

Normandy Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number101450Local AuthorityBexleyInspection number363653

Inspection dates 13–14 July 2011

Reporting inspector Hilary Macdonald HMI

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 510

Appropriate authority The governing body

ChairMr Paul SmilesHeadteacherMrs Nickie ForrestDate of previous school inspection13 May 2010School addressFairford Avenue

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 23 lessons and held discussions with governors, staff, groups of pupils and a representative of the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation including the school's analysis of pupils' attainment and the progress they make, data on attendance, plans for improvement and evaluations of those plans, and policies such as that for safeguarding pupils. Inspectors analysed 72 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as 99 questionnaires from pupils and 19 from staff.

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

- The extent to which the school has improved pupils' achievement in English and mathematics and addressed weaknesses in teaching.
- How well leaders and managers have raised expectations and demonstrated capacity for further improvement.
- How well assessment information is used to support learning, challenge pupils and develop their independence in lessons.
- The rates of attendance and persistent absence, including the impact on pupils' attainment, and the actions of the school in addressing poor attendance.

Information about the school

Normandy Primary School is a much larger than average primary school, which is continuing to grow in size. Most pupils are White British, with a significant proportion of pupils of Black African heritage. An average percentage of pupils have statements of special educational needs and/or disabilities, although an above average proportion of pupils are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. The majority of these have learning or behavioural difficulties. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the normal times for transfer is high. On the same site is a Children's Centre, which is managed by a committee from the governing body and is subject to a separate inspection. Breakfast and after-school clubs run daily throughout term-time and are included within this inspection.

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

2

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. This is a satisfactory and rapidly improving school that is well on the way to resolving the issues raised at the last inspection, when its overall effectiveness was judged to be inadequate. This is because the headteacher, supported by her deputy headteacher, the local authority and other leaders have worked industriously to secure the necessary changes. There has been a rigorous and relentlessly sharp focus on improving outcomes for pupils, within a caring and increasingly aspirational environment.

The headteacher has introduced extensive systems for monitoring the work of the school and for holding all staff to account. As a result, a thorough self-critical approach now permeates the school, leading to a precise view of its strengths and weaknesses. Ambitions are high and plans for improvement are in place. These robust structures and substantial strides made since the last inspection, particularly with regard to pupils' progress and attainment, demonstrate the school's good capacity for continuing improvement.

Due to a legacy of weak teaching and inconsistent progress, pupils' achievement varies widely throughout the school and is less good in writing than in reading or mathematics. However, as a result of precisely targeted interventions, many of the older pupils, in particular, have made very rapid progress. At end of Key Stage 2 results have improved over the last two years. In 2011, attainment at the end of Year 6 was broadly in line with national expectations in English and mathematics. Focused support from local authority consultants, combined with regular monitoring of lessons and an extensive programme of staff training, has helped to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Teaching is satisfactory overall and there are examples of good teaching and learning in Key Stages 1 and 2. Despite this, inadequate teaching is not yet fully eradicated. In the better teaching, assessments are used to set learning activities which closely match the needs of pupils of all abilities, and pupils are provided with many opportunities to be active in their learning and to discuss and review their work with a partner or a group. However, the improvements are not yet fully established across all year groups and important features of effective teaching appear as strengths in some lessons but as weaknesses in others. Very limited use of information and communication technology was observed during the inspection and, in discussion with inspectors, pupils commented that they would like more opportunities to work on computers and laptops and to use more technical equipment to support their learning.

The younger children in nursery or reception classes make satisfactory progress in their learning. However, there are too few opportunities to extend their learning and well-being

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

as, despite improvements to the physical environment since the last inspection, the range of activities provided do not generate excitement, imagination or skill development.

Those pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable and those with additional needs are given the support they need to enable them to participate fully in school life. There is an unequivocal commitment to inclusion, to equality and to safeguarding pupils. The school has rightly prioritised the need to raise attendance. Levels of attendance are barely satisfactory and a small number of pupils are failing to make adequate progress as they miss so much school.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment in mathematics and English, particularly writing, so that an increased proportion of pupils in all classes meet the nationally expected levels for their age.
- Raise the overall quality of teaching from satisfactory to good, so that all pupils make good progress in all classes by:
 - ensuring that activities are appropriately challenging for pupils of all abilities
 - taking every opportunity to enable pupils to become independent learners, including providing more opportunities for pupils to discuss and reflect upon their own learning
 - ensuring pupils are fully involved in target setting and review
 - marking pupils' work in all classes and subjects to an equally good standard so that pupils understand how to improve their work further.
- Increase pupils' skill in, and application of, information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum.
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - raising the overall quality of teaching
 - planning for 'continuous' learning across the different areas of learning
 - using a greater range of resources to stimulate children's imaginative play and problem-solving skills
 - focusing more closely on the well-being and involvement of children.
- Increase attendance and reduce persistent absence to national average levels.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills often well below those typical of children this age. From this starting point, they make satisfactory progress. The large majority of pupils enjoy school, with most saying that they have learnt a lot this year. Positive relationships with teachers build pupils' confidence and encourage them to extend themselves. A notable example was seen in a Year 2 class, where pupils responded enthusiastically to a series of time-bound challenges set by their teacher,

