

Claremont Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131750
Local Authority	Barnet
Inspection number	360316
Inspection dates	5–6 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Helen Howard

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	395
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire Adamson
Headteacher	Elizabeth Gray
Date of previous school inspection	25 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The team observed 17 lessons taught by 14 teachers. They met with pupils, members of the governing body and various members of staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation, including its self-evaluation, policies and procedures relating to safeguarding of children and data about pupils' progress. Inspectors also considered the views of pupils, staff and the 246 parents and carers who returned the questionnaire.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The current attainment and progress of pupils in all year groups, especially in writing.
- The consistency of the quality of teaching in securing good progress for pupils.
- The success of leaders and managers in accelerating progress for all groups of pupils.

Information about the school

Claremont Primary is larger than the average school of its kind. The proportion of pupils who have a minority ethnic heritage is very much higher than the national average, as is the proportion of pupils whose first language is not English. The percentage of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above those found nationally. The number of pupils who have statements related to their needs is below the national average. More than half of the pupils join or leave the school partway through their education, a proportion that is very much higher than the national average, and many of these are pupils who speak English as an additional language or who have additional needs. The school has a number of awards, including Healthy School status and Artsmark. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage attend part time in the Nursery and full time in one of two Reception classes.

The acting headteacher has led and managed the school for two extended periods last year and since January 2011. Following the retirement of the substantive headteacher, the governing body has appointed a new headteacher to start from September 2011.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Claremont Primary School is a good, inclusive and very harmonious school that is continuing to improve under the strong leadership of the acting headteacher and senior leaders. The school has a caring and respectful community so that pupils develop strong values and an enjoyment of learning. One pupil said, 'I love coming to school, it's really fun and the teachers are so friendly.' Pupils, including those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, are cared for well and the school is prepared to go to great lengths to support them. Children and pupils feel very safe because arrangements for safeguarding are outstanding. Their behaviour is good and this is evident in lessons, around school and at playtimes. As a result, the school is very calm and orderly. Pupils get on well together. In a few lessons where attitudes to learning are not at the same high level, this is because teaching is not as stimulating. Most pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and this has resulted in the awarding of Healthy School status. Good engagement with parents and carers ensures that they have opportunities to be fully involved in decision-making about the school.

While children have a secure start to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage, their progress is satisfactory rather than good, as the quality of teaching and provision is not consistently as effective as it is in other parts of the school. In Years 1 to 6, pupils' progress increases so their attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly average. Rigorous systems to diagnose and to remedy past weaknesses and raise previously low attainment are working. The good progress that pupils make includes those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils' progress in mathematics, which was a focus for the whole school, is accelerating. Writing skills do not develop at the same fast pace consistently across the school and pupils are not as confident in using complex sentences.

As a result of the school's intensive focus on attendance, levels for most are now average and improving. However, for a very small minority, attendance is a concern. Punctuality, which was an area for improvement in the last inspection, is now good.

Teaching is good overall. It is stronger in Key Stage 2. In the majority of lessons, teachers make good use of assessment information to meet the needs of all learners, although this is not consistent across all year groups, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where it is less effective than other year groups. The curriculum offers pupils opportunities to make links across a range of subjects and provides very effective support for targeted pupils so that they make good progress. Notably, the mentoring programme for pupils helps the majority to understand what they need to do to improve their work in mathematics. It does not yet include discussions about English work. The school works effectively with partners to enhance curriculum provision, including for design and technology, art and for sports. Consequently, the school has gained the Artsmark award.

