



Abbey Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102967
LEA Sutton LEA
Inspection number 276799
Inspection dates 2 February 2006 to 3 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mike Thompson AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Glastonbury Road
School category	Community		Morden
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		SM4 6NZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8770 6770
Number on roll	417	Fax number	020 8770 6767
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr B Quinny
Date of previous inspection	27 March 2000	Headteacher	Miss L Tunstall

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large primary school, which serves an area of significant social deprivation. Children's levels of attainment on entry to the Nursery are very low. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is higher than average, as is the number with learning difficulties and disabilities. About a quarter of the pupils are from homes in which English is an additional language. All year groups are affected by the high proportion of pupils who either leave or join the school during the course of each year. There have been a significant number of staff changes over the last two years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good and effective school that gives good value for money. Parents and pupils hold their school in high regard. Their views are fully justified. Children in the Foundation Stage are given a good start to their education. They quickly settle in, and make rapid progress because they are given a good range of interesting activities to do and are well taught. In Years 1 to 6, the quality of education, including teaching, is good. As a result, the pupils achieve well. All pupils are warmly welcomed and equally valued. There are good systems to ensure that teachers can quickly get to know the large number newcomers to the school. Teachers are good at helping pupils to improve their skills in written and spoken English during literacy sessions. However, they sometimes miss opportunities to develop these skills when they are teaching other subjects. Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy their lessons and behave well. Pupils are very well cared for and feel secure and happy. The leadership of the school is good. The headteacher and her deputy provide exceptionally good direction for the school's work. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and have devised a clear plan for its further development. However, the leadership and management skills of some relatively new and inexperienced subject leaders need to be improved. The school has made good progress since its last inspection in 2000. There is a strong commitment to continuous improvement at all levels within the school, leaving it well placed to make further progress.

What the school should do to improve further

* Ensure that better use is made of the opportunities to develop pupils' skills in speaking, listening and writing in all subjects;* Improve the skills of subject leaders.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the Nursery with very low levels of skill and understanding, especially in speaking and listening. Even though they make good progress, standards are well below average by the time children transfer from the Foundation Stage to Year 1. The school is working hard to improve learning in Years 1 and 2, and pupils are making good progress. Although standards are still well below average in reading, writing and mathematics, they are improving. Standards at the end of Year 6 are below average in English, mathematics and science. However, pupils are making good progress overall. The pupils currently in Year 6, and who have been at the school since they were in Year 2, have done particularly well. Most of these pupils are on course to meet the challenging targets set for them and to reach or exceed the levels expected nationally for pupils of this age. The large numbers of pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress, as do those for whom English is an additional language. There is no significant difference between the progress made by boys and girls or different ethnic groups in the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. This helps them to develop self-esteem and positive attitudes to learning. The vast majority of pupils behave well. However, there have been a number of temporary exclusions this year. These result from the challenging behaviour of a very small number of boys. The relationships between almost all pupils and all adults, and between pupils themselves, are excellent. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is good. Pupils celebrate the wide range of cultures represented in their school from an early age. For instance, in a lesson in the Reception class, children displayed a good level of knowledge about the Chinese New Year. Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong. They report that bullying is rare because of the school's effective 'peer-mediation' strategy, whereby Year 6 mediators take good care of the younger pupils. School council members carry out their duties responsibly and are proud of their contributions, saying that 'these help to make the school a better place'. Pupils enjoy their education and have a clear understanding of the importance of healthy living. They recognise that exercise is essential, and enthusiastically take part in a range of physical activities. Pupils make a sound contribution to the community and are fully involved in raising funds for different charities. They are prepared well for their move to secondary schools. Attendance is improving year-on-year. Most pupils attend well. However, the poor attendance of a small number of pupils adversely affects the school's annual attendance rate.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good, with some pockets of very effective practice. Throughout the school, teachers are good at making their lessons interesting and enjoyable. Skilled teaching assistants work closely in partnership with the teachers and provide good quality help for pupils with specific learning difficulties and those for whom English is an additional language. Teachers manage their pupils' behaviour well and create a positive atmosphere for learning. They are skilled in using questions to find out how well pupils are learning. They use this knowledge very well to ensure that, in English and mathematics in particular, tasks are set for pupils at different levels of difficulty according to their needs. The teachers also use questions well to involve all pupils in the lessons. However, in lessons other than English, they miss opportunities to improve the quality of pupils' listening, speaking and writing. The school is good at ensuring that newcomers are quickly assessed, so that individuals' precise needs can be identified. Teachers then use this information well to ensure that these pupils quickly settle in and make good progress in their learning. The school has recently reviewed and strengthened its assessment and tracking procedures. The school correctly identified teachers' assessment of pupils' work as a weakness and, through rigorous training and development, has effectively improved teachers' skills and abilities

in this area. A tracking system has been devised by the school and is proving to be highly effective in providing monitoring data to check on pupils' progress and identify which pupils need extra help.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good range of interesting activities for its pupils. Provision for English is good but opportunities to extend pupils' expressive language in other subjects are sometimes overlooked. The imaginative use of interactive whiteboards helps to hold pupils' interest and heighten their enjoyment of lessons. The school has begun to focus on providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their creativity, and good links have been made between different subjects. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is good. They are effectively identified and the curriculum is suitably adapted to meet their learning needs. The school's mission to 'open windows of opportunity' for pupils is achieved very effectively through an impressive range of out-of-class clubs, activities, projects, visits and visitors. For example, the school has football teams for boys and girls, tennis 'taster' sessions, and cycling proficiency lessons, all of which help promote pupils' health and safety well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care and support for pupils is good. The overwhelming majority of parents praise the school in this respect and are happy with their children's progress. Pupils also believe they are very well cared for and have an adult to talk with should they feel the need to discuss personal matters. As a result, they feel safe and secure. The firm stance taken by the school in dealing with the anti-social behaviour of a very small number of pupils has been effective, and the pupils most recently excluded have not re-offended. The school liaises very closely with a range of service providers to ensure good care and support for all pupils. Health and safety routines and risk assessments are carried out regularly. Child protection procedures are clear and are used very effectively to support all pupils. The policy is widely understood and all staff are trained in this. The school has good systems in place to cope with the large number of pupils who leave or join the school during the course of each year. Pupils are quickly assessed when they join, so that their needs can be met rapidly. Pupils' progress is tracked effectively. They understand their learning targets and appreciate the systems for rewarding and celebrating their success.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and her deputy work very well as a team. Together, they provide outstanding leadership, which is focused strongly on raising standards and improving the achievement of all learners. They know the school very well because they rigorously monitor all aspects of its work. The views of pupils and parents are carefully considered

as part of this process. The information which they gather is used well to set challenging targets for the school's performance. Their evaluation of the school's effectiveness is accurate, although over-cautious in some respects. Senior teachers provide good leadership for their teams. Particularly noteworthy is the clear management of teaching assistants and the good opportunities for them to develop their skills, provided by the co-ordinator for special educational needs. There is good leadership provided by the experienced staff who provide direction for key areas. In other subjects, leadership is satisfactory. Many of these subject leaders are relatively new to the school and to subject leadership. As a result of their lack of experience of leadership they do not yet have a clear enough overview of how well pupils are progressing. The school is very good at coping with a regular high turnover of teaching staff, caused by the high cost of living in the London area. There are highly effective systems to induct new teachers and quickly develop their effectiveness in class. The staff work well as a team, and share a clear sense of purpose to ensure that pupils do well and are fully included in activities. Very good use is made of the buildings to provide a stimulating learning environment. Governance is good. Governors care about their school and hold it to account. They provide useful support for school initiatives and ensure that it meets its legal responsibilities.

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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	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	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	3	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?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	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	2	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	2	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

Following our visit to inspect your school we would like to tell you what we think about how well you are getting on and how well your school is helping you to learn.

We enjoyed seeing you at work and at playtimes, and liked talking to you. There are lots of things that we like about your school. Some of them are: * Your school is friendly and welcoming. You behave well and get on really well with each other; * You are making good progress. You try hard in your lessons and, when you find work hard, you are given the right sort of help; * Your teachers are good at teaching you. They make your lessons interesting and organise lots of extra activities for you to do; * All of the adults who work in your school make sure that you are safe and are really well looked after; * Your headteacher, and all of the other people who help run your school, are good at making sure that you get a good education. We agree with your parents that you go to a successful school.

All of the adults in your school want it to be even better. To help them to do this we think that the things to do next are: * Make sure that you continue to improve your English when you do your work in other subjects; * Help the teachers in charge of all subjects to become as good at leading their subjects as the teachers in charge of subjects such as English, mathematics and science.