

Alderwood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101112
Local Authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	376747
Inspection dates	5–6 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Derek Watts

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	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rob Stevens
Headteacher	Barbara Warren
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 May 2009
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who observed teaching and learning in 19 lessons or part-lessons, taught by nine different teachers. The inspection team examined the school's policies, assessment information, pupils' work, teachers' plans and school improvement planning. They held discussions with the headteacher, the staff, members of the governing body, parents and carers, and pupils. The inspectors analysed 56 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, along with 63 from pupils and 18 from staff.

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

- How effective is the action to accelerate pupils' progress and to raise attainment in mathematics in Key Stage 2?
- How good are the strategies to improve pupils' performance in English in Key Stage 2?
- To what extent are teachers using assessment to promote good learning and to match tasks to pupils' different abilities so that they are challenged?
- How well is the 'designated specialist provision' used to help pupils' progress?
- How rigorously are all leaders and managers evaluating performance and taking effective action to improve teaching and to raise pupils' achievement?

Information about the school

Alderwood is an average-sized primary school. Just over two thirds of the pupil population are of White British heritage. Other pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. There is a 10-place 'special resource provision' for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder. This is referred to as the 'designated specialist provision' and is a local authority facility which serves pupils from the immediate area and further afield. The school also provides 'nurture support' for up to 10 children/pupils between the ages of four to seven. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision for children in Nursery and Reception classes. A breakfast club is managed by the governing body and was part of the inspection. An after-school club is managed by the local authority and is inspected separately.

An executive headteacher was appointed in March 2011. She is also headteacher of another primary school in the borough. An acting deputy headteacher was appointed from within the staff for September 2011. A children's centre with pre-school provision is part of the school and shares the school site. This is managed by the headteacher and the governing body, but is inspected separately.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. The headteacher, senior leaders and staff show considerable determination to improve the school after a significant fall in Year 6 attainment in 2010. Inconsistencies in teaching and weaknesses in the curriculum contributed to this decline.

There are some good aspects to the school's work. Good care, guidance and support contribute well to pupils' personal development. They make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn together in a positive and safe learning environment. They feel safe and show a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Community cohesion is promoted well and pupils make valuable contributions to the school and to the wider community. Productive partnerships have been formed with other schools and agencies.

On her appointment, the headteacher, with staff, swiftly and accurately reviewed the school's performance and correctly identified the most pressing areas for improvement. She, together with new key leaders, has taken positive action to strengthen teaching, extend pupils' opportunities for writing and to improve areas of mathematics, such as mental calculation and practical problem solving. These actions are having a positive impact on pupils' learning in the classroom but the changes are too recent to have had a full impact on pupils' attainment and on their progress over time.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a sound start. Provision and children's progress in this setting are improving after a period of staff absence. Activities are not always well matched to children's needs, particularly in language and writing. The 'designated specialist provision' and 'nurture support' have experienced and suitably qualified staff. These promote good personal and social development for pupils and satisfactory progress in their learning. Pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 is more rapid than in Key Stage 2; overall, it is now satisfactory and improving. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is steadily rising from the low levels of 2010 and is broadly average.

Teaching is improving because of the action taken by senior staff, but good and better practice is not seen consistently across the school. Teachers' demonstrations, explanations and questioning promote learning well. In the most successful lessons, teachers convey high expectations, pupils are challenged well, and their learning maintains a brisk pace. In a few lessons, activities are not sufficiently well tailored to pupils' different needs, particularly the most able. In a few cases, expectations are not high enough and the pace and flow of the lesson is too slow.

Self-evaluation is accurate and realistic. The school has benefited from local authority

support. New leaders are taking positive steps to improve provision and to raise pupils' achievement. However, as recent improvements have not been sustained over time, the school's capacity to sustain improvement is satisfactory.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged 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?

- Accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 by:
 - increasing the proportion of good and outstanding teaching
 - ensuring tasks are matched to pupils' different abilities more consistently, particularly to challenge the more able
 - raising expectations of what pupils can do and ensuring that lessons move on at a good pace.

- Improve provision in areas such as language and writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage and carefully match activities to children's needs so they make good progress in all areas of learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Across the school, pupils enjoy the activities provided and show positive attitudes to learning. They spoke enthusiastically to inspectors about their learning in lessons and the range of additional activities provided. Most pupils, including the most able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress overall. Pupils in the 'designated specialist provision' also make satisfactory progress, although activities are not always specifically matched to their needs.

