



# Plumcroft Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 100140  
**Local Authority** Greenwich  
**Inspection number** 285726  
**Inspection dates** 13–14 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Madeleine Gerard

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Plum Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community		Plumstead
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		London SE18 3HW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8854 1308
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	546	<b>Fax number</b>	020 8317 0026
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Brian Kennett
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Richard Gray
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 February 2003		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
3–11	13–14 November 2006	285726

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Plumcroft is a larger than average primary school with a nursery. Pupils come from a range of different backgrounds with White British and Black African being the largest groups. About 35 percent of pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of those with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. The school serves an area of social disadvantage and the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school other than at the normal starting and leaving points is high.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Plumcroft School judges its overall effectiveness to be satisfactory and inspection evidence confirms this. It is a caring school set in a challenging context. Improvements have been made over the past two years following the appointment of the headteacher. Parents confirm this and praise the school. One parent said 'We strongly feel that we have made the right choice of school for our child'. The school is well supported by the local authority.

Most children enter the school with skills which are exceptionally low for their age. Good teaching and the well structured environment in the Foundation Stage enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. By the time pupils start Year 1 standards have risen to below average. In Years 1 and 2 pupils achieve satisfactorily because of satisfactory teaching. Pupils' standards are below average by Year 2. This is due in part to the school admitting a considerable number of pupils from other schools into all years and to the low starting point of a significant proportion of pupils. From Years 3 to 6 pupils' progress is satisfactory but standards remain below average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils who join the school outside the normal starting times make good progress in relation to their below average attainment on entry. They achieve levels close to the national average as a result of the extra help they receive in English and mathematics particularly in Years 5 and 6. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The head teacher and his senior leadership team have a rigorous schedule for monitoring classroom practice, supplemented by a professional development programme for teaching and support staff. However, the quality of teaching is not consistently good and is satisfactory overall. Assessment information is not used to set pupils individual learning targets and marking does not make clear to all pupils what the next steps are to improve their work.

A real strength of the school is the pupils' personal and emotional development. The school provides effective care and support for all pupils including the most vulnerable. The school works well in partnership with outside professionals to promote learners' personal development and well-being. Pupils respond well to each other and to adults because they develop strong social skills. Those who arrive from other schools settle quickly into the life of the school because the existing pupils involve them in their activities. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and pupils speak enthusiastically about the school.

The school has a number of appropriate strategies in place to monitor and improve attendance, which is slowly rising and is close to the national average. Since the last inspection leadership and management have been satisfactory and have brought about adequate progress. Through good financial management the school has recovered from a significant shortfall. The school has an accurate picture of what needs to be improved. The effectiveness of recent measures to raise the quality of teaching and boost standards show that the school has the capacity to make the improvements needed.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, science and mathematics.
- Ensure that a higher proportion of teaching is of good quality.
- Increase pupils' knowledge of their individual targets and what they should do next to improve their work.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory overall and standards are below average. At the end of Year 2 standards are below average. Whilst standards at Year 6 have been consistently below the expected level, they have been improving over time. The school was close to its targets in English and science and exceeded their targets for pupils reaching the higher levels. Current Year 6 pupils are on course to reach the nationally expected levels. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well provided for and they make similar progress to other pupils. Those who speak English as an additional language make better than average progress because of the effective support they have from skilled members of staff.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

The pupils' personal development and well-being, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects, are good. Pupils enjoy school and say they feel very safe. They are keen to learn and their behaviour is good due to the school's focus on personal, social and emotional development. From the Foundation Stage onwards children and pupils become skilled at working with one another in their learning activities. They show respect towards, and good relations with, their friends and the staff. They enjoy the responsibilities they are given to help others both within their classes and the wider school community. These skills together with the progress they make in basic skills prepare them adequately for later life. Healthy eating and physical exercise are actively promoted and supported. The school council value the responsibilities they are given and are proud of the contributions they have made to the recent refurbishment of the toilets. However, the school council's effectiveness is hindered by inconsistencies in the way they are encouraged to fulfil their role across the classes.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching is good in the Foundation stage. Children make good progress because lessons are thoughtfully planned to provide a good blend of direct instruction and opportunities to explore. In other years, teaching and learning are not consistent.

Assessment information is not used to plan tasks which are suited to all levels of ability. Where used, interactive white boards help to make learning interesting. Pupils say they enjoy lessons because teachers make learning 'fun'. Although teachers are beginning to give pupils time to reflect on their learning and develop speaking and listening skills this is still at an early stage. Opportunities are missed to challenge and develop the pupils' skills in discussion. This usually stems from a narrow style of questioning that does not encourage or sustain more open responses. While marking gives feedback on strengths it does not tell pupils consistently what they need to do next to improve their skills in order to work at higher levels.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. Pupils develop good personal and social skills in response to the whole school approach to teaching social and emotional skills.

The school has made improvements in the use made of computers to enhance pupil learning, although opportunities for pupils to develop their computing skills in a range of subjects are limited. Educational visits and visitors especially for history, enrich the curriculum. There is an adequate number of extra-curricular clubs. In particular, pupils are given opportunities to take part in seasonal sporting activities, which promote a healthy lifestyle. The breakfast club is effective in ensuring pupils get a good start to their school day and the school has funding in place to improve the out of school curriculum further. The peer 'buddying' system to support new pupils to the school gives pupils opportunities to take on responsibility. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are included well in all activities. More able pupils are beginning to be identified but the school has not set up a complete programme for these children.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. The school provides a safe and supportive community, which many parents confirm. The procedures for child protection and vetting of all staff and volunteers are in place.

The good tracking of pupil progress means that the school is able to identify quickly those at risk of underachieving and put effective support in place, such as the booster classes in maths. The school links effectively with outside agencies to help the pupils. Induction procedures for pupils entering the school are good as are the transition arrangements to secondary schools. The parents' support for the school reflects the school's support for parents as well as its care for the pupils. Pupils know their group learning targets but they are not told their individual target levels.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory and ensure that the school has an accurate view of its performance. The headteacher is a good leader and has a clear vision for the school committed to raising standards and ensuring every child is well looked after. With the support of the governors and the local authority he has steered the school through a very difficult period. He works well in partnership with the senior leadership team. Coordinators make a useful contribution to monitoring and evaluating the school's work. There have been significant improvements over the last two years. For example, systems are now in place to enable the school to track the progress of pupils more closely. Behaviour has improved. Strengths in pastoral care have been built upon to develop pupils' personal and social development. Nevertheless, a number of recent improvements and initiatives have not yet had an impact on standards and the quality of teaching.

The governing body have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are supportive of the school and carry out their duties well.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for making us so welcome and helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and watching lessons. We would like to tell you what we found.

Plumcroft Primary is a satisfactory school. Here are the things that we think are best about your school:

- your behaviour is good and most of you enjoy school
- children in nursery and reception classes make good progress
- staff work hard to make sure everyone is cared for, helped and safe

These are things we have asked the school to do to make it even better:

- improve your level of English, mathematics and science
- ensure the quality of teaching is consistently good
- give you a clearer idea of your individual targets and how to improve your work.

You can help by listening carefully to your teachers and when you know what to do, making sure you do the best you can.

Yours sincerely,

Madeleine Gerard

Lead inspector