

Smallwood Primary School and Language Unit

Inspection report

Unique reference number	101021
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	376501
Inspection dates	21–22 March 2012
Lead inspector	Joanna Toulson

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	280
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Harry Cowd
Headteacher	Martin Roughley
Date of previous school inspection	3–4 February 2010
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Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	21–22 March 2012
Inspection number	376501



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Introduction

Inspection team

Joanna Toulson

Additional Inspector

Richard Capel

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 14 lessons, observed 5 hours and 48 minutes of teaching and observed 12 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school improvement plan, self-evaluation reports, data relating to pupil progress and attainment, documentation relating to safeguarding, lesson plans and pupils' work. The questionnaires returned by pupils, staff and 35 parents and carers were also scrutinised.

Information about the school

Smallwood Primary School and Language Unit is an average-sized primary school. There are two classes in Reception, with the school expanding to have two classes in each year group, rather than one. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is very high. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is more than twice the national average. There is a unit of three classes for around 30 pupils who need particular help with language and communication skills, and these pupils are taught in classes alongside the mainstream classes in the school building. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs within the mainstream school is higher than the national average. Most of the learning difficulties of these pupils relate to speech, language and communication needs, or behaviour, emotional and social difficulties. The school manages a Children's Centre which is subject to a separate inspection. The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key finding

- This is a satisfactory school. It has made rapid improvement in strengthening the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement since its previous inspection. Overall effectiveness is not good as improvements made have not yet had a full impact on improving achievement to a consistently good level.
- Achievement is satisfactory. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has been low over the last few years. However, the attainment of pupils throughout the school is improving and is now broadly average by the time they leave. While pupils' overall progress is satisfactory, it is accelerating in all classes across the school as a result of improved teaching. Pupils make good progress in the Language Unit. Otherwise, all groups of pupils make similar progress, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs.
- Whilst teaching is satisfactory over time, it is improving, with much effective teaching seen across the school. Teachers do a particularly good job of developing pupils' language skills and they provide interesting lessons with tasks mainly matched to pupils' abilities. However, occasionally tasks do not provide enough challenge for more able pupils. Teaching assistants often provide good support but pupils are sometimes over-reliant on their support and do not have enough chances to learn to work independently.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils feel safe and are polite and friendly to each other. They have a good understanding about the different types of bullying.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has been successful in providing good quality training and using performance management effectively to improve teachers' skills. In this way, it is well focused on improving the achievement of the pupils. Self-evaluation is accurate, but the monitoring of achievement is not systematic enough.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring that more able pupils are sufficiently challenged and reach their full potential as shown by the rise in the proportion of higher levels achieved at the end of each key stage
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of independence and resilience when tackling challenging activities.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - developing a clear and systematic approach towards monitoring and evaluating work across the school
 - providing clear systems for recording the information from all monitoring
 - ensuring that all weaknesses identified in the monitoring are followed up swiftly.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children join the school with levels of skills and knowledge well below those expected for their age, particularly in their communication and language skills. As a result of the improved quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children now enter Year 1 with broadly average attainment. Standards of attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 have been rising steadily over the last three years and are now average, helped by a strong focus on improving the teaching of phonics (linking letters to the sounds they make). The pupils currently in Year 6 are attaining standards in reading, writing and mathematics which are in line with the national average.

Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaires feel that their children make good progress. The inspection found that pupils' progress is satisfactory overall. However, the school's assessment information and work in lessons show that good progress is increasingly evident in all year groups. Occasionally, when the pace of work slows in lessons, pupils, particularly the more able, do not make as much progress as they could. For example, Key Stage 1 pupils sometimes spend too long drawing before moving on to their writing. Their books also show that they have too little opportunity to practise their writing skills. The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language and pupils who join the school at different times is improving due to carefully planned interventions and good levels of support in classrooms. However, while more able pupils mainly make satisfactory progress, occasionally they do not progress rapidly enough because the work lacks enough challenge for them. Achievement for pupils in the Language Unit is good because of the effective, targeted support they receive.

Pupils develop positive attitudes to learning and this is shown in the good

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presentation of their work. They take a pride in their achievements. Pupils speak proudly about their learning and how they are encouraged to 'never give up'.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire felt that teaching is good. Inspectors found that the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although improving rapidly. There is an increasing amount of good teaching seen across the school, with training being used well to boost the range of strategies used by teachers in their lessons.

