



# Noak Bridge Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 114894  
**LEA** ESSEX LEA  
**Inspection number** 279469  
**Inspection dates** 29 September 2005 to 30 September 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Ms. Ruth Frith LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Coppice Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community		SS15 4JS
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 12		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01268282433
<b>Number on roll</b>	206	<b>Fax number</b>	01268281125
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs.. New
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 July 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms. Huma Karim

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 12	<b>Inspection dates</b> 29 September 2005 - 30 September 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 279469
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average size primary school situated in Noak Bridge village near Basildon. Most pupils who attend come from the immediate socially mixed area and the percentage receiving free school meals is broadly average. Overall, children's attainment on entry is slightly below the local education authority (LEA) average and boys' attainment is lower than girls' in all areas of learning. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is broadly average and two pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Most pupils come from white British backgrounds but seven speak English as an additional language. Over the last two years, the school has admitted a number of pupils from the Traveller community and they currently form five percent of the school population. The LEA recognised that the school was working in difficult circumstances due to a period of significant change amongst staff and has given support. The school now has settled staffing and team of governors. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been in post for one year.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

Noak Bridge primary provides a satisfactory standard of education. However, over the last year great progress has been made in raising standards and improving the quality of provision. This is the result of the new headteacher's outstanding leadership and drive for improvement. The enthusiasm and commitment of staff and governors, together with these recent successes, indicate that the school has a good capacity to improve further. The quality of teaching and learning has improved and now has several good features. These are helping to increase the pupils' rate of learning. Those in the reception class make a good start and quickly become eager to learn. Because of this, and the effective teaching and support, they make good progress. Whilst staff have been successful in encouraging pupils to reach the standard of work expected for their age, more challenge is needed for the more capable pupils. Overall, the pupils' individual needs are well met so that they become happy and confident learners. Despite the hard work of staff to encourage all pupils to attend school regularly, attendance remains below the national average. The headteacher has been particularly effective in developing a good team spirit amongst staff, who now share a determination to improve provision and raise standards. Her high expectations and high quality leadership and management skills are ensuring that the strongest areas of the school have been maintained whilst areas of weakness are quickly being addressed. This is reflected in the recent improvement in standards, although staff have recognised the need to continue to improve pupils' quality of writing. Several staff are new to management and need further time and training to ensure that they can fulfil these roles to the best of their abilities. Inspection findings reflect the views of the school's self-evaluation and acknowledge the very significant recent improvements. These changes are yet to impact fully on all of the school's work, but a very good start has been made. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

-Continue the drive to raise pupils' standards, particularly in writing. -Improve the provision for more capable pupils to enable them to achieve as well as they can.  
-Continue the work to improve attendance levels. -Further develop the roles of teachers with additional management responsibilities.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

One of the most significant developments over the last year has been the improvement in standards for pupils in Year 6. In the 2005 national tests, standards were average in English, mathematics and science compared with the previous year when standards were well below average. In Year 2, standards also improved and pupils attained broadly average standards. Overall, the school met the challenging targets it set itself. This reflects the success of the leadership team's work and their focus on improving teaching, learning and the curriculum. Staff have been effective in getting pupils to

