

Monteagle Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	130340
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	381261
Inspection dates	5–6 July 2012
Lead inspector	Susan Williams

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	663
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Natalie Newton
Headteacher	Hugh Godfrey
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 March 2010
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Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	5–6 July 2012
Inspection number	338261



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Introduction

Inspection team

Susan Williams Additional inspector

Sarah Beales Additional inspector

Alastair McMeckan Additional inspector

Clementina Ogunsanwo Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 20 teachers in 23 lessons or part lessons including sessions of phonics (letters and their sounds). Six lessons were observed with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors attended two assemblies and three music rehearsals as well as observing pupils at break and lunchtime. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online survey (Parent View) in planning the inspection, and examined a range of school documents including the school's self-evaluation, governing body minutes, behaviour logs, safeguarding records, and attendance documents. Inspectors scrutinised 68 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, along with those returned by pupils.

Information about the school

The school is much larger than the average primary school. A small minority of pupils are of White British origin with the remainder from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds predominantly those of African, Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than that seen nationally. The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The number of pupils who join or leave the school during the school year is above average. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school has specially resourced provision for pupils with additional learning needs.

There have been some changes of leadership since the previous inspection. The interim executive board has handed over control of the school to the governing body. The executive headteacher left the school and for a period of time the school was led by an acting headteacher until the current headteacher took up his post.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Pupils are polite and courteous. It is not yet a good school because the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are satisfactory rather than good and pupils' performance in Key Stage 1 is weaker than in other stages. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Children make good progress from their very low starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils' progress in the rest of the school is satisfactory, although it has accelerated recently, particularly in Years 5 and 6, leading to below average but improving attainment at the end of Year 6, particularly in mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory but improving. In the best lessons, teachers plan engaging activities, ensure pupils are challenged and use effective lesson starters to interest pupils in lessons. In the less successful lessons, teaching strategies are more mundane and teachers fail to awaken pupils' curiosity or develop an enthusiasm for learning. Teachers do not always plan lessons that develop the learning of all pupils in the class.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are productive. Pupils feel staff will listen to their concerns and deal with them. Pupils' attitudes to learning are generally positive, although they can lose focus when the teaching fails to stimulate them sufficiently. Attendance has improved and is now above average.
- School leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. As a result of regular training and opportunities to share good practice, the quality of teaching is improving. The leadership of teaching and the management of teachers' performance are satisfactory. The Key Stage 2 curriculum has been improved to incorporate activities which motivate pupils to learn, but the Key Stage 1 curriculum is not yet as effective.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 by:
 - matching the work set to the full range of pupils' needs
 - adapting the curriculum so it has activities that motivate pupils and engage them in learning
 - encouraging pupils to evaluate their work in lessons and reflect on areas for improvement.

- Significantly increase the amount of teaching that is good or outstanding by:
 - planning exciting lesson starters to engage pupils quickly in learning
 - using a range of imaginative teaching strategies in lessons
 - developing pupils' curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

On entry to the school, children's levels of skill and knowledge are well below those expected for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage but enter Key Stage 1 with levels still below those of their peers nationally. There have been improvements this year, particularly in children's communication and language development, due to an effective focus on speaking and listening skills. Pupils are developing their reading skills well in Year 1 and results from the recent phonics tests show most children achieved the expected level.

Pupils' progress throughout the rest of the school is satisfactory. Their attainment overall at Key Stage 1 has been low for the last two years although attainment in reading was average in 2011. At Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment has been low overall for the last three years and was also low in reading in 2011. Provisional figures for 2012 show that results in English, which dipped last year, have improved and there is a noticeable rise in the scores for reading. Attainment in mathematics at Key Stage 2 has been average over the last two years; provisional test results show an improvement in 2012.

Pupils respond well to interesting activities in lessons and work well in groups, supporting each other. The vast majority of parents and carers believe that their children are making good progress in school and a very large majority of pupils were positive about how well they were doing. Inspectors found that pupils only make good progress where teachers have high expectations and plan a range of interesting activities which engage them in learning. For example, in a Reception lesson where children were engaged in a variety of activities, such as making models of medals in clay and writing to the Olympic team, they were enthusiastic about their learning and made good progress. In too many lessons, however, pupils' progress was restricted because the work set was not sufficiently engaging and there were not enough opportunities for them to become involved in practical problem-solving.

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Induction procedures for pupils who join the school during the year are sound, ensuring that these pupils make satisfactory progress. Despite some inadequate progress last year, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are now making satisfactory progress both in the school and also in the new resourced provision. They are well supported with adapted activities by teaching assistants who enable them to take a full part in lessons.

