

South Norwood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101736
Local Authority	Croydon
Inspection number	286166
Inspection dates	7–8 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Madeleine Gerard

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	368
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mick Vincent
Headteacher	Mrs Della Williams
Date of previous school inspection	25 February 2002
School address	34 Crowther Road South Norwood London SE25 5QP
Telephone number	020 8654 2983
Fax number	020 8656 8436

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school. It educates a higher than average number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, with Black Caribbean pupils being the largest of these groups. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language and who are at an early stage of learning English is above the national average. The most common languages spoken are Turkish, Urdu and French. Prior to the appointment of the current headteacher in September 2007, the school was without a permanent headteacher for 12 months and there has been a high turnover of staff in recent years. The school has two special needs groups which cater for autistic pupils.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

This is a friendly and caring school but it is ineffective overall because standards are exceptionally low and pupils' achievement is inadequate. The school has not made enough progress since the last inspection. In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the standards and achievement of the pupils, the quality of teaching and in leadership and management.

Standards have fallen since the last inspection and Year 6 results in 2006 were exceptionally low in English, mathematics and science. The academic progress that pupils make is inadequate. Factors contributing to this include work which is not always well enough matched to pupils' needs, the high turnover of teachers and inadequacies in teaching.

A lack of clear leadership over a number of years has meant that leaders and managers have not had a rigorous effect on improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising standards and achievement. Improvements have been made following the appointment of the new headteacher. Since her arrival the headteacher has accurately evaluated the work of the school and has identified key priorities to make the school's overall performance better. Over the past six months, the effectiveness of measures to improve behaviour and strengthen the leadership and management of the school show the school has the capacity to make the necessary improvements. Changes to provision in the Reception classes, improvements in the teaching of reading and the development of the curriculum have been well managed and standards are rising. However, there is still much to do. The quality of teaching and learning is improving, but it is not consistent enough. Teachers do not always expect enough of pupils. Recently appointed subject coordinators have not been in place long enough to monitor and improve provision. Assessment is not used to set individual learning targets and marking does not make clear to pupils how to improve their work. The Foundation Stage is satisfactory and offers a sound balance between activities directed by adults and opportunities for pupils to make choices and develop their independence.

Relationships between staff and pupils and among the pupils themselves are sound. Behaviour is satisfactory and pupils are positive about the school. They enjoy taking on responsibilities as prefects and on the school council. The school is working hard to engage the support of parents, for example through workshops and regular newsletters informing parents about the work the school is doing. One parent commented, 'I now feel that I am part of school life as I get involved with what is happening with the school and my children's education.' Parent volunteers are now working with teachers to support pupils in their reading and regular 'rainbow reading' for younger children is helping parents to take part in their learning. Many parents speak positively about recent developments. One said, 'I think the new headteacher has made a number of positive changes at the school since her appointment last September'.

Attendance was not good enough at the time of the previous inspection. It is still below average and too many pupils arrive late to school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in literacy and numeracy by ensuring teachers consistently plan work well matched to all pupils' needs which challenges them to meet demanding targets
- Use marking to give pupils clear guidance on what they need to do to improve their work
- Develop the role of subject coordinators in improving pupils' performance and progress
- Improve attendance and punctuality.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards are too low and pupils have not done as well as they should. The attainment of children entering the school in Reception is below average. By the time they enter Year 1 most have made satisfactory progress. Communication, language and literacy as well as physical development have been areas of particular weakness. Major changes to the Foundation Stage curriculum as well as the development of outside play areas are already improving children's skills. By the end of Year 2 pupils reach broadly average standards and have made satisfactory progress.

Attainment in Years 3 to 6 has fluctuated since 2002. Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2006 were lower than previous years. Pupils of all abilities, including the more able and those with learning difficulties, made inadequate progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The personal development and well being of pupils is satisfactory. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school, which many parents confirm. One pupil described the school as '...a great place to be'.