work at the levels expected for their age but do not yet fully challenge the more capable learners, so that they achieve as well as they can. Although the quality of pupils' writing, including their spelling, is getting better, more could still be done to raise standards even further. Whereas in 2004, the pupils' progress across Years 3 to 6 was inadequate in English, progress now in English, mathematics and science is satisfactory. There has been a rapid improvement in the quality of teaching, which is accelerating the rate of learning, and some pupils are now beginning to make good progress. Pupils in the reception class quickly adapt to the school's procedures and staff expectations and make good progress, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Although information provided by the school indicates that boys start school at a lower level than girls, there is no evidence of underachievement during lessons or in the school records. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make similar progress to their peers because they receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants. The support for pupils with English as an additional language and those from the Traveller community is also effective, so these pupils are beginning to make good progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The calm atmosphere and the high expectations of staff help pupils to settle quickly and enjoy their learning. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding because they are interested in what they are doing and respond well to the teachers' good range of strategies which recognise the pupils' strengths and set clear standards. Pupils enjoy their successes and want to do well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school has been particularly successful in the areas of moral and social education and pupils learn to respect others and different beliefs and values. Pupils in Years 2 to 6 respond well to the opportunities they have to act responsibly and get involved in improving the school through the school council. This has helped them to see that their views are taken seriously and they can make a difference. Older pupils are encouraged to look after the younger ones and act as 'buddies'. This helps to cement the exceptionally good relationships seen throughout the school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle, for example, through regular exercise, eating a range of good food and staying safe. Pupils also have a good understanding of events in the local community and particularly enjoy singing to senior citizens and being involved in the music festivals. They become aware of their roles in the wider community through the personal, social, and health education programme and when they raise money for charities. Pupils' economic awareness is satisfactory as they are prepared for their later life through specific lessons and the standards they achieve. The school has made significant efforts to raise attendance levels and this has brought about good improvements. However, the overall attendance rate remains below average and is a key factor in impeding some pupils' progress and achievement. Most pupils arrive on time and are keen to start their lessons.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching is satisfactory overall, but with many good features. The quality of teaching is improving because of the robust approach of the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Higher expectations of pupils' performance are leading to improved progress in learning. Because of the exemplary behaviour in the school, teachers are able to ensure the time available is used well to help pupils to make progress. Also, the grouping of the older pupils according to their capability in mathematics helps to raise their self-esteem by completing the work and doing well. Teachers' marking gives pupils clear indications about what they have done well and how they can improve in the future. Through marking and pupils' self-assessment, teachers evaluate how well pupils have understood the work and modify their planning for the following lessons in the light of this. The information gained from regular and accurate assessments enables teachers to plan work that is challenging for most levels of ability. However, the school recognises that improvements are needed to enable teaching to challenge the most capable fully. Planning for those learners with difficulties and disabilities ensures that their work takes their learning forward at the right pace. Teaching assistants work well alongside teachers to give these pupils good support. However, their expertise is not always used as effectively during other parts of the lessons when the teacher is working with the whole class.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum for the pupils that is broad, balanced and increasingly aimed at developing creativity. There is a strong focus on developing safe and healthy lifestyles, for example, the recent 'Healthy Schools' week. The curriculum for reception children is particularly effective as it helps them to settle quickly in school and take full advantage of learning through discovery and investigation. Beyond the normal school day, the pupils are given several opportunities to develop their learning. A wide range of extra-curricular activities helps the pupils to maintain a healthy lifestyle, for example, in sports and the residential visit helps them to work with others in a less formal setting. Most take an active part in the activities provided.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Staff care well for their pupils and good procedures are in place to guide and support them and ensure their safety. Adults are sensitive and friendly and this helps to create an atmosphere where pupils feel secure and are keen to learn. Staff are aware of the procedures for child protection and those to ensure health and safety. Pupils are supported well in their academic work through the individual comments from teachers

and specific additional provision for those who find their learning difficult. Pupils know they are expected to work hard and talk about their targets and how they can improve. Parents are pleased with the work of the school and feel that they are consulted and their views valued. Pupils think they are treated fairly.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Overall, leadership and management of the school are satisfactory but recent changes have brought about some good developments. After a long period of instability there is now a secure and effective management team which is giving direction to the school's work. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. Her clear vision and determination have, in a short time, turned the school around and gained the confidence of staff, governors and parents. She has introduced many changes which are addressing areas of weakness and improving standards. Self-evaluation is good and there are effective systems in place to monitor key aspects of the school's work. Parents are encouraged to put forward their views, and their comments are helping to identify areas for improvement. The school has a good capacity to improve. Good relationships and a supportive atmosphere are now encouraging higher expectations. This can be seen in the rapid improvements to standards in the last year. Teachers with additional responsibilities, while relatively new to their roles, all provide sound leadership. They do, however, have the capacity to improve further. All teachers have sufficient time to enable them to perform their duties effectively. Performance management arrangements are well established and targets are linked closely to the school's improvement plan. This is ensuring that staff develop their individual skills as well as bringing overall improvements to the school. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body is well led by a knowledgeable and energetic chair of governors, who in turn is well supported by a core of active and committed governors. With the systems now in place, governors rely less on information from others and are in a position to gather much of the information they need for themselves. Training courses have been offered and attended and governors are beginning to have a clearer understanding of their roles, including the importance of monitoring the work of the school and their own effectiveness.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	4	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	3	NA

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	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	2	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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 very much for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school and for talking to us and showing us your work, with a special thank you to everyone on the School Council. We saw lots of good things and particularly liked the following: -Ms Karim has done an excellent job over the last year and, together with the rest of the staff, has made many improvements to the school. This has helped you to do better work, particularly in English, mathematics and science. -All staff work very well together as a team and want you to do as well as you can. Those of you who sometimes find it difficult to learn are given good support. -The youngest children in reception make a good start in school and quickly get used to being there and working hard. -You enjoy school and are keen to do good work. You particularly like the clubs and Golden Time. Many of you like literacy, numeracy and art. -You are kind to each other and your behaviour is some of the best we have seen. -Staff look after you well. They listen to what you have to say and use some of your ideas to make the school better. You think they are fair. There are still things to do and we have asked Ms Karim, teachers and the governors to: -Help you improve your writing; -Make sure that those of you who are particularly good at some things get the opportunity to do as well as you can; -Make sure that all of you come to school regularly; -Help those teachers with extra management responsibilities to carry them out. Thank you once again.