



Perry Hall Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101640
LEA Bromley LEA
Inspection number 276558
Inspection dates 19 October 2005 to 20 October 2005
Reporting inspector Christopher Redman HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Perry Hall Road
School category	Maintained		Orpington
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Kent BR6 0EF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01689820313
Number on roll	380	Fax number	01689897669
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Sally Fairbairn
Date of previous inspection	22 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Angela Ward

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Perry Hall is a large primary school serving an economically and socially mixed area of Orpington. It has 380 pupils currently; an additional 30 pupils are expected to join the Foundation Stage in January 2006. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is less than half the national average. About one in seven of the pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, slightly less than is typical of schools nationally; the proportion having a statement of special educational need is low. About one in ten of the pupils represent heritages other than white British. Almost all of the pupils speak English as their first language.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

When Perry Hall Primary was last inspected in 1999, it was judged a very good school and shortly afterwards was awarded Beacon status. However, it was unable to maintain its high quality; the pupils' progress slowed and standards fell to about average for the pupils' age by the time they left school. Since the current headteacher arrived in September 2004, the provision has started to improve quickly from its lowest point. Teaching, learning, leadership and management are now satisfactory and improving. As a result, standards are starting to rise, but have yet to reach the high levels attained previously. The pupils' personal development is outstanding; particular strengths include the pupils' excellent behaviour and their very good moral and social development. The school is currently offering a sound education for its pupils and provides satisfactory value for money. The school's self-evaluation agrees with this judgement. Recent improvements in leadership and management underpin a good capacity for improvement. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children quickly settle into school and form caring relationships with staff.

What the school should do to improve further

The school is aware that to raise standards it needs to: * quicken the progress made by the pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2; * improve the quality of teaching and learning so that more is good; * use assessment information effectively to set realistic targets and raise teachers' expectations, particularly of the pupils' writing; * strengthen the quality of the curriculum; * bring greater consistency to the quality of leadership and management.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The pupils enter the school with standards well above levels typical for their age. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were high across the school and the pupils made very good progress. The school was unable to sustain that outstanding level of performance and standards fell in the ensuing years. The results of the 2004 end-of-key stage national tests were particularly low compared with previous years; nevertheless they were broadly typical of other schools nationally. In 2005, the results improved at Key Stage 1, particularly in reading and mathematics, but there was little improvement at Key Stage 2 and the progress that the Year 6 pupils made over the previous four years in English, mathematics and science was much too slow. However, recently progress has improved; it is good in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. As a result, the standards achieved by the youngest pupils are outstanding, and they are predominantly good for the other pupils. The pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress. Standards in writing are markedly lower than standards elsewhere in the curriculum and are not good enough.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. The pupils enjoy coming to school and are happy in lessons, though a few of the older pupils said that they didn't enjoy some subjects. Relationships with each other and their teachers are excellent. The pupils play very happily together in the limited space available and their behaviour is consistently exemplary, showing an awareness and concern for others. Attendance is good and the school employs a good range of strategies to ensure that figures are consistently above the national average. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall; their moral and social development is outstanding so that they possess very strong social skills and a clear appreciation of right and wrong. The school also provides well to ensure that the pupils' cultural development is good, particularly in sports and music. The school recognises that there is a need to be more systematic in developing the pupils' understanding of other cultures. The school promotes well the pupils' health and safety and is close to achieving the Healthy Schools award. The wide range of clubs promoting physical activity is very well supported. The pupils are wholehearted in confirming that they feel very secure at school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and adequately meets the specific needs of the pupils. The strongest elements of the teaching are the excellent behaviour management, very good relationships and the skilled work of teaching assistants. The weakest element is the teachers' expectations of what the pupils can achieve, especially in writing. Teaching and learning are good for the pupils aged four to seven, where teachers are more skilled at ensuring that work is suitably challenging, and satisfactory for older pupils. The pupils' work is usually accurately assessed and marked, but this information is not sufficiently well used, particularly in Years 3 to 6, to ensure that pupils know what they have to do next to make quicker progress. Parents commented that they are broadly happy with teaching, although a few were concerned by the number of staff changes experienced by their children in the last year. The pupils agree that some classes have had too many teachers; nonetheless, they feel this is improving. They like their teachers and value their learning opportunities. Pupils commented that they enjoy learning, especially when participating in extra club activities. Pupils with learning disabilities and difficulties benefit from satisfactory teaching. Learning support assistants know the pupils well and work closely with the teachers and visiting specialists, so that pupils make steady progress. The monitoring of their progress in learning is satisfactory.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. All the statutory required subjects are taught and learning in different subjects is enhanced by a good range of visits, visitors and special events. The school is aware that the balance of the curriculum is uneven because too much time is dedicated to specific English and mathematics lessons, detracting from the time available for other subjects, and strategies have not been developed well enough to improve literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. Children with special educational needs receive carefully planned support. There is a wide range of well attended out-of-school activities. The pupils value these opportunities which enrich their experiences beyond what they receive in lessons, enable them to participate with others and develop wider interests. The Foundation Stage curriculum is mostly good, but outdoor learning is a weakness because of the lack of suitable facilities and equipment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support provided by the school are good. Teachers show a strong commitment to pupils' welfare. The pupils have good and sometimes outstanding, relationships with their teachers, which contribute significantly to the caring ethos and to pupils' enjoyment of school. Children's welfare is good. The pupils enjoy a good range of curriculum activities which enable them to develop a good understanding about how to be safe and make healthy choices in life. The school's council takes an active role in addressing any concerns raised by the pupils. For example, the pupils have been involved in re-designing their playground to make it a fun and safe place to be. Older pupils take responsibility for younger pupils and actively follow rules, which results in outstanding behaviour. Child protection arrangements are effective. Nearly all parents agree that their children feel safe and are well cared for at school. There were marked weaknesses in the teachers' monitoring of the pupils' academic progress and subsequent target setting; however, there has been significant improvement recently. Pupils have positive attitudes to healthy eating because the school is actively helping children to make careful and sensible choices when selecting food.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher's leadership and management are outstanding. In the 14 months that she has been in post, she has taken effective action to reverse the decline in standards, establish secure senior leadership with a clear sense of direction, raise expectations of teaching and learning and re-establish confidence in the school by an overwhelming proportion of the parents. She has introduced very good approaches to self-evaluation which accurately identify the priorities for improvement. Leadership elsewhere in the school is uneven, but sound overall. For example, most senior managers make a very

