



Monks Orchard School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101730
LEA Croydon LEA
Inspection number 276577
Inspection dates 2 May 2006 to 3 May 2006
Reporting inspector David Marshall AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Glade
School category	Community		Shirley
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Croydon CR0 7UF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8654 2570
Number on roll	456	Fax number	020 8662 0423
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Jane Smith
Date of previous inspection	31 January 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Misson

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Monks Orchard is a two-form entry Community Infant and Junior school with a two session part-time Nursery. The school serves an area of mixed local authority, housing association and owner occupied property. Attainment on entry is broadly in line with that expected nationally. The number of pupils with educational difficulties is below the national average and two pupils have statements of particular educational needs. The number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds has remained constant in the last two years and is around a third of the school's roll. Pupil mobility increased in 2005 to above the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The inspection team and the school agree that Monks Orchard School provides a good, and improving, education for all its pupils. It provides sound value for money and has made significant improvements in the last year. Strengths and weaknesses have been identified because the school has introduced improved systems for monitoring its work. Pupils' progress is good and standards are improving.

The school now has a good partnership with its parents who hold the school in high regard. One accurately described the atmosphere as 'warm and friendly.' Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress because teaching is imaginative and assessment is used well.

Teaching and learning are good. Staff throughout the school are teaching more effectively under the guidance brought in by the headteacher and lessons are generally well planned. Teachers aim to make learning fun. Parents in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire said how pleased they are about this. The use of assessment has improved in English and mathematics and standards have risen as a result. However, these systems are not yet being applied effectively in other subjects. Pupils are cared for well, and all of them, including the most vulnerable, are safe and secure. The curriculum covers all subjects and is enhanced by a good range of additional activities. However, more opportunities could be taken to make the range of activities more interesting and enjoyable for all pupils.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides good leadership and she is ably supported by her deputy and all staff, who work together well as a team. Developments are now being driven forward at a good pace. The school's capacity to improve further is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use the results of assessment and tracking procedures consistently in all subjects to ensure that all pupils make maximum progress.
- Modify the curriculum to extend further the opportunities available for all pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Inspection findings confirm the school's judgements that pupils are now achieving well and making good progress. Pupils enter the school with standards that are in line with expectations for their age. Due to the effective organisation in the Foundation Stage children settle in quickly and make good progress at once.

In Years 1 and 2 the emphasis put on developing speaking and listening skills has had a positive impact on the standards pupils reach in reading and writing. Achievement in mathematics is being raised due to the new arrangements for pupils to have

improvement targets that are regularly reviewed. Standards are now above average and improving.

Although national test results in Year 6 in 2005 were lower than those in previous years, the school exceeded the targets set for that particular group of pupils. There is now a secure system in place that tracks the progress each pupil makes in reading and writing and mathematics, and identifies where additional teaching will be most beneficial. Thanks to these measures, pupils' standards currently are above average in English and mathematics, and results in 2006 are predicted to improve and meet the rigorous targets set for them. These systems are now being extended throughout the school in other subjects to raise achievement further. Improved provision enables pupils to achieve good standards in information and communication technology (ICT).

Pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties, and those with above average ability, make good progress overall. They are well supported and have access to a curriculum that helps them to achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' personal and social development and well-being are good because the school provides well for them. Inspection evidence supports the views of the vast majority of parents that their children enjoy coming to school, work in harmony with their peers and establish trusting relationships with their teachers and other adults in the school. Pupils speak openly of their pride in the school and the many good things on offer - clubs, lessons, playtime facilities, outings and friendships. 'This is a smashing school. I really like it' is just one typical response of many from pupils. Good behaviour is an expectation of all and pupils quickly develop enthusiastic attitudes to learning and treat other children and all adults with consideration and respect. The school places great store on pupils' development of healthy lifestyles and learning how to look after themselves well and keep safe. Consequently these aspects of personal development are very good.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Through the good example set by all staff and carefully planned opportunities, pupils learn to distinguish right from wrong, understand the need to acknowledge the strengths of others and to care for those less fortunate than themselves. Two very active school councils provide a forum in which pupils' views can be heard. Pupils accept the responsibility for making decisions and learn to consider the views and beliefs of others. There is an awareness of the diversity of cultures within the school and these are celebrated through work in art, music, drama, history and religious education.

Attendance is satisfactory and there are good systems in place for monitoring any persistent cases of absence.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is consistently good in the Foundation Stage because group activities are well planned by the dedicated teachers to meet children's different needs and motivate them to enjoy their learning. Resources are good and well organised. The staff make the most of the limited space in the classrooms to provide a wide variety of opportunities for all children.

Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is good overall and includes examples of very good practice. There are examples of teachers motivating pupils to learn in different ways. For example, a well-judged variety of listening, visual and practical learning activities enabled Year 1 pupils to make very good progress in describing their 'Troll' characters. The teachers' searching questions and use of praise in a Year 6 ICT lesson gave pupils confidence to try the additional challenges in their multimedia presentations. The Year 3 and 4 singing lesson was outstanding in the enthusiasm it created and the opportunities for pupils of all abilities to perform successfully. The school recognised that there was some unevenness in the quality of teaching last year due to the absences of key teachers and has addressed the issue well through its effective monitoring systems. There are good plans in place to extend the exciting and innovative practice that some teachers show to all classes in the school.

Pupils are invariably eager learners and behave well. Their positive attitudes make a significant contribution to the improving standards in the school. Pupils with learning difficulties, or those with English as an additional language, receive good support that enables them to progress well. Support staff are well trained and play an integral part in contributing to pupils' learning in lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and is well planned to meet the basic needs of all pupils. However, the new leadership team has correctly identified that there is an overemphasis at times on prescriptive literacy and numeracy lessons. This occasionally restricts the opportunity for first hand experiences and imaginative work to motivate and excite pupils. This also prevents pupils' taking responsibility for their own learning. When pupils have the opportunity to explore subjects in depth or apply their skills in other areas, standards of work are higher, for example: a sensitive description about evacuation written from the point of view of a child of the Second World War, a description of how to make a lever for a pop up book or an account of a science investigation.

Since the last inspection there has been investment in provision for ICT which is now satisfactory. This has resulted in a significant rise in standards. ICT is used effectively by pupils for research, presentation and art across the curriculum.

The school increasingly offers a range of visits and visitors and out of school activities. This is particularly successful because of the effectiveness of the teacher who ably co-ordinates this area. The clubs are enjoyed by the large numbers of pupils of all ages and include football, netball, French, Spanish and dance. Pupils value this opportunity to extend their skills and raise self esteem. 'Our World Cup is the best thing we have ever had in this school', is just one of many responses.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Good care, guidance and support are provided for all children. The school site is clean, safe and welcoming and very well maintained by the much respected site manager. Very effective health and safety procedures are regularly reviewed and all staff are fully aware of their responsibilities with regard to child protection issues. The benefits of healthy eating and regular exercise are promoted well and pupils are alerted in science lessons to the dangers of smoking and substance abuse. Throughout the school, relationships are very good and pupils have great confidence in all members of staff.

All school personnel receive training in identifying vulnerable pupils. Comprehensive strategies are in place to support these children and the school staff are quick to liaise with outside agencies should the need arise.

The use of assessment in English and mathematics is good. The necessary strong focus is in place to continue to improve the assessment of pupils' work in other subjects in order to produce more consistent and robust target setting and pupil tracking. There is a strong commitment to include all children in the work of the school. Those pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and those who are in the early stages of learning English are quickly assessed and good support is provided to enable them to participate fully in all aspects of learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Initiatives already in place demonstrate the senior teachers' good track record in moving the school forward and there is a good capacity to improve further. The headteacher and deputy have been in post since September and have correctly identified several areas for development. The most immediate change has been to the leadership team where a distributed approach to school management has encouraged staff, governors, parents and pupils to take more ownership and responsibility for the effective running of the school. A good example of this significant change is where key staff took leadership of developments such as the effective early learning project (EEL). This led to a probing evaluation, and enhancement, of the good provision in the Foundation Stage. The self evaluation process, whilst detailed, is still developing and the headteacher acknowledges that strategies to ensure accuracy in prioritisation need to be strengthened further.

Pupil involvement in running the school is now well established. The governing body is increasingly involved at strategic level and governors are aware of the strengths and areas for development in the school. These many changes have been achieved through discussion and evaluation of the needs of the school with parents, pupils, governors and all staff. This process was, in itself, a welcomed and needed development.

There has not yet been time for the changes implemented to impact fully on pupils' overall achievement. These include the headteacher's introduction of effective assessment procedures and curriculum development which are already having a positive impact on pupils' learning. As the senior staff acknowledge, these procedures need to be consistent and sustained to increase the improved opportunities for pupils.

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	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	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	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	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	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

Pupils

Thank you very much for welcoming us so warmly during our recent visit to your school. Thanks especially to those children who helped us find our way around and those who talked to us during the inspection. I am glad to tell you that we think your school is good and provides you with a really good start to your education. We were particularly pleased with these things:

* Your headteacher and staff do a good job in organising the school and looking after you.* You are all making good progress with your work.* You behave very well, work hard and listen carefully to your teachers. This helps you succeed at school. * All the adults in the school look after you very carefully. They always make sure that you get help if you need it.* Your school councils do a great job.

Your teachers are always trying to help you improve and we have asked them to make sure they keep a track on how well you are doing in all your subjects. The staff are also planning to give you more varied opportunities to learn in some subjects. You must continue to listen carefully and take note of what they say in order to make even better progress.Finally, we would like to thank you once again for all your help.

With kind regards

David Marshall

Lead Inspector