Quality of teaching

All the teaching observed during the inspection was at least satisfactory with most of the better teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2. Leaders' monitoring suggests that teaching is improving and inadequate practice has been eradicated. A very large majority of parents and carers and most pupils were positive about teaching. The strengths of the teaching include the productive relationships between adults in classrooms, the clear presentation of lessons, pupils' clarity about routines and teachers' good subject knowledge. The best teaching in the school is characterised by high expectations, interesting starts to lessons and tasks which motivate pupils. All these were evident in a Year 6 English lesson where pupils were discussing reasons for and against Dwayne Chambers being part of the Olympic team. The debate was brought alive by role play which engaged pupils and supported their learning when they planned their writing. Not all lessons employ such imaginative teaching strategies to develop pupils' curiosity, enthusiasm for learning and aspects of their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

Marking has improved and target books are effective for older pupils. Where teaching is good, pupils are clear about their targets and how to improve their work; this was not so evident in the younger year groups, where pupils were not given sufficient opportunity to evaluate their own work or that of others. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, assessment is used effectively to plan lessons that advance children's learning by focusing on identified gaps in their knowledge and skills. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together in lessons to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Activities are supported in a structured way and teaching assistants question the pupils they work with effectively so that they can take a full part in lessons. For example, in Reception an activity was especially designed to support a child's motor development in the use of scissors.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are polite to adults and their sound attitudes to learning allow lessons to progress without disruption. Routines are clear in lessons and assemblies and for the fire drill. Most parents and carers think that behaviour is good in school and that lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour. Pupils were less positive about behaviour overall. While they said behaviour was good in lessons, they thought that at times it was not as good in the playground when they were playing football, but they were confident that any poor behaviour was dealt with well by the school. Pupils were more positive about bullying and said that incidents of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying, were rare and that the school also dealt with these

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effectively. Younger pupils spoke positively about Year 6 prefects who they said would support them in dealing with any issues. All pupils were confident that staff would help them if the need arose, and that this helps them to feel safe in school. The school liaises closely with a range of agencies to support pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable and employs a parent support adviser to work with pupils and their families. Exclusion rates have fallen and school's records indicate that racist incidents are uncommon.

An overwhelming majority of parents and carers said their children feel safe in school and most pupils agreed. Pupils know how to keep safe and they understand the dangers of the internet. The school has held assemblies for pupils, parents and carers to promote internet safety and an outside group delivered a session on e-safety to pupils in Key Stage 2 during the inspection. Attendance rates have improved and are now above average; the number of persistent absentees has fallen. Pupils are punctual to school and to their lessons.

Leadership and management

The governing body has an ambitious vision for Monteagle to be a high-achieving school. The handover from the interim executive board was managed well with a shadow governing body in place before the present governors took up their posts last September. Governors have set up clear systems for monitoring the school and have a schedule of termly, annual and triennial actions. Governors and senior leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Pupils' achievement, while still only satisfactory, has continued to improve, as has the quality of teaching. The impact of the professional development and performance management of staff is evident in these positive signs and the school demonstrates the capacity to improve. Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and are effective.

The school is inclusive and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Leaders and managers promote equality of opportunity and the school is successfully narrowing the gap between the attainment of pupils with special educational needs and other pupils. The gap in attainment between boys and girls in the school has also narrowed. Strengths in the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum have been built on successfully to improve children's communication skills. The curriculum is also now broader and more balanced at Key Stage 2. Well-planned enrichment activities include visits to residential centres and theatres and visits from theatre groups to the school. There are many popular, extra-curricular clubs which promote learning and enjoyment in sporting, arts and environmental activities. Pupils in Year 5 also benefit from whole-class instrumental tuition in brass and woodwind instruments. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well in these activities as well as in regular lessons and assemblies. The Key Stage 1 curriculum is less well advanced and does not give pupils such a rich breadth of experiences.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Monteagle Primary School, Dagenham, RM9 4RB.

Thank you for the help you gave us when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking with those of you we met and visiting your lessons. Thank you also to the pupils who completed the inspection questionnaire and those that introduced themselves to us in the playground. We enjoyed seeing the younger children's sports day, your activities around the Olympics in lessons and the Year 5 brass and woodwind rehearsal. We were very impressed to see how much your attendance has improved. It is now better than most other primary schools across the country.

We judged that Monteagle is a satisfactory school and we have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to do a number of things to improve your school, namely to:

- plan more interesting work for those of you in Years 1 and 2 and give you the chance to see and comment on each other's work in lessons
- make lessons much more exciting for you all, with interesting starts and different activities that engage your curiosity and develop your enthusiasm for learning.

We hope you continue to attend school regularly and work hard so you can achieve well when you leave school.

With very best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Susan Williams
Lead inspector

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