

Aerodrome Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	135225
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	381846
Inspection dates	3–4 July 2012
Lead inspector	Madeleine Gerard

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	448
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anne Marie Brown
Headteacher	Zoe Foulsham
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	3–4 July 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Madeleine Gerard

Additional Inspector

Terry Payne

Additional Inspector

Gillian Smith

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 28 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 17 teaching staff, and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, looked at work in pupils' books and tracking data showing pupils' attainment and progress. The school's development plans and records relating to safeguarding pupils were also seen. The inspectors considered responses to questionnaires from staff, pupils and from 141 parents and carers.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average primary school. The proportion 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 school has a specially resourced nursery provision for 12 disabled children and those who have special educational needs aged three to four. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportions of pupils with minority ethnic heritage or who speak English as an additional language are above average. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

The school opened in September 2010 in new premises following the amalgamation of two schools. There have been a number of changes in teaching staff to the senior leadership team and in the governing body since the school opened. The headteacher joined the school in May 2011, initially in the role of head of school and since April 2012 as headteacher. The school manages a breakfast club. The children's centre and the pupil referral unit which share the school site were not part of this inspection.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because not enough teaching is outstanding and there is some variability in rates of pupils' learning and progress.
- Pupils achieve well. Children get off to a strong start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. All groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, pupils who speak English as an additional language and those known to be eligible for free school meals, make good progress from their starting points. Attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 is broadly average.
- Children in the specially resourced provision learn well. They benefit from sessions with specialist staff tailored to their specific needs.
- Leaders have secured teaching that is usually good through systematic monitoring and a well-selected programme of support and coaching for teachers. Detailed planning uses information about pupils' progress to set them suitably challenging tasks to do. The specific contribution additional adults make to pupils' learning in lessons is not as consistently well planned in some classes. Sometimes, opportunities for pupils to develop skills in working independently are more limited.
- Pupils have positive and enthusiastic attitudes to learning. They work well together in groups, behave well and are quick to respond when reminded by staff about the behaviour that is expected. They have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe from harm, for example how to avoid unsafe situations outside school.
- Leaders have successfully managed performance by setting ambitious targets for the school's work and pupils' academic outcomes. Strong links with other local schools and the children's centre have also contributed to securing the good standard of education the school provides. The curriculum captures pupils' interest and boosts their achievement in literacy and numeracy.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2013, increase consistency in the rates of pupils' learning and progress further and make teaching outstanding by:
 - enabling pupils to practise a wide range of strategies for working independently very regularly in lessons
 - making sure teachers' planning consistently identifies specifically how additional adults can support pupils' learning in lessons.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

When this new school opened, attainment was below typical expectations in most year groups. The school has been successful in a relatively short period of time in securing good progress for pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals. As a result they reach broadly average levels of attainment in English, including in reading, and mathematics by the end of Year 6. In some classes the rapid pace of pupils' learning helps them to make outstanding progress but this is not consistent. All groups of pupils, including pupils speaking English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic backgrounds, achieve well. Children join the school with levels of skills and capabilities that are below those expected for their age. They make good progress in Nursery and Reception classes, particularly in developing social skills and in literacy and numeracy. Progress for children in the specially resourced provision is good because their needs are well met. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in developing reading skills. Provisional results in national reading screening in Year 1 are positive although attainment in reading at the end of the Year 2 remains below average. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive additional support carefully tailored to their requirements, and do well. The responses to questionnaires for pupils and parents and carers showed they feel positive about learning and progress in the school. Inspection findings support this view.

Pupils enjoy the work they are set and work hard to complete tasks in the time they are given. For example, in a mathematics lesson, older pupils listened very carefully to the teacher's explanations of time differences around the world. They worked quickly together in groups to calculate the local time in different locations. They enjoyed the additional challenge of solving word problems involving air travel across different time zones, and working out arrival times. In a letters and sounds session (phonics) in Key Stage 1, pupils keenly practised writing words using the new sounds and spellings they had learned. Higher attaining pupils were eager to write sentences using the new words they were learning to spell. Children in the specially resourced provision were observed developing their social skills well. During group snack time they were happy and settled as they copied the adults to ask for more fruit when they had finished.

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Quality of teaching

The school tracks the progress pupils make and analyses the information carefully. All groups of pupils make good gains in their learning because teachers' planning uses this progress information well to match work to the range of abilities in classes. For example, in a literacy lesson pupils were completing three very different vocabulary tasks that were well selected to build on what they knew and could do already. Specific planning for the contribution of additional adults in lessons to ensure they consistently support pupils' swift learning and progress is not always as detailed. This means the part they play in helping pupils to make even faster gains in their learning is sometimes limited. Regular pair and group work activities enable pupils to discuss their ideas together and help them to develop collaborative working skills. Occasionally, restricted opportunities for pupils to practise new skills during whole-class teaching limits their confidence in tackling independent tasks. Consequently, the pace of learning is not as consistently brisk.