good contribution to leading improvements, but the role of the deputy headteacher is poorly defined and is not making an adequate contribution to developments. Strategic planning is mostly good. Performance management for staff is securely in place and used effectively to improve the school's provision. A suitable programme of monitoring lesson planning and teaching is used well by senior managers to identify areas for improvement and to focus robust systems for training staff; as a result, teaching and learning have improved. Governance is satisfactory. The governors have significantly improved the ways they evaluate the school's work and they are moving towards better focused ways to monitor developments. Communication between governors and the school is good and they have a sound understanding of the variability of its achievements. Financial management is good. Despite high staffing costs, the school has adequate specialist equipment; it uses its cramped accommodation highly effectively.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

You may remember that four inspectors came to your school recently to find out how good it was and how well you were doing. Thank you for being so friendly, for talking to us and telling us so many interesting things. We are writing to let you know what we found out.

You told us how much you like school and described many interesting things that happen there, especially how much you enjoy the wide range of clubs you attend. Several of you told us how excited and proud you were learning to play a musical instrument or play sports. We think your school offers a very good range of activities outside your lessons. We were impressed by your excellent behaviour and how you care for each other. We know that people in the school take good care of you and are teaching you to be confident and responsible members of the community with a clear understanding of right and wrong and how to live healthy lives.

You told us that you enjoy many of your lessons, but some were not as interesting as others. We agree with you and we have asked your teachers to make some improvements so that you will make more rapid progress during your time at Perry Hall, particularly how well you write. You are lucky to have such a good headteacher as Mrs Ward who is making sure that you start to learn more quickly and meet more challenging work. We have asked the school to set you clear targets so that your work is even better than it is at present. It was good to see you working so sensibly in lessons. We know you understand why it is important to do your best. We enjoyed our two days with you. If you continue to work hard and pay attention to your teachers, you will play an important part in making your school even better than it is now.

Yours sincerely

Chris Redman, Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools