



Lonesome Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102636
LEA Merton LEA
Inspection number 276749
Inspection dates 22 November 2005 to 23 November 2005
Reporting inspector Marianne Harris AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Grove Road
School category	Community		Mitcham
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		CR4 1SD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8648 1722
Number on roll	383	Fax number	020 8640 8662
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Janet Smith
Date of previous inspection	3 July 2000	Headteacher	Mr David Winters

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Introduction

Three additional inspectors carried out the inspection.

Description of the school

Lonesome School is a large primary in an area where there is more deprivation than usual, with one third of pupils being eligible for free school meals. About half of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, with most having an Asian or Black African or Caribbean background. Many are learning English as an additional language, with a significant proportion at the early stages. The school has well above average numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and a significant proportion has a statement of need. A very high number of pupils leave or join the school part way through their education. Since the last inspection the school has been reorganised and is now a primary school rather than a first school where pupils left at the end of Year 3.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Lonesome Primary School judges itself as being satisfactory. However, inspectors judge this to be a good school, working in challenging circumstances, where pupils make good progress from a very low starting point and develop good attitudes to learning. Parents and pupils have very positive views of the school and know it is doing a good job. The school provides good value for money. Leadership and management are good. The head teacher provides strong leadership and there is a clear plan for how to raise standards. Accurate analysis of data has highlighted the areas for improvement so as to raise levels of achievement in English, mathematics and science. Many strategies have been put in place to raise standards and these are beginning to have a positive impact. Pupils are very positive about the learning targets they have. The school has set challenging targets for future improvement. The capacity to improve further is good. Provision in the Foundation Stage and has improved recently, and is now good. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school, and results in pupils making good progress, especially in their attitudes to learning. However, work is not always marked well enough so pupils know what to do to improve their work. The school provides good care for pupils, whatever their background or ability. Particular strengths include the way the school works with parents, and the support given to pupils are learning English as an additional language, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those who join the school part-way through their education.

What the school should do to improve further

* Make sure that work is always marked effectively so that pupils know what to do to improve their work* Use the results of the improved assessment systems to continue to raise levels of achievement in English, mathematics and science

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children start school with skills and knowledge that are very low, especially in their language and social skills. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage, but standards are lower than usual by the time they enter Year 1. From this very low starting point, pupils make good progress in their learning, particularly in their attitudes as they are keen to learn and beginning to be involved in setting their own targets for improving their work. Despite the school's best efforts to raise standards, they remain well below average at the end of Years 2 and 6. However, the challenging targets that have been set, the effective strategies that have been implemented and the good teaching seen in the school means that standards are now rising, as shown by the progress pupils made in 2005. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who are learning English as an additional language make good progress in their learning as well as their personal development. They are well supported throughout their time in the school by skilled teaching assistants. Pupils who join the school part-way through

their education are immediately welcomed and know that they make good progress, whatever the length of time they spend in the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children greatly enjoy their time in school and feel very safe. Their personal development is good and their behaviour is excellent, because of the school's good strategies. Pupils are keen workers in class and co-operate especially well in groups. Over the last few years the school has been successful in improving attendance, which is now average. Pupils' moral development is very good and they firmly believe in honesty and truthfulness. Spiritual, social and cultural development is good. Parents make valuable contributions to celebrating special festivals, bringing unity to diversity within the school community. Pupils themselves were keen to point out that 'We learn all about the countries people come from but we don't learn their languages yet!' Pupils contribute well to the school community, for example as playground buddy volunteers. They participate eagerly in projects raising funds for charities and for the school. They have opportunities to express their views about the school through pupils' questionnaires, and are fully involved in the democratic process through school council. They are considerate of others and confident that problems that arise are dealt with promptly and fairly. All pupils are aware of the need for a healthy lifestyle, and are learning how to keep safe and make appropriate choices about eating healthily and staying safe.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teaching is effective in the Foundation Stage because there is good emphasis on developing children's language skills and helping them to become independent. In the rest of the school, teachers rightly concentrate on helping pupils to speak clearly and listen attentively. Pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities, or who are learning English as an additional language, are well supported in their learning so that they can make good progress. Pupils are enthusiastic about learning. In the most effective lessons, pupils know exactly what they are going to learn because teachers write the purpose of the lesson in question form. This means that, by the end of the lesson, pupils can answer that question and assess for themselves what they have learnt. Work is usually matched well to the abilities of each pupil, although there are occasions when work for all pupils is the same. Teachers mark work with positive comments, and this encourages pupils. However, there are few comments that guide pupils in what they should do next to improve their work and reach their targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a balanced curriculum that covers all subjects. There are good opportunities for extra-curricular activities. Pupils are especially enthusiastic about the opportunities they have to participate in sports. The school day is well organised and lessons are usually planned appropriately so that pupils know what they are going to learn. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is sound. Teachers plan stimulating and exciting activities that enrich language. The curriculum for all of the school is further enhanced by a range of visits into the local area and by visitors into the school. Pupils say they particularly enjoy these. Pupils in Year 6 are particularly looking forward to their residential trip which will enhance their social skills. The curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, or at early stages of learning English is good. It ensures that the necessary time and materials are made available to meet everyone's individual needs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with parents that the school provides good care, guidance and support for their children. The school site is safe and welcoming and there are good procedures in place for child protection. Pupils know about healthy living, and the dangers of misusing drugs. Relationships are good throughout the school and pupils have great confidence in their teachers and other school staff. They know who to go to if they are in difficulty or distress. Pupils have recently become involved in setting their own targets for raising standards and are very enthusiastic about knowing what they are aiming for. The needs of pupils new to the school, as well as those who are learning English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and disabilities, are quickly assessed. Appropriate support is organised by the school, using outside agencies if this is required.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The head teacher provides good leadership and encourages senior staff to take an active role in school improvement. Together they have rigorously analysed the performance of the school and highlighted the weaknesses in test results. As a result standards have risen since the 2004 national tests. Teaching and learning have been evaluated and effective strategies introduced to raise standards. There has been a drive to involve parents at every opportunity and many help in the school. This has resulted in everyone feeling included, and is especially valuable for those pupils who are learning English as an additional language. The school's capacity to improve is good. The school development plan is a useful document and details accurately what needs to be done to raise standards further. These strategies have been most effective in raising pupils' self-esteem and confidence so that they are keen and ready to learn. Governance is satisfactory. There are some vacancies on

the governing body and many are new to the role. They are beginning to understand what they can do to ask challenging questions that hold the school to account for the work it carries out. Financial management is satisfactory and the school has an appropriate amount of money to deal with emergencies.

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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	4	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	1	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

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school recently. You were most helpful in making sure we found out all we needed to know. Thank you for talking to us all and telling us how well you are doing. We are now writing to let you know what we found out.

We think that your teachers work really hard to make sure that you are all included in your lessons and that you enjoy learning. We were very impressed by the way you behaved so well, you opened doors for each other and always spoke to us with a smile on your face. We know that some of you find learning very hard work, but you all try your best and we are asking that you carry on doing this. The children we spoke to were very enthusiastic about the targets that you have agreed with your teachers. This means that you know what you are trying to do. We have asked your teachers to help you even more by marking your work in such a way that you know what you need to do next to reach those targets.

Once again thank you for being so friendly and making our visit to your school such a happy one. Best of luck in the future and we hope to see you all again sometime.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Harris

Lead Inspector