The whole school practises reading every morning. In Years 1 and 2, daily phonics sessions help pupils develop skills in reading and writing. Additional sessions outside lessons for selected pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those speaking English as an additional language, help them to develop literacy, numeracy and social skills, and catch up quickly. Written feedback in pupils' books, and individualised targets, are used well so that pupils know what to do in order to improve their work. Teachers often set additional personalised challenges for pupils to help them make even further progress, although pupils do not always respond to these as consistently as they do towards their other work. In the surveys, most parents, carers and pupils rightly agree that teaching is good.

Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage create an environment where children develop good personal and social skills and grow in confidence. There is a good balance between adult-led tasks and opportunities for children to choose activities for themselves. Children in a Reception class were observed practising writing their names on their own initiative. Working with an adult, children made pizzas and higher attaining children wrote shopping lists of the ingredients they needed to buy. Higher attaining children in another Reception class were building swiftly on their phonics skills by competing with one another to write as many five-letter words as they could. Teaching and the curriculum in the specially resourced provision ensure children receive the support they require for good quality learning. They also benefit from spending time in the Nursery class with their peers. The breakfast club provides a healthy and friendly start to the school day for the small number of pupils who attend. Whole-school outings bring the community together to celebrate their successes. The school's five values are discussed regularly and promote pupils' moral development. Through celebrating Black History Month and the wider cultural diversity within the school, for example during international week and the school's community carnival, pupils' cultural awareness is fostered strongly. Pupils from diverse backgrounds get along well together and treat one another's cultures and faiths with respect and consideration.

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good. Most parents and carers in the survey agree that their children feel safe at school and most pupils who completed the survey confirm this. A small minority of parents and carers did not agree that behaviour is good and a few felt that lessons are occasionally disrupted by bad behaviour. The inspection found behaviour around the school and in lessons to be typically good. Pupils' positive behaviour makes a good contribution to their own learning and they are typically keen to meet teachers' high expectations of them. Most parents and carers who expressed an opinion felt that bullying is dealt with well, although a few did not agree. In the pupil survey, most pupils were confident that the school deals well with any cases of bullying all or most of the time, as the school's records confirm. Pupils are aware of the various forms bullying can take including name-calling and over-physical behaviour. They say that teachers and lunchtime supervising staff take swift action to deal with any problems. They develop a good awareness of keeping themselves safe from harm, including how to avoid risks when using computers or when crossing the road. Attendance is broadly average. The school works hard to make the importance of regular attendance abundantly clear to the whole-school community.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, members of the governing body and staff work together as an effective team. Through a shared determination to secure good quality provision and set high expectations of what pupils can achieve since the school opened, leaders have demonstrated strong capacity to secure further improvement. Leaders have taken uncompromising action to deal with staffing and performance issues. Together with rigorous monitoring, professional development and additional training for staff, they have secured good teaching and pupils' good achievement. Partnerships are used successfully to enhance provision. Links with local schools are particularly strong and support professional development. The curriculum is well planned to ensure that pupils have engaging work and interesting projects to do. This makes learning relevant to their interests and experiences. Careful planning helps pupils practise literacy and numeracy across a wide variety of different curriculum subjects. However, opportunities for pupils to develop skills and strategies to support their learning during independent work are less consistently well developed.

Some initiatives have only recently been introduced and have not had time to show their impact on securing more outstanding teaching and improving pupils' achievement further. The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Close working with the children's centre provides additional support and guidance for pupils and their families. The school tackles discrimination and promotes equality well. Pupils are known well as individuals and rates of learning and progress are equally good for all groups of pupils. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements. The site is secure and very well maintained. Staff have received up-to-date training and are well aware of safeguarding procedures.

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.



5 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Aerodrome Primary School, Croydon CR0 4EJ

Thank you for your friendly welcome and for helping the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and hearing what you had to say. This letter tells you about the judgements that we reached during our visit.

Aerodrome Primary is a good school. You behave well and are enthusiastic to learn. You know how to keep yourselves safe from harm and those of you who completed the survey told us that you feel safe at school. You are well taught and make good progress in your reading, writing and mathematics skills. You told us in the survey that you usually learn a lot in lessons. By the time you leave the school at the end of Year 6, you reach similar standards to other pupils nationally. Those of you who need additional help are well supported by the adults so that you make good progress too.

To help you do even better, we want the school to make sure that you have plenty of opportunities to develop your skills in working on your own. We have also asked that the teachers plan even more carefully how the additional adults can support you further in your learning in lessons. All of you can help by continuing to work hard.

Finally, I would like to thank you again and wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Madeleine Gerard
Lead inspector

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