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

including using personal whiteboards to draw upon appropriate mathematical strategies to arrive at their solutions. In some lessons, pupils were less enthusiastic as the opportunities to participate were limited. Despite this, although erratic, pupil progress is now at least satisfactory for all groups of pupils, including those in receipt of free school meals and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Where additional support is closely matched to individual needs, pupils make particularly good progress. Pupils are satisfactorily encouraged to apply their basic skills in a range of contexts, although opportunities to build and extend ICT skills are limited.

As a result of the focus given to mathematics and English, pupils' attainment in these subjects has improved. Achievement is satisfactory because pockets of underachievement remain in some year groups and the proportion of pupils reaching nationally expected Level 4 results is broadly average in mathematics and writing.

Pupils say they feel safe in school, and are generally aware of how to deal with potentially unsafe situations. A number of pupils, parents and carers commented on negative behaviour, particularly at the less structured times, including play and lunch times. During the inspection, behaviour was satisfactory. Some pupils do struggle to manage their own behaviour but effective systems in are in place to support these pupils and to keep others safe. Pupils have a fair understanding of the importance of health and fitness, although opportunities to take part in a range of health promotion activities have been limited. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and a developing understanding of wider values. An increasing number have roles of responsibility, such as being on the school council or acting as monitors. Some pupils are currently undergoing training to act as 'buddies' in September, about which they are proud.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning		
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	3	
Pupils' behaviour	3	
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles		
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community		
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	3	

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?

There are some clear strengths in teaching at each key stage but the variation in teaching from inadequate to good. The use of targets is equally variable and undermines attempts to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress. Some pupils are able to talk in detail about personal targets and their progress towards them but others are not. Planning is thorough throughout the school and in many cases resources are well prepared to help pupils become independent learners and engage purposefully with the learning activities. An example of this was seen in a Year 5 class, where interesting and relevant resources for a mathematics activity on percentages were prepared for each ability group. In this lesson, pupils also had the opportunity to use the interactive whiteboard for a mathematics quiz and then to teach their peers how to use the program. In other cases, however, there are insufficient opportunities to extend and reinforce learning through less accurate matching of task to need, and through poor use of teacher questioning to check pupils' understanding or to provide challenge.

The curriculum is heavily focused on establishing essential basic skills. Mathematics and English mornings, where on alternate days pupils spend all morning on one of these subjects, run throughout the school. Opportunities to enhance the curriculum are satisfactory, with 'theme' days such as 'French Day' making a valuable contribution to raising awareness and understanding of cultural diversity and providing some opportunity for more creative cross-curricular learning.

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

Most pupil workbooks are regularly marked and provide feedback in line with the school marking policy. Some give detailed suggestions as to how to improve and ask pupils to respond to these suggestions. Marking is not consistently followed up by pupils, but where this is the case, their learning is further supported and reinforced. In some classes, pupils are beginning to self-assess their work. The learning environment is used well in some classrooms to support independent learning further, through having mathematics and English displays that give current vocabulary and key information enabling pupils to solve problems for themselves.

Good and sensitive support is provided, in the classroom and in withdrawal groups, by skilled and committed adults for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Impressive links with the local authority ensure that pupils receive prompt access to additional support when necessary. Pupils who attend breakfast and after-school clubs are well cared for by adults who talk to, and play with, them.

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	
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The principled and determined leadership of the headteacher has successfully raised aspirations and instilled a sense of shared purpose across the school. Actions taken to identify and remedy weak and inadequate teaching have been swift and highly effective. While many leaders are new to their roles, they have been well supported by the headteacher and strong partnership with the local authority. Middle leaders are well aware of their own place in securing further school improvement; they are ambitious for the pupils, their subject areas and themselves, and make a good contribution to their improvement through tracking progress, modelling lessons, supporting planning and providing formal and informal feedback. A system of staff 'buddying' ensures that all teachers have immediate access to advice and guidance regarding improving their own practice. The governing body is fully supportive, well organised, has clarity of roles and responsibilities, and meets all statutory duties. There is an increasing focus on training and the need to understand school data and performance, enabling the governing body to fully challenge and hold the school to account. Systems for safeguarding pupils are robust. Policies are clear and consistently put into practice. Multi-agency partnerships are highly effective in ensuring pupils' safety and well-being. Risks are routinely assessed and minimised.

The school is committed to equal opportunity and tackles incidents of discrimination appropriately, as well as responding to any differing performance of identifiable groups. The school knows its immediate community well and, on the whole, pupils from all

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

backgrounds get along well together. Some links exist within the local community, such as the 'adoption' of the school by a local home for the elderly. A particularly exciting link has been made with a school in Australia. The pupils in Year 2 have made and received books of letters and questions about differing lifestyles and school experiences. This project will be maintained as pupils make the transition into Key Stage 2.

Engagement with parents and carers is improving. Continuous opportunities exist for parents and carers to come into school to discuss concerns or join activities. The recently introduced systems for email contact with individual teachers has been particularly well received, as have the parent forums, which are now actively involved in discussing and reviewing many aspects of school life, including policy decisions.

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	

Early Years Foundation Stage

Since the last inspection, considerable improvements have been made to the physical environment, including dividing a very large shared indoor space into separate classrooms. These spaces now provide more appropriate accommodation for young children. The outside area is large and could contribute very positively to learning. However, during the inspection, use of the outdoor classroom was limited. Most children make satisfactory, and some make good, progress in learning. During inspection, no aspect of provision was observed to be better than satisfactory, with some that was inadequate. The range of activities and resources, although enjoyed by many children, are uninspiring and are not sufficient to generate a sense of awe and wonder in learning. A lack of continuity across the different areas of learning reduces opportunities to reinforce new knowledge and skill. This issue is acknowledged by both senior leaders and the local authority and steps to enhance early years provision are planned. Records and planning demonstrate accurate pupil assessments and tracking of progress. Whilst focusing on the right areas, action

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

planning is not detailed enough in order to overcome weaknesses as quickly as possible. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

The response rate from parents and carers to the Ofsted questionnaire was lower than the national average for primary schools. Overwhelmingly, those who did respond agreed that their child enjoys school and the very large majority consider that teaching is good, with most agreeing that school keeps children safe.

However, some parents and carers raised concerns and these covered a broad range of issues, including pupil behaviour, consistency of staffing, and communication. During the inspection, pupil behaviour was found to be satisfactory overall and good in many lessons. Changes have been made to staffing both during the year and for the year ahead. However, these changes are well considered by the headteacher and plans indicate a stable teaching structure from September onwards. Communication systems were found to have improved over the last year, with plans in place to improve these even further.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Normandy 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 54 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 510 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	4	29	54	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	37	27	50	7	13	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	13	24	33	61	8	15	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	26	32	59	7	13	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	12	22	37	69	3	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	11	20	36	67	6	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	24	36	67	3	6	1	2
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)	14	26	29	54	7	13	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	10	19	36	67	7	13	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	15	28	52	11	20	5	9
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	7	13	34	63	8	15	2	4
The school is led and managed effectively	13	24	27	50	10	19	3	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	20	36	67	4	7	3	6

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)					
Type of school	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.

Achievement:

Progress:

Common terminology used by inspectors

	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

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:

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.

■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.

of its systems to maintain improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.

the progress and success of a pupil in their learning,

- 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.

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.



15 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Normandy primary School, Bexleyheath DA7 6QP

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school recently. It was good to have the opportunity to meet and talk to so many of you, to look at your work and to watch you learn in lessons.

Your school has got better since the last inspection, which is good news! We could see that your school takes good care of you and provides you with a satisfactory education overall. This means that some things are going well, but there are some things that could be better. Your headteacher, governors and staff have worked hard so that more of you are now achieving expected levels in English and mathematics. Your teachers have made lessons better by providing more practical activities and by challenging you to work hard and quickly! As a result, many of you have made really good progress in your learning over the last year.

To help your school improve further, we have asked that you have more opportunities to use computers and other equipment to support your learning and skills in information and communication technology (ICT) and across all subject areas. We have asked teachers to help more of you reach the expected levels for your age, particularly in writing. They will do this by making all lessons as good as the best ones and by involving you more in assessing your own work. We have also asked that the very youngest children in school are helped to get off to a better start by giving them more opportunities to be creative and develop their imaginations, for example by building with boxes, tubes and everyday items, rather than ready-made construction kits. Finally, we have asked adults in school to work with others to improve the attendance of those who miss the most school.

You can help too, by doing your very best in all lessons and by attending school every day you possibly can.

Yours sincerely

Hilary Macdonald Her Majesty's Inspector

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