

Parsonage Farm Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102312
Local Authority	Havering
Inspection number	376692
Inspection dates	9–10 November 2011
Reporting inspector	David Curtis

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr D Seagroatt
Headteacher	Mrs P Beaton
Date of previous school inspection	22–23 June 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 24 lessons taught by 14 teachers. Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and pupils, including the school council, prefects and members of Year 6. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation relating to safeguarding and child protection, the school improvement plan, minutes of meetings held by the governing body and data provided by the school and local authority in relation to pupils' performance in 2011. Inspectors looked at 141 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, together with those completed by staff and pupils in Years 3 to 6.

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

- Pupils' current attainment in English in Years 3 to 6.
- The progress of more-able pupils across the school.
- The effectiveness of senior leaders and managers in raising attainment in English in Years 3 to 6.

Information about the school

This is a much larger than average size primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. An increasing proportion of pupils come from a range of other minority-ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, most of whom have speech, language and communication difficulties or social, emotional and behaviour needs, is below the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average.

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

This is a good school. It has maintained the strengths identified in its previous inspection and has been successful in raising pupils' attainment in English at the end of Year 6 from being low in 2009 to broadly average for the current Year 6 pupils. Attainment by the end of Year 2 has also improved, and has been above average for the last three years. Inspection evidence and school data show that pupils currently in Year 5, and in the years below, are on track to meet the challenging targets set for attainment to be above average in English and mathematics when these pupils leave Year 6. Pupils' achievement is good and most pupils make good progress in their learning. Currently, the progress of more-able pupils in mathematics is satisfactory because teachers are not sufficiently adapting their planning to meet these pupils' needs. Pupils have an outstanding understanding of how to keep safe in the school, the community and on the internet. This is confirmed by 100% of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire agreeing that the school keeps their children safe.

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Children make good progress in learning the links between letters and sounds but less so in developing early number skills for the more able. Children have insufficient opportunities to choose their own activities indoors and outdoors as too many activities are adult led.

There are strengths in the teaching of reading and writing across the school. Teachers and teaching assistants work successfully to ensure that pupils benefit from and make consistently good progress through working in groups based on their ability. The provision of extra-curricular activities is good and there is a high take up by pupils of the many clubs offered at lunchtime and after school. All staff are effective in supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those whose circumstances put them at risk of being vulnerable. As a result, these groups make good progress in their learning.

School self-evaluation is broadly accurate. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders and managers, is committed to continuous school improvement. In this, she is supported by an effective governing body that provides good challenge and support. Taking into consideration the significant improvement in attainment since the last inspection, and the quality of school improvement planning, the school has a good capacity to improve.

Parents and carers receive high-quality information as to the National Curriculum

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levels which their children reach in reading, writing and mathematics. This information for parents and carers includes detailed next steps targets for their children in each subject. However, these targets are not shared consistently with pupils by teachers, with the result that pupils are not always sufficiently aware of what they need to do next.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - giving children more opportunities for independent learning
 - improving the outdoor learning area and encouraging greater free-flow between indoors and outdoors
 - ensuring that the teaching of problem solving, reasoning and numeracy meets the needs of all groups of children.

- Throughout the school, raise the progress of more-able pupils from satisfactory to good, especially in mathematics, by:
 - ensuring teachers' marking identifies pupils' next steps in learning
 - ensuring that pupils have and use individual targets for literacy and numeracy
 - ensuring that planning in mathematics is adapted to meet their learning needs.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children start school with skills below those expected for their age. In lessons, pupils are keen to learn and want to do well. They listen attentively and are very keen to participate in question and answer sessions. Speaking and listening skills are above average. Pupils explain clearly their thinking in lessons and there are strengths in paired discussion in the way pupils value and appreciate the views of others. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, a pupil received spontaneous applause from his classmates for his metaphor of how a pike moves through water. In the same lesson, pupils used their good knowledge of similes and metaphors to understand how authors draft and redraft poems. In mathematics, a few more-able pupils in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5 explained that their work was too easy, and inspectors agreed. As a result, in these lessons, such pupils made only satisfactory progress because of insufficient challenge. Apart from this group, all other groups of pupils make good progress, with those of below average ability often making outstanding progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those known to be eligible for free school meals make good progress. As a result, their achievement is higher than for similar groups nationally.

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Pupils say that they feel very safe in school and are confident that there is always an adult to whom they can turn if needed. Behaviour is good and pupils are polite and extremely well mannered, for example in spontaneously shaking the inspector’s hand following a discussion with a group from Year 6. Attendance is above average and reflects pupils’ enjoyment of school. The school council is effective in bringing about improvements to the school environment and prefects perform their duties conscientiously. Pupils are very supportive of local and national charities. Relationships are particularly strong when pupils work in pairs. They develop a good understanding of life in a multicultural society through links with a school in Tower Hamlets. With good attendance, rising attainment and strengths in their personal development, pupils are prepared successfully for transfer to secondary school.

