

Parkway Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101437
Local Authority	Bexley
Inspection number	376563
Inspection dates	7–8 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Angela Konarzewski

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	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maggie Ayres
Headteacher	Nicole Bradley
Date of previous school inspection	3–4 June 2009
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed teaching and learning in 13 lessons taught by nine different teachers. Meetings were held with parents and carers, groups of pupils and staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and local authority representatives. Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised pupils' workbooks and evaluated a range of documentation, including development plans, the governing body minutes, and local authority reports. Procedures to protect and safeguard pupils were analysed, together with 56 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, and others from staff and pupils.

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

- How well pupils are making progress in Key Stage 2, especially in mathematics and writing.
- The effectiveness of current provision in meeting the differing needs of boys and girls, and groups of pupils of different ability levels and backgrounds.
- The impact of the ambitious drive for improvement and the supporting plans initiated by the new headteacher and senior leaders.
- How well information about the progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is used to identify strengths and weaknesses in their learning and inform planning to meet individual needs.

Information about the school

Parkway is an average-sized primary school serving a diverse community. Almost three quarters of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, the majority being of Black African heritage, and almost half speak English as an additional language. These proportions are much higher than national averages. In addition, a significantly higher proportion of pupils than nationally have special educational needs and/or disabilities, most often relating to difficulties with speech, language and communication. Similarly, a much higher percentage of pupils than average are known to be eligible for free school meals, and a high proportion of pupils join or leave part-way through their primary school education.

A new senior leadership team was appointed in September 2011, and the new Chair of the Governing Body was appointed at the beginning of November.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' attainment in English and mathematics.

The newly-appointed and inspirational headteacher, deputy headteacher and Chair of the Governing Body have secured rapid improvements in the short time they have been running the school. Despite the remaining weaknesses, pupils agree it is a happy place where they have to work hard and are safe. Their very high rates of attendance demonstrate how much they enjoy coming to school. Many systems and procedures have been overhauled since the beginning of term. Expectations of both staff and pupils have been raised. The work of other senior leaders, external advisers and the governing body is contributing significantly to this transformation.

As a result of leaders' largely accurate self-evaluation and focused staff development, pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are now making satisfactory progress across the school in response to satisfactory and improving teaching. Rigorous procedures for individual target-setting, tracking progress and intervening promptly where underachievement is identified, are beginning to ensure that all pupils receive the help they need. As one pupil put it, 'We have targets so we now know what we need to do to improve our work.' However, some teaching, while being effectively supported by external advisers, reflects limited expectations of what pupils can achieve, and marking is not always used effectively to show pupils exactly what they need to do to raise the quality of their work to the next level.

Good care, guidance and support, coupled with pupils' outstanding behaviour and attitudes to learning, play an important part in the improving pace of learning. Pupils' progress in mathematics and writing is now satisfactory, but the recent improvements in provision have not yet had a sustained impact on attainment, which remains too low.

The school demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to improve. Senior leaders are focused on the key priorities, and are working effectively with staff and external advisers to move the school forward. As a result, it now has strengths in several areas and attainment is beginning to rise. Behaviour and attitudes are particularly good, and pupils take a real pride in their achievements. As one Year 6 pupil put it,

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'We enjoy coming to school because it's fun and we learn a lot. It's changed since the new headteacher came... I am making more progress now I know the next level I have to get to.' Parents and carers are highly supportive of the school and are unanimously positive about the recent improvements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning to at least good so that pupils consistently achieve well, by ensuring that:
 - pupils of all levels of ability are set challenging work so they aim high and achieve well in lessons
 - marking consistently helps all pupils to improve their work, and they have more opportunities to act on teachers' feedback.

- Raise attainment in mathematics and writing by:
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to talk about, explain and record different ways to solve mathematical problems
 - increasing opportunities for writing at length in all subject areas.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Although improving, pupils' achievement overall remains inadequate because previous gaps in learning are continuing to hold back attainment for all groups. Even so, teaching and learning were typically satisfactory in the lessons observed, and sometimes better. This is beginning to have an impact on attainment in key areas. For example, more-able pupils in Year 5 are improving their writing. One boy, writing in the style of his favourite author, Michael Morpurgo, wrote, 'In an abandoned flat in London, ten hounds lived. Every stormy night they would go into people's houses. When they were in they would tear off their limbs aggressively, then feast on them.' Pupils say that the most significant factor in helping them to improve in reading and mathematics, as well as in writing, has been the new system for target-setting, linked to levels.

As a result of the focus on addressing underachievement, there has also been an improvement in the progress and attitudes of pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils with behavioural problems have also received targeted provision this term so that behaviour among all groups is now excellent. Recent arrivals to the school are well integrated and quickly adopt the positive attitudes modelled by their peers.

Pupils feel safe in school and have complete confidence that staff will sort out any problems. They have a good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle and they respond well to the many opportunities provided for them to contribute to the running of the school and to the wider community. The development of their basic

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skills is improving and this, together with their good collaborative skills and high attendance, is helping to ensure that they are suitably prepared for the next stage of their education and later life. Many now have the ambition to go to university, inspired by the headteacher.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	4
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	1
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	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Training for all staff has been a priority since the beginning of term, and teachers say they feel an increased sense of motivation and commitment. There is evidence of improvement although much remains to be done. For instance, marking has improved since last year and the best examples not only give clear guidance on what pupils need to do to improve their work, but also maintain an ongoing dialogue between pupils and their teachers. There is good practice on which to build. For example, in an outstanding mathematics lesson with lower-ability Year 6 pupils, the teacher ensured rapid progress in developing the use of the language of measurement and conversion through detailed planning with explicit success criteria for learning and appropriate challenge.

The new leadership team has rightly focused the curriculum on improving basic skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT). This is clearly having some success, but pupils do not yet have enough planned opportunities to hone their skills in specific areas such as writing in different subjects or considering different ways to tackle mathematical problems. The curriculum is

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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enhanced through a partnership with the neighbouring Business Academy Bexley (BAB) that provides specialist practitioners to run sports clubs. Specialist professionals are also brought in to assist and advise where needs are identified, so provision for all pupils is improving. Well-focused support in lessons for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities contributes to their good personal development and ensures that they make academic progress in line with their classmates. Steps taken to raise attendance through rewarding regular attendance and the deployment of a learning mentor have also been highly successful.

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?

‘Learning to Achieve’, the recently-adopted school motto, underpins the new headteacher’s vision of achievement for all, through high-quality teaching and learning. Her strong leadership is inspiring leaders at all levels to show increased commitment, drive and enthusiasm. Staff are now held to account for the progress of the pupils in their class. The governing body, under the leadership of the new chair, is supportive and increasingly active in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

Partnerships with parents and carers are now strong; they feel more involved with their children’s education and able to support them effectively with their learning. The school has developed partnerships with other agencies and organisations, most notably the neighbouring Business Academy Bexley (BAB), and a local Bexley junior school, to extend provision and enhance pupils’ achievements. Leaders have carried out a thorough analysis of the outcomes for precise groups of pupils, including those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, so that all groups have an equal chance to succeed. Senior leaders have also analysed the school’s community context and are promoting links with a range of other local schools, and schools further afield in Australia and Nigeria. Pupils from different backgrounds are proud of their opportunities to support local, national and international charities, including Help for Heroes, and they get on noticeably well with each other. Procedures and policies for keeping children safe are well established, meet current government requirements and follow recommended good practice, including regular staff training.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children’s progress across the areas of learning is satisfactory but variable. Progress is better in communication, language and literacy development, where children’s skills are generally very low on entry. The atmosphere throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage is calm and routines are well established, so children settle and behave very well. There is a wide range of activities on offer, both inside and outside, to promote learning across all areas. Children share and take turns well. They pay attention to their own and each other’s safety, especially when promoting their physical development on the large apparatus and range of bicycles and wheeled toys in the outside area. Children’s personal and social development, behaviour and attitudes are notable strengths because these aspects of learning are prioritised in order to provide a good foundation for future learning.

There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff support children well, and they work together effectively to meet children’s welfare and safety needs. Recent advice from a local authority specialist is helping them to extend their roles to maximise every opportunity for learning, for example, by using the tally of children who have milk or water daily as an opportunity for counting, labelling and recording. The environment is vibrant and inviting with a wide choice of good-quality resources to promote learning. The recent focus on fireworks across the whole Foundation Stage has provided many exciting opportunities for exploring sounds, for example ‘fizz’, ‘bang’ and ‘whoosh’, speaking and listening, writing, picture and model making, counting, measuring, and recognising and naming three-dimensional shapes. One child was overheard saying, ‘I’m using my sounding out, f-i-zz, fizz’, applying her emerging phonics skills well to build new words. Methods for collecting and assessing the progress of individuals through observations are

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becoming more systematic. This information is now being used more effectively to inform planning for future learning, so that progress across all the areas of learning is becoming more even.

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

The school and its new headteacher clearly enjoy the support of the parents and carers who returned the questionnaire. A number of individual comments praised the high-quality care, support and guidance offered to pupils, and the considerable improvements seen since the beginning of term. A very small minority of parents and carers said they did not feel well informed about their children’s progress, but inspectors found that the school offers good opportunities to access this information and that most parents and carers are happy with this aspect of the school’s work.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Parkway 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 230 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	73	14	25	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	34	61	21	38	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	30	54	21	38	5	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	43	29	52	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	24	43	29	52	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	26	46	27	48	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	54	25	45	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)	22	39	29	52	3	5	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	25	45	26	46	3	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	48	27	48	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	46	27	48	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	26	46	27	48	2	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	33	59	22	39	0	0	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 8 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.

9 November 2011

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Parkway Primary School, Erith DA18 4DP

Thank you for your help during the inspection. We very much enjoyed seeing you in your classrooms and outdoors, and hearing your views. We believe your school does some things well, especially since the appointment of your new headteacher, but needs to improve in other areas, so we have given the school a 'notice to improve'. This means that another inspector will visit to check that the school is improving rapidly enough. These are some of the things it does well.

- You enjoy school, participate well in lessons and behave exceptionally well because of the good care, guidance and support you receive.
- Your attendance is very high, and you get on very well with each other.
- You now understand the next steps you need to take to improve your work because target-setting is clear and well focused for all of you individually.

These are the aspects we have asked the leaders and managers to improve.

- Make all teaching and learning good or better by ensuring that you are consistently challenged in lessons, whatever your level of ability.
- Ensure marking consistently helps you to improve your work and teachers give you opportunities to respond to their feedback.
- Improve achievement in mathematics by giving you more opportunities to talk about, explain and record different ways of solving problems.
- Further improve your writing skills, by increasing your opportunities for writing at length in different subjects.

We know you enjoy doing real-life problem-solving activities, so you will be doing more of these. Your teachers will be marking your work, especially your writing, as carefully as possible and you will be able to feed back more to them about how you are doing. All of you can help the school by maintaining your excellent attendance record as well as your outstanding behaviour and attitudes to learning.

We send you our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Angela Konarzewski
Lead inspector

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