- How accurately the school monitors the quality of its work and ensures consistency of provision through the school so that all pupils learn and progress well.

Information about the school

This is a much larger than average primary school. The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of provision in Nursery and Reception classes. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties, or speech, language and communication needs. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is above average. A small minority of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is much higher than average. More pupils than average join and leave the school part-way through their education. The after-school club, which shares the school site, was not part of this inspection as it is not managed by the governing body. The school has achieved a number of nationally recognised awards including Singing Schools Gold and Healthy School Status. The headteacher joined the school in September 2010.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Aldersbrook Primary is a satisfactory school. Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are happy and form positive relationships with adults and other children in the Nursery and Reception classes. However, opportunities are restricted for pupils to practise and develop their skills in the outside areas. Teaching through the rest of the school, although better in a few classes, is satisfactory and enables pupils to make satisfactory progress in their learning and reach average attainment by the end of Year 6. Systems to track pupils' progress are in place. However, teachers' planning does not always use information from assessments well enough to plan the next steps in pupils' learning. Consequently, expectations about what pupils can do are not always high enough and pupils are not always set suitably challenging tasks. This means that the pace of learning is not always as swift as it should be. In a few classes, pupils know their targets and how to improve their work, but the quality of marking is not consistent across the school.

The school's strengths are in the promotion of pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy school, they behave well and make a good contribution to the community. For example, pupils take part in the selection of new members of staff, the gardening club tends the school's allotment and the school choir sings for local elderly residents. Pupils are friendly and welcoming. Good gains in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enable them to show care and consideration for one another. For instance, pupils ensure that those who join the school part-way through their primary education make new friends quickly. Fund raising for a wide variety of charities, including a school in Africa, reflects pupils' generosity of spirit and promotes their awareness of those less fortunate than themselves. Attendance has risen since the previous inspection and is now average as a result of the school's promotion of regular attendance and good punctuality.

Through perceptive and accurate self-evaluation, the new headteacher has a clear understanding of the school's performance and is already raising the staff's expectations about what pupils can achieve. Priorities for action are appropriately focused although some initiatives are too recently introduced to show their impact on securing improvements. Leaders, managers and the governing body are involved in monitoring the quality of the school's work although this has not always been systematic enough to secure consistent improvements. As such, this is an area for development. Attainment has remained average since the previous inspection. Given the school's track record, for example in ensuring consistently good behaviour, developing the promotion of healthy eating, enhancements to the curriculum, and the quality of the work observed, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and increase rates of learning and progress through the school by:
 - using information from assessments to plan work that is consistently well matched to all pupils' needs
 - using marking and target setting to ensure that all pupils have clear guidance that shows them what they need to do to improve their work
 - using the outdoor areas in the Early Years Foundation Stage more effectively to develop children's learning.
- Develop and extend the skills of leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, in monitoring the school's work in order to secure improvement and consistency particularly in teaching and learning, and pupils' achievement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children join the school with skills and capabilities that are generally those expected for their age. Rates of learning and progress and overall achievement and enjoyment are satisfactory. The reason for this was illustrated in a mathematics lesson when the teaching of new learning was not sufficiently clear to enable pupils to set to work on independent tasks straight away. The pace of learning slowed because the teacher needed to explain the work again. Similarly in a literacy lesson, pupils made satisfactory gains when the work was not matched in difficulty to the range of pupils' abilities in the class. This means that the work was too easy for some and too challenging for others. Pupils made better progress in some lessons. For example, in a mathematics lesson, pupils solving time problems learned at a swift pace because tasks were suitably challenging for pupils' individual learning needs and the teacher made clear links between real-life situations and the time concepts they were learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive support from additional adults in lessons and outside the classroom in small withdrawal groups. They make satisfactory progress overall because the quality of this provision is variable. More able pupils are sometimes set work which is insufficiently challenging. Pupils who arrive part-way through their education, and pupils speaking English as an additional language receive targeted support adequately matched to their needs and make satisfactory progress.

The school's success in achieving Healthy School Status reflects pupils' positive attitudes to keeping fit and healthy. Visits from the local emergency services and advice on how to keep themselves safe when using computers support pupils' good awareness of how to keep themselves safe.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Pupils' good social skills are promoted successfully through opportunities to discuss their learning in pairs and small groups. Although additional adults are sometimes used well in lessons to contribute to pupils' learning and progress, teachers' planning does not always identify specifically what they should do to support learning to ensure that all pupils make rapid progress. When pupils are not sufficiently challenged or when explanations of tasks do not ensure that pupils know clearly what they are supposed to do, the pace of learning drops.

Music is a highlight of the curriculum. All pupils in Year 3 learn to play the violin and in Years 2 and 4 they play the recorder. Opportunities to perform regularly in school and the local community promote pupils self-esteem and develop their self-confidence well. There is a satisfactory number of extra-curricular clubs. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning because they enjoy the engaging activities they are given. However, the curriculum does not always ensure that pupils build steadily on their skills in English and Mathematics because planning does not always ensure that tasks are consistently well matched to all pupils' needs. Opportunities to ensure pupils practise and develop their literacy and numeracy skills across a range of subjects are sometimes missed.

Pupils receive appropriate support and guidance and the school knows individual pupils well. In partnership with a range of outside agencies, the school supports vulnerable pupils and those with complex needs adequately. Classroom support and additional

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sessions for pupils who need extra help with their learning, and provision to extend the learning of more able pupils, are not always well organised to support them in making rapid progress. Workshops for parents and carers, for example on literacy and computing, support them in helping their children's learning at home.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The governing body fulfils its statutory duties and safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory. The staff receive regular training on safeguarding. Community cohesion is promoted well at school and at a local level. Pupils have a good awareness of themselves as part of the school and local community and through links with a school in Uganda they have an understanding of the life of those who live in contrasting global communities. However, the governing body has not ensured that the school is systematically evaluating its work to promote community cohesion in order to plan further developments. The school's systems to ensure that monitoring secures sustained improvements in teaching, learning and outcomes for pupils are not always as effective as they should be. The governing body is supportive but in the past it has not done enough to challenge the school over pupils' progress and achievement. This, together with some inconsistency in how well and how swiftly pupils' progress information is analysed, is why leaders and managers drive improvement and embed ambition soundly. The school's work to tackle discrimination and promote equality is satisfactory, although there are some inconsistencies in ensuring that the needs of all pupils are consistently well met.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children share equipment and work and play well together. For example, during the inspection, children in the Nursery enjoyed exploring the snow in the outside spaces together and encouraged one another to come back inside when they began to feel cold. Children in Reception thoughtfully shared gloves with one another to keep hands warm while outside. Independence is fostered well. Children in the Nursery were learning about domestic tools and practised using plastic knives to spread butter on toast. In the Reception classes, children help to tidy equipment away quickly and enthusiastically. Although there is a range of skills and capabilities in the Early Years Foundation Stage, activities do not always meet the full range of pupils' abilities. This is particularly the case in the outdoor areas where opportunities for children to develop their skills in all areas of learning are sometimes limited. Records of ongoing observations are kept. However, planning does not always use information from assessments to plan further activities tailored to children's specific needs so that they make swift gains in their learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed satisfactorily.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation	3

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Stage	
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Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire is lower than is typically found in primary schools. The very large majority of respondents are happy with their children's experience at the school. The overwhelming majority of them are confident that the school keeps their children safe and confirm that their children enjoy school. Most agree that the school meets their children's individual needs. The very large majority evaluated the quality of the school's work to develop children's personal skills positively. A very small minority expressed concern about the way behaviour is managed at the school. A few felt unable to judge how well the school is led and managed and the extent that the school prepares their children for the next stage in their education. Inspection findings generally endorse the positive views of parents and carers regarding pupils' personal development. Inspectors found behaviour to be good. They found leadership and pupils' rates of progress and their academic outcomes to be satisfactory.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Aldersbrook Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	64	64	35	35	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	49	49	48	48	1	1	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	36	36	58	58	3	3	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	50	43	43	4	4	3	3
The teaching is good at this school	42	42	50	50	3	3	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	41	41	50	50	6	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	39	54	54	2	2	3	3
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	30	30	50	50	2	2	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	34	58	58	2	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	33	46	46	12	12	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	33	54	54	6	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	39	39	46	46	5	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	54	54	38	38	2	2	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



3 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Aldersbrook Primary School, London E12 5HL

Thank you very much for your friendly welcome and for helping us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit and were delighted to hear that you have been awarded a gold singing award. We particularly enjoyed hearing some of you singing together and listening to a few of you playing musical instruments in assembly. I am writing to tell you about the judgements that we reached.

Aldersbrook Primary School is a satisfactory school. You told us that you like coming to school. You behave well and get on well with one another and the staff. You have a good understanding of how to keep yourselves fit, healthy and safe. The youngest children get off to a satisfactory start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We have asked the school to make sure that children in the Nursery and Reception classes have more opportunities to learn in the outdoor spaces. You make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6, although many of you could do better.

To make the school even better, we would like it to make greater use of the information that it collects about the progress you are making. This is because we have asked the staff to make sure that all of you are set work that is at the right level of difficulty. All of you can help by telling your teachers if the work is too easy or too difficult. When teachers mark your work, we would also like them to give you clearer ideas about what you need to do to move on to the next level. Additionally, we have asked school leaders to monitor how well pupils are progressing in lessons more closely.

Finally, I would like to thank you again and wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Madeleine Gerard

Lead inspector

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