Pupils are generally keen to learn, and when they are restless it is often due to the slow pace of teaching. A good variety of equipment and games available during break-times is improving pupils' social and emotional development. Pupils are developing a satisfactory awareness of how to stay safe. They understand how to lead healthy lives and appreciate the healthy food available for lunch. The school council has worked effectively to create a 'buddy' system to provide peer support at playtimes. Pupils are enthusiastic to take on responsibility. Year 6 prefects ensure the smooth running of the dining areas and serve salads to younger pupils.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Assemblies help them to learn about different faiths, increasing their respect for different cultures.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Teaching is inadequate because it does not enable pupils to reach expected standards or make appropriate progress for their age and ability. Lessons are planned to cover appropriate learning objectives. Most pupils enjoy their lessons, but the work is generally insufficiently challenging because teachers' expectations are too low. More able pupils often find the work too easy and sometimes say that they are bored. The school has now introduced a system to assess and track the progress of all pupils. However, this has not been in place long enough to help bring about

significant improvement. Tasks are not consistently well matched to the needs of the pupils because teachers do not make effective use of assessment information to plan the next steps in their learning. Marking does not make clear to pupils what they need to do to improve their skills in order to work at higher levels, and pupils are not aware of their individual targets for learning. The school is aware of these shortcomings and has clear plans to address them in the future.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils' personal and social development are improving in response to the whole-school approach to teaching social and emotional skills. This has not yet had time to become firmly established, but is a positive start. Opportunities for pupils to develop their computing skills are more limited. Teachers are developing links between subjects and relevant aspects such as Black history are included. Themed weeks are enhancing learning and involve all pupils. The curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is equally sound. Parents are kept well informed, for example through the recent curriculum evening. Extra-curricular provision is satisfactory and includes opportunities to attend dance, drama and football clubs after school. Two popular lunchtime clubs help pupils newly arrived at the school to settle well. The school has secured funding to purchase a set of steel drums as well as financial support for the development of the school library.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support given to pupils are satisfactory. There are robust procedures to ensure that pupils are safeguarded and staff receive appropriate training.

The school works with a number of outside agencies to support pupils' progress. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities receive sound support and have individual education plans that include appropriate targets. The majority of pupils feel safe and secure in school. However, a minority feel that silly behaviour in class is not dealt with sufficiently well by all members of staff.

Assessment systems have not been in place long enough to help teachers plan lessons to meet the range of needs in the school, and marking gives too little practical guidance to pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The new headteacher is a good leader and has a very clear picture of how she wants to see the school develop. She has made a good start and has already made many changes designed to raise standards. These include restructuring the senior management team. Since some members have been appointed very recently they have not yet had time to impact on the standards achieved by pupils. Other initiatives, such as improving the use of information about pupils' attainment in order to adapt teaching, and changes to the curriculum and the way teachers plan have clear potential for enhancing achievement. The management of teachers' performance is done well and has already led to improvements in the leadership and management capacity of subject leaders.

Over recent years the governors have not been sufficiently effective in holding the school to account. They are keen to embrace the changes through which the school is passing and acknowledge that their main priority must be to raise standards.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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	No

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	4
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ 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.

Annex A**Leadership and management**

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4
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	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
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?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

4 May 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of South Norwood Primary School, 34 Crowther Road, South Norwood, London, SE25 5QP

Thank you all 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.

You are not all making as much progress as you could but we think things are getting better. We are recommending that the school gets some extra help over the next year because it still needs to improve more.

Here are the things we think are best about your school.

- You enjoy the opportunities you have to take on responsibility.
- You get on and work well with each other.
- The new headteacher is making changes which are making the school better.

Here are the things we think should be improved.

- You could be doing better in English, mathematics and science.
- Your teachers need to make sure that all the work you get is just the right level of difficulty for each one of you. You can help by telling the teachers if the work is too easy or when you finish quickly.
- You need to be given a clearer idea of how to improve your work, especially in English, mathematics and science.
- Too many of you miss too much school. This means some of you miss important learning. We are asking your parents and the school to work together to make sure you go to school every day and arrive on time.

Thank you again. Good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Madeleine Gerard

Lead Inspector