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The school has good systems in place to monitor the effectiveness of its work and self-evaluation is strong. It knows its strengths and weaknesses and plans effectively to address them. Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have reviewed middle leaders' responsibilities so that they are more involved in driving improvements, developing rigorous systems for tracking progress and improving pupils' punctuality. As a consequence, progress throughout the school is accelerating and the capacity to sustain further improvements is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' attainment in English by:
 - developing clear year-on-year progress in vocabulary and sentence construction in pupils' writing.
 - ensuring that the mentoring programme consistently helps pupils to know their targets and what to do to improve in English and mathematics.
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by July 2012 by:
 - improving the consistency and quality of teaching
 - ensuring that activities are consistently planned to match the needs of all pupils.
- For a small minority of targeted pupils, improve their attendance by
 - developing creative strategies to engage with parents and carers who may be reluctant or unable to get their child to school regularly.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Children start school with skills and ability levels that are well below age-related expectations and by the time they leave school, they make good progress. In the majority of lessons, pupils make good progress, although there are differences in the rate of progress between year groups and classes because teaching is not consistently good. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they receive very effective support from teaching assistants. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress because teachers' good planning, after clear identification of their needs, helps them to develop their language skills and take part in all activities. While pupils' attainment in reading and in speaking and listening is improving, it is not improving at the same rate in writing. Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school. They have sound basic skills and apply these well across a range of contexts. They acquire very good personal skills and develop good information and communication technology skills.

A very small minority of pupils think behaviour could be better. Inspectors found that behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. Most pupils respond well to 'The Claremont Way' behaviour policy. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, a student teacher took the role of a child who was not behaving well and was interfering with the computer. The teacher very successfully used the performance to extract from the children how to behave when sharing equipment. Pupils work well together and encourage each other to do well. They respond well to instructions from staff.

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Pupils are proud of the contribution they make in school and in the local community. They like having a say in the running of their school and they have, as a result, been able to influence decisions such as contributing ideas for a new playground area. They are reflective about the world around them and are encouraged to celebrate their rich and diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. Pupils were proud to describe the influence their faith had on them. Consequently, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Although pupils generally make good progress, some weaknesses in acquiring basic skills and the erratic attendance of a few means their preparation for later life is satisfactory, rather than good.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
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?

Teachers' good subject knowledge and positive relationships with pupils ensure that pupils are motivated to do well and make good progress. In the majority of lessons, teachers use detailed steps for learning so that pupils know precisely what they need to do in order to be successful, and were using these criteria to assess their own work. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were scaling numbers up and down and worked in pairs to check their responses against four clear statements so that they could see how much progress they had made and what they would need to do to improve. The majority of teachers use data effectively to plan activities that match the needs of learners and to

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identify and effectively support pupils who may be underperforming. They set targets and mark pupils' work effectively, so that pupils know how to improve.

The curriculum provides purposeful links between subjects and activities. For example, the 'shape jungle' created by Year 1 explored two-dimensional shapes in a piece of art work. The school's regular international day offers opportunities for pupils to explore other cultures. Pupils especially enjoy activities in school led by artists, storytellers, musicians and performers, who have inspired them to produce high quality display work including collages, masks, bowls and sculptures.

The school knows and supports its pupils very well and gives them the help they need. A range of innovative strategies to improve attendance, in partnership with external agencies, has improved attendance and punctuality for the vast majority of pupils. However, a very small minority of pupils have persistently low attendance and efforts to persuade some parents and carers about the importance of attendance have not been as successful. The school is very welcoming, especially when pupils start school. Almost all pupils and most parents and carers agree that their child is well prepared for moves between year groups and schools. The help and guidance for Year 6 in preparation for their move to secondary school is very effective. For example, in one lesson, pupils were considering how they can communicate with people who may be unfamiliar to them and were exploring a range of ways to show emotions. They were encouraged to discuss their thoughts and express any concerns so that the teacher could reassure them.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher has shown determination in creating a shared vision for improvements across the school. She has been well supported by senior leaders and managers. The effective governing body is actively involved in the strategic direction for the school and monitors the impact of initiatives. Leaders and managers plan carefully for future improvements. While more needs to be done to raise attainment further and gain greater consistency in teaching, there have been considerable improvements in progress and attainment overall.

The school promotes equal opportunities well and there are no significant differences in the performance of groups of pupils. Pupils' talents and differences are celebrated and they are confident that if discrimination were to occur, the school would manage it quickly and effectively. The school engages well with parents and carers and the vast majority who returned a questionnaire agree that the school takes account of their concerns and suggestions. Effective partnerships, including those with other schools, contribute to

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improved outcomes. For example, Year 6 pupils are offered design and technology lessons in a local secondary school so that they can use specialist equipment to make models.