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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good relationships with pupils and manage their behaviour successfully. They make good use of new technology, such as interactive whiteboards to teach new skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers’ subject knowledge of the teaching of letters and sounds is strong and a key factor in rising attainment in English. Assessment of pupils’ attainment is used effectively to create the groups in which pupils are placed for English lessons. This term, the school has adopted a new mathematics scheme. While inspectors recognise that this is a recent development, in too many mathematics lessons observed, teachers did not adjust

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

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their planning to ensure that more-able pupils in particular made good progress. In their marking, teachers are consistent in telling pupils how well they have done, but there is inconsistency in giving pupils the next steps in their learning and linking it to individual targets.

The curriculum is adapted successfully to meet the needs of most pupils, with the result that almost all groups make good progress. The intensive support programme to allow pupils to 'catch up' in English is particularly effective in improving progress and raising attainment. It provides good opportunities for pupils to use and apply key skills in other subjects, for example in history, where pupils talked enthusiastically about the Tudors and their forthcoming visit to the Globe Theatre. Pupils in Year 6 benefit from attending science lessons at the local secondary school. Over 60% of pupils attend extra-curricular activities.

Transition is good from pre-school into Reception and from Year 6 to Year 7. Teachers and teaching assistants provide very effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those potentially at risk of falling behind in their learning.

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 headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior leaders work as an effective team and have been very successful in raising attainment in English and mathematics across the school. Senior leaders have detailed data, from the assessment of pupils' learning, to support the school's ability to meet its challenging targets to raise attainment to above average in English and mathematics by 2013. While there are strengths in the monitoring of teaching and learning, there is currently insufficient focus on measuring the impact of the new mathematics scheme on pupils' progress in lessons.

The governing body is very effective in challenging the school and in holding it to account for pupils' attainment and progress. It ensures that it carries out all of its statutory duties rigorously and that all requirements for safeguarding and child protection are met in full. Consequently, parents and carers have total confidence in the school to keep their children safe. The promotion of equality of opportunity is very effective, with the result that the gaps in pupils' attainment and progress,

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compared with national figures, have closed significantly. The school is a harmonious community and discrimination in any form is not tolerated. Virtually all parents and carers agree that their children enjoy school.

The school has addressed successfully the key issue from the previous inspection to improve community cohesion. Pupils in the school from different heritages get on remarkably well with each other, most noticeably in paired discussion in lessons. The links with a school in Tower Hamlets are effective in raising pupils’ knowledge of life in a multicultural society.

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	2
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

Although children make good progress in their learning, outcomes are judged satisfactory because they have too few opportunities to be active, inquisitive and independent learners and to move freely between indoors and outdoors. Children’s behaviour is good and they work and play together successfully. They make good progress in learning the links between letters and sounds because they are taught successfully in groups based on accurate assessment of their prior knowledge.

Teachers and teaching assistants are highly effective in teaching letters and sounds because of detailed understanding of how to teach these key skills. In problem solving, reasoning and numeracy, teachers’ planning does not take sufficient account of the range of children’s learning needs, especially the more able. Outdoor learning is under-resourced, especially for physical development and staff do not encourage sufficient free-flow.

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There are good links with parents and carers both in the induction process and in ongoing links throughout the school year. Day-to-day and ongoing assessment of individual progress is good, with parents, carers and children building a detailed picture of progress through individual 'learning journeys'. Currently, there is insufficient emphasis on assessing the progress of groups.

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

Thirty-two per cent of parents and carers returned the questionnaires, which is in line with the average national response rate for primary schools. The number of returns may have been affected by the school very recently conducting its own survey where the response rate was 84%. Twenty-five parents and carers wrote positive comments with most stating that they are happy with the school and that it meets successfully the needs of their children. Where negative comments were received, they focused mainly on the view that communication with parents and carers needs to be improved and on the lack of a parent–teacher association and/or parental involvement. These comments were shared with the headteacher and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspection findings show that partnerships with parents and carers are good overall.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Parsonage Farm 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 141 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 420 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	79	56	61	43	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	101	72	40	28	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	58	41	72	51	7	5	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	72	51	62	44	4	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	84	60	51	36	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	64	45	65	46	10	7	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	61	43	72	51	7	5	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)	49	35	74	52	5	4	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	56	40	78	55	2	1	4	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	55	39	68	48	7	5	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	42	30	65	46	19	13	6	4
The school is led and managed effectively	76	54	54	38	3	2	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	80	57	52	37	6	4	1	1

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

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

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

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	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.



13 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Parsonage Farm Primary School, Rainham RM13 9JU

Thank you very much for making your contribution to the inspection through completing questionnaires, talking to inspectors in lessons and in meetings with prefects, Year 6 and the school council. The inspectors enjoyed meeting you. I am pleased to tell you that you go to a good school and that it has improved since its last inspection. These are some of the areas in which the school is particularly successful.

- You have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe in school, in the community and when using the internet.
- Most of you make good progress and your attainment is improving.
- Your behaviour is good and you enjoy coming to school, as shown by your good attendance.
- Teaching is good and helps you to make good progress.
- All adults in school know you as individuals and provide good care and support, including for those of you who may find learning a little harder at times.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governing body are determined to make your school even better.

Although you go to a good school, there are a few areas that we think will make it even better. These are to:

- make sure that those of you in Reception spend more time choosing your own things to do both indoors and outdoors
- make sure that, especially in mathematics, all of you make good progress and understand your targets.

You can all help by asking your teachers if you are not sure of your targets and what you must do in lessons. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

David Curtis
Lead inspector

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