In a number of lessons observed, pupils made good progress in applying speaking and listening skills, particularly when discussing their learning in pairs. In others, opportunities for discussion were missed. Pupils make steady progress in reading and many enjoy the wide range of books available. Pupils are now writing for a range of purposes and in different styles because of the action taken by the school. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils made good progress in planning a story in a Second World War setting. They set the story in the past, used interesting vocabulary and structured their writing into an opener, a build-up, a resolution and end. This was a good example of linking literacy to history. Punctuation and spelling are not always accurate but these are improving. There are inconsistencies in the quality of handwriting but the school has clear plans to tackle this area. Inspired by the view from the classroom window, Year 2 pupils wrote imaginative poems.

Improving pupils' skills in mental mathematics and extending practical problem solving opportunities remain priorities, but are improving. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils had good opportunities to add several numbers together

using a range of mental strategies. They rose to the challenge, solved the problems and explained to the class clearly the method they used.

Pupils are friendly and demonstrate positive qualities, such as cooperation and consideration for others. In an assembly, they reflected on poverty in different parts of the world and the importance of kindness and helping others. Pupils show a good understanding of different cultures and faiths. Most pupils are well behaved, particularly in Year 5. However, behaviour is not consistently good in all classes. The school has a few pupils with challenging behaviour but these are well managed and supported by staff. Pupils feel well cared for at school and are confident that there are always trusted adults they can turn to if they need support. They choose healthy foods and participate enthusiastically in a range of physical activities. Pupils willingly take on additional responsibilities, such as serving on the school council. They support those less fortunate than themselves by raising funds for a range of appeals and charities. Attendance levels are broadly average. At Alderwood, pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their future lives and education. Their personal and social skills are well developed and they are making satisfactory progress in acquiring and applying literacy and numeracy skills.

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	3
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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory and improving. There are numerous examples of good practice but inconsistencies remain. Pupils know what they are expected to learn because teachers effectively share the learning intentions with them. Specific indicators or success criteria are provided to guide pupils’ learning and to help them assess their own progress. Teachers typically use questioning effectively to check

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

pupils’ understanding of new learning. Assessment systems have been strengthened. However, in some lessons, activities and tasks are not sufficiently challenging as assessment information is not used consistently well to plan teaching. Teaching assistants are usually well deployed and provide clear guidance and support for pupils who need it. The marking of pupils’ work is developing well. Good work is recognised and constructive comments guide improvement.

The curriculum’s contribution to pupils’ personal and academic development is secure and improving. A number of initiatives have been implemented to raise pupils’ achievement in English and mathematics, such as interesting extended writing sessions and practical problem-solving approaches in mathematics. Good use is made of the school’s woodland and wildlife areas for scientific study. Popular clubs include art, choir, computers, dance, drumming and recorders. Visitors and trips enhance pupils’ learning. A popular Year 6 residential visit to Dorset provides new exciting outdoor activities and develops pupils’ social and problem-solving skills.

Adults in the school know the pupils well and establish good relationships with them. Pupils, parents and carers appreciate the safe and warm atmosphere created. As some parents and carers commented, ‘All staff are friendly and approachable’ and ‘Children are well cared for here.’ Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided with the support they need to take up the opportunities the school offers. The ‘nurture provision’ serves pupils with emotional needs well. In partnership with other agencies, the school is successful in supporting pupils and their families who need additional help. The school monitors and promotes regular attendance which is broadly average and steadily improving. About 20 pupils each day take advantage of the well-organised breakfast club, which provides a good start to the day and prepares them well for learning.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The relatively new headteacher has quickly gained the confidence of pupils, staff, parents and carers. Key staff, including the acting deputy headteacher and leaders of English and mathematics, are new to their posts. Nevertheless, the headteacher, key leaders and staff are firmly focused on improving teaching and raising pupils’ achievement in English and mathematics. Leaders are fully involved in self-evaluation and have taken positive steps to bring about improvement. It is too soon to see the full impact of the action on pupils’ attainment and progress. The monitoring and development of teaching by senior staff and the local authority have had a positive impact on practice. Most of the inadequate teaching has been eradicated and there is

more good teaching. However, a few inconsistencies remain.