The outstanding safeguarding arrangements are seen as a model for other schools, especially with regard to the vetting of staff and promoting pupils' awareness of safety in the use of new technologies. For example, when pupils use the internet, they know which websites are safe to use and how to report any concerns. Community cohesion is good. Pupils have a strong understanding of their religious, ethnic and socio-economic context both within the school and in the local community. Their understanding of those living in the wider world is a weaker aspect of their understanding.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

From a starting point which is below national expectations, children make satisfactory progress by the time they move to Key Stage 1. This is as a result of established induction systems which help children to feel extremely safe, settle happily and quickly and the positive links with parents and carers. An increased focus on developing children's speaking, listening and writing skills is beginning to have a positive impact, although it is not yet consistent across the whole setting and gaps remain. Positive relationships between adults and children make an effective contribution to children's good personal and social development. For example, in one session in the Nursery, staff's engagement with children enabled children to make active contributions of creative ideas for making mask models and this made learning fun. Adults' good teaching of the links between letters and sounds is enabling the children to develop early writing skills and spell simple words. When children are offered the opportunity to work in small groups, they are encouraged to cooperate, and this is helping to develop social skills. Subsequently, behaviour is good. Staff care well for the children and promote their health effectively.

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Systems for planning are improving and there is a balance of adult-directed and child-initiated activities. Regular assessment of children's progress ensures that staff track the rate of progress made towards achieving early learning goals. It is not yet used consistently to plan to meet the needs of all children. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff work well together as a team to plan activities to sustain the children's interest. There is a detailed action plan that reflects their awareness of the key priorities that would bring about improvements in provision, but it is not yet impacting on consistently good outcomes for children.

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 Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

More than two thirds of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, a response rate that is well above the average. Most are positive about their child's experiences in school. One parent summed it up by writing, 'I am very happy with my children's progress at school. I am very grateful to all.' The large majority of parents and carers say that their child enjoys school and are confident that their child is safe in school and feel well informed about their child's progress.

A very small minority of parents and carers felt that the school does not help them to support their child's learning. Inspectors found that there is a range of opportunities for parents and carers to support learning, including through workshops, information in leaflets and meetings with staff. A very small minority of parents and carers disagreed that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found that pupils usually behave well and that staff manage behaviour issues very effectively.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Claremont 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.

The inspection team received 246 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 395 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	132	54	102	41	9	4	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	133	54	102	41	4	2	7	3
My school informs me about my child's progress	119	48	110	45	16	7	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	89	36	127	52	21	9	5	2
The teaching is good at this school	111	45	113	46	18	7	4	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	94	38	119	48	25	10	4	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	98	10	127	52	15	6	3	1
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)	89	36	132	54	14	6	1	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	77	31	137	56	22	9	4	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	88	36	126	51	16	9	8	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	81	33	131	53	17	7	5	2
The school is led and managed effectively	90	37	124	50	12	5	7	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	113	46	109	44	15	6	5	2

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



7 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Claremont Primary School, Cricklewood NW2 1AB

You may remember that three inspectors came to visit your school recently. I would like to thank you for such a warm welcome. We very much enjoyed our visit and I am writing to tell you what we found.

Claremont is a good school that helps you make good progress. We saw how much you enjoy learning new things, especially when lessons are fun. A lot of you told us that you feel very safe in school and that you trust the adults who help you. We thought that your behaviour was good and that you get on really well with each other. You work very well together and we could see that you enjoy working in pairs and small groups. You also like the trips and the visitors who come to your school.

Although you like your start to school, we think that you can make even better progress to match the progress of pupils in Years 1 to 6.

We were very impressed with the work that we saw around the school, especially the art work. You told us how proud you were of your fund raising and how much you like to be involved in making decisions about the school.

We have asked the school to do three things to help make it even better:

- To help you with your writing skills and using your mentoring time to talk about targets in English as well as mathematics.
- Make some lessons even better by making sure that all of you have work that is at the right level.
- Help the very small number of you who are away from school too much to improve your attendance.

Yours sincerely

Helen Howard

Lead inspector

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