Teaching contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers have created a bright, well-ordered and engaging learning environment, with displays celebrating pupils' work and providing learning prompts that pupils refer to while working. Pupils' use of language is well supported, with good use of 'talking partners' to involve all pupils in the learning, and adults encouraging pupils to talk in full sentences. During the inspection, 'Star Words' were used well in a mathematics lesson, where pupils recorded when others used particular mathematical vocabulary during the lesson. This emphasis on developing good language and key technical vocabulary is helping all pupils and especially those with English as an additional language. Effective questioning of children in the Reception classes is contributing well to their development of language skills. An example of this was seen when adults questioned children about the parts of a plant, and encouraged them to handle a variety of fruit and vegetables and write labels for a picture. Effective questioning is also a particularly strong element of the teaching in the Language Unit, where it supports pupils' good progress. During the inspection, these pupils sequenced events in the story of 'The Enormous Crocodile', where good opportunities were taken to encourage pupils to express themselves and work with their friends to act out the story. Teachers' marking in books gives good guidance on how to improve and the pupils have a good understanding of how well they are achieving and what they need to do in order to improve.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain lesson objectives clearly. However, sometimes lesson introductions are too lengthy and pupils do not have as much time as they should for the follow-up activities. For instance, in a mathematics lesson where learning was satisfactory overall, there was too much recapping of prior learning about coordinates which held back the more able pupils. Occasionally, teachers do not plan activities that challenge the more able pupils sufficiently. For example, pupils using classroom equipment to estimate length were told how to solve a problem, rather than being given the scope to find the solution themselves. Teaching assistants often provide very effective support, especially when they work with pupils right from the start of the lesson. However, pupils are too often reliant on the support of an adult to complete their task and not enough opportunities are provided for the individuals concerned to learn to work independently. It also sometimes limits the opportunities that pupils have to make progress with the learning through discussing areas with their classmates.

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour seen during the inspection was good and pupils are adamant that this is the norm, with their questionnaires showing that the overwhelming majority think that behaviour is good most of the time. Parents and carers who returned the questionnaire also support this view and believe that their children are safe in school. There is a consistent approach to behaviour management, with adults having high expectations of how pupils should behave. Adults are good role models and, as a result, pupils are polite to adults and kind to each other. There is evident care by the staff for the pupils, which is making pupils feel safe and happy. This is a very inclusive, cohesive school and there have been no exclusions for two years. Pupils know about the main types of bullying and can explain what constitutes cyber bullying and racism. They are confident that if bullying does occur, or even if pupils 'fall out', staff deal with it promptly. The school takes robust action with families whose children are persistently absent. Pupils respond well to awards for good attendance, for example the 'In To Win' strategy and, as a result, attendance has improved over time and is now average.

Leadership and management

Areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection have been largely addressed. In particular, the quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, which is where teaching was weakest in the previous inspection, has now improved and although still satisfactory overall, the proportion of good teaching in these phases has increased. The improvements made to teaching and the improved outcomes for the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, together with improving rates of progress and standards of attainment through the school, all provide evidence of the school's capacity to sustain improvements.

Senior leaders have worked with individual teachers, providing coaching and training to improve their practice and there is a coherent programme of professional development in place for all staff. Actions taken to improve teachers' practice, although generally successful, sometimes lack urgency. Senior leaders make accurate judgements on the quality of teaching and learning but current monitoring is not systematic and actions taken and their impact are not recorded. Subject leaders for mathematics and English demonstrate an informed determination to improve all aspects of learning, although some of this work is at an early stage, for example the systematic monitoring of teachers' planning and pupils' work. A new governing body has been established which is working with other school leaders to shape the school improvement plan. It is holding the school to account for progress towards achieving its aims.

Parity of achievement between different groups, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, is secured through effective tracking of progress to determine where intervention is needed to support learning. This, alongside the harmonious ethos of the school, demonstrates equality of opportunity for them. Discrimination in any form is not tolerated. The curriculum is generally matched to

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pupils' needs and is providing interesting experiences to support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, both in lessons and assemblies and through experiences such as visits to London and beyond, the 'I Gospel' singing project, and the 'Reluctant Writers' Workshop' led by visiting poets and authors which was held during the inspection. The recent introduction of laptop computers is beginning to ensure that information and communication technology (ICT) is used as a tool for learning, although ICT is not always used as effectively as it might be. The school works well with parents and carers and a 'Friends of Smallwood Primary' association is currently being developed to support this partnership. Statutory safeguarding procedures are in place.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



23 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Smallwood Primary School and Language Unit, London SW17 OTW

Thank you for welcoming us so warmly when we visited your school recently. The other inspector and I really enjoyed meeting you. You told us that you enjoyed school. We thought you were well behaved and it was lovely to see how kind you are to each other. All the staff care about how well you are doing and how happy you are. You have a good understanding about how to keep safe. You told us that you enjoy learning and taking part in the different activities available in school and in after-school clubs. We found that your school is satisfactory and, to make it even better, we have asked your headteacher to:

- make teaching even better by ensuring that those of you who manage your work quickly and easily are always given tasks that challenge you to reach the higher levels in English and mathematics
- ensure that those of you who receive extra support for learning are also given plenty of chances to work independently
- strengthen the systems for checking the quality of work carried out across the school.

You can help by continuing to work hard and telling your teacher if your work is too easy or too difficult for you. We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Toulson
Lead inspector

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