Members of the governing body are supportive and fulfil their statutory duties. The new chair brings enthusiasm to the post and individual governors are beginning to be more focused on the key areas of teaching and pupils’ achievement. Governance is satisfactory. Procedures to protect and safeguard pupils meet requirements and are satisfactory. However, some of the policies in this area are in need of review.

Equality of opportunity is promoted satisfactorily. Discrimination is tackled very well. However, improvements to pupils’ progress have not been sustained over a significant period. The school has a good understanding of the community it serves and promotes community cohesion well. Different cultures and faiths are promoted effectively through the curriculum. Pupils have a good understanding of the cultural diversity within the United Kingdom and in the global community.

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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills below those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress overall and attainment is usually below average on entry to Year 1. Staffing absence last year led to inconsistencies in provision and this had an adverse impact on children’s attainment and progress. Staffing is more settled and the setting is showing more consistency. Leadership and management of the setting are satisfactory. Good care, guidance and welfare mean that children feel safe, secure and grow in confidence. The school meets requirements and registration conditions for children up to three years of age.

Children enjoy the indoor and outdoor activities provided. Lesson observations indicate that teaching is satisfactory and improving. There is a secure balance of adult-led activities and those chosen by the children. Children have numerous

opportunities to explore, be creative and work independently. There are clear systems to assess children’s attainment. However, activities are not always sufficiently well matched to children’s needs, and learning can slow when this happens. Children make sound progress in speaking and listening because these skills are promoted through most activities. Occasionally, opportunities to develop language skills are missed.

Children thoroughly enjoy the stories read to them. For example, after the stories from African folklore, they made African drums and model spiders from reclaimed materials. The teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) receives good attention and children make good progress in this area. Opportunities for children to acquire and practise mark-making and early writing skills are satisfactory but could be extended. The spacious and well-resourced outdoor areas successfully encourage children to be active and purposeful learners. Some of the learning equipment and resources are old and well used but there are plans to replace these. In the woodland area, the children were fascinated by the mini beasts found and observed them carefully.

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

Nearly all of the parents and carers who returned the questionnaire are happy with their children’s experience at the school. They are particularly pleased with the safety in the school, their children’s enjoyment, and the leadership and management. These positive views reflect the findings of the inspection. A very small minority of parents and carers expressed concern about how well the school deals with unacceptable behaviour, how well they are kept informed about their children’s progress and the meeting of children’s particular needs. The school is currently working on improving behaviour and encouraging pupils to take greater responsibility for their actions. Pupils who display challenging behaviour are well managed. The new leadership team has improved the quality of information to parents and carers about their children’s progress and there are clear plans to improve this further. While teaching and the curriculum are improving, individual needs of pupils are not always met. The school is not complacent and the new leadership team is keen to strengthen its engagement with parents and carers, which is currently judged to be satisfactory.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Alderwood 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 56 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 212 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	57	23	41	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	71	16	29	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	33	59	17	30	3	5	3	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	48	25	45	1	2	3	5
The teaching is good at this school	25	45	25	45	1	2	3	5
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	22	39	29	52	1	2	3	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	41	32	57	0	0	0	0
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)	24	43	24	43	2	4	3	5
The school meets my child’s particular needs	21	38	26	46	6	11	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	29	26	46	12	21	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	36	28	50	6	11	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	30	54	22	39	3	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	30	54	24	43	1	2	0	0

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



10 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Alderwood Primary School, London SE9 2JH

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school, giving us your views and showing us your work. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit. Yours is a satisfactory school which is making clear improvements.

These are the main strengths.

- You thoroughly enjoy school and the activities provided.
- A wide range of additional learning activities is provided including clubs, visits and visitors.
- You have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and fit.
- You feel safe at school because teachers and other adults take care of you and provide good guidance and support.
- You make valuable contributions to school life and to the wider community.
- You show a good understanding of different faiths and how people live in different parts of the world.
- The headteacher and senior staff are taking steps to improve the school.

We have asked the headteacher and teachers to do the following things to improve areas of the school's work.

- Improve your progress so that you reach higher levels in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. We have asked teachers to match work more carefully to your abilities, to expect more from you and to ensure that your learning moves along at a quick pace.
- Provide more language and writing activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage and ensure that activities are not too easy or too hard for you.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard, especially in English and mathematics. We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Derek Watts
Lead inspector

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