



Parkside Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 118536
Local Authority Kent
Inspection number 291160
Inspection dates 4–5 October 2006
Reporting inspector Nigel Pett

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Tennyson Avenue
School category	Community		Canterbury
Age range of pupils	3–11		CT1 1EP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01227 464956
Number on roll (school)	156	Fax number	01227 457908
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	B Letchford
		Headteacher	I Nierzwicka
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2003		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized primary school. A large number of pupils experience social and economic disadvantage, and the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is well above average, as is the number of pupils who leave and join the school during each year. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with a significant minority of pupils who are members of the traveller community and a small number who are looked after by the local authority.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school which works in very challenging social conditions. Its effectiveness is improving through the enthusiasm of the headteacher, seen by many as a breath of fresh air! The clear direction she has set since her appointment a year ago is motivating staff and pupils very well. After the last inspection the overall provision declined but the school is now on an upward path and improvement since that inspection is satisfactory. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership team is strong. Although the capacity for improvement is judged as being satisfactory it has the potential to become good because the team is extending the roles of all staff and governors in the effective procedures for monitoring and evaluation they have put in place. It is also beginning to make use of the views of parents and pupils. This is leading to everyone gaining a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and what needs to be done to raise standards.

This good work, which is well supported by the local authority, is beginning to raise pupils' achievement, which is satisfactory. Many pupils enter the school with weak communication, personal and social skills. Children in the Nursery and Reception class (Foundation Stage) make satisfactory progress and pupils in other classes make steady progress from their starting points. However, standards in literacy and mathematics are below average. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and the assessment procedures are becoming more effective in tracking pupils' progress to improve planning so that work set meets the specific needs of the many differing groups of pupils. This is no easy task as a large number of pupils start at the school at varying times of the year and some only stay for short periods of time. Attendance is unsatisfactory and not enough parents are helping their children to gain from the opportunities provided. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, with good enrichment activities, much enjoyed by the pupils. Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory although the school does well in helping pupils to cope with the many personal difficulties they experience. Pupils generally enjoy school but, whilst many are friendly and polite, the behaviour of some pupils occasionally disrupts school life.

What the school should do to improve further

- The school should:
- raise pupils' achievement and standards in literacy and numeracy by the consistent inclusion of basic skills in all lessons
- ensure that assessment data is used consistently by teachers to plan work that meets pupils' many different needs to improve their progress
- ensure that the procedures for behaviour management and the raising of attendance are consistently applied, and especially to encourage the further involvement of parents and carers who do not send their children to school regularly.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and improving. Across all year groups, pupils' progress is inhibited by weak language and literacy skills and by the lack of continuity that many experience in their education. In the Foundation Stage, attainment on entry in the Nursery is low and children make sound progress. By the end of the Reception class, where progress is satisfactory, they do not reach the expected standards for their age in all areas of learning. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2005 and 2006 show below average standards although pupils made satisfactory progress. The national test results at the end of Year 6 in 2005 were below the national average in English, mathematics and science but pupils did better than expected. Provisional results for the very small number of pupils who took the tests in 2006 show similar standards and targets were met. Pupils who had been in the school throughout their schooling did as well as expected but those who had not had the continuity did not do as well. Pupils' progress across Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. It is improving, as the quality of teaching and learning is now addressing pupils' differing needs more rigorously, although standards in literacy remain below average. Satisfactory progress is made amongst the many differing groups of pupils present, including the many identified with learning difficulties, looked after children and the those from the traveller community. The achievement of the minorities of gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory. The school knows it needs to improve pupils' progress and achievement still further and the whole school achievement targets for 2007 are challenging.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being, as well as their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are satisfactory. They make sound progress in developing their personal qualities especially as many experience frequent changes in their lives. They enjoy school and say, 'I can't choose best things because so many things are good especially the teachers – everybody is welcoming.' Behaviour is satisfactory but not all pupils behave well and this leads to some being excluded. In most lessons pupils show good attitudes towards their work but some have difficulty in maintaining good relationships. Attendance is unsatisfactory. Pupils make a sound contribution to their own community through the school council and have raised funds for the local community. They have a good understanding of what makes a healthy lifestyle, especially in their good response in taking the well cooked lunches. Their knowledge and understanding of how to be safe is satisfactory. Because of their weaknesses in basic literacy and numeracy, they have only satisfactory skills for their economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and effective monitoring and support is improving the provision. Behaviour in class is improving where teachers are making good use of the code for behaviour management and this is helping pupils to concentrate on their learning tasks. Pupils respond well to praise and this boosts their confidence very well so that they bring their ideas to their learning. Teachers' marking informs pupils on how well they are doing and this is helping pupils to know what they must do to improve although they are not yet sufficiently involved in assessing their own learning. The assessment of pupils' work is being well recorded but the information is not yet used consistently enough to plan work that is always matched to the pupils' needs. Pupils' learning is hindered by their weak language skills but where teachers reinforce pupils' understanding of vocabulary and encourage them to develop their answers, they make good progress. Pupils do not have enough hands-on opportunities with work that is set in their everyday experience. They make good progress and enjoy their learning where teachers use a good range of stimulating tasks, as in a Year 1 numeracy lesson. Teaching assistants generally work very well in supporting the wide variety of pupils with learning difficulties.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Links between subjects are satisfactory and need to be further developed to help pupils develop their literacy skills and to support their learning. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) is satisfactory. Enrichment is good. The arts and creative subjects, such as music and art, are well used to raise pupils' self-esteem and to address the important need to widen their cultural awareness. Visits to places of interest, especially the nature of the city and its cathedral, are used well and visitors to school are well chosen. These activities further develop pupils' skills and their enjoyment of learning. There is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of citizenship and their personal development in personal and social education lessons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory. Pupils of all ages and from the many different groups are given sound support so that they all make similar progress in their learning. The close tracking of their progress has been firmly established, resulting in pupils' improved achievement. The support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is effective, as their needs are quickly identified. Pupils are very well supported in their personal development. Parents and carers appreciate how well their children are looked after and emphasised their improved

progress, particularly in their social skills, although they still have some concerns regarding behaviour. The new system of rewards and punishments is helping pupils to understand how they must behave. The good links with outside agencies have resulted in pupils having more positive attitudes during lessons and a fall in the number of exclusions. However, the efforts to raise attendance have not been successful enough and some parents do not ensure that their children attend regularly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher leads and manages very well and the high expectations she has set in her first year in post are being well met by staff and pupils. Her evaluation is accurate, and the very clear direction she has given is being sensibly implemented through an effective improvement plan which is beginning to raise pupils' achievement and standards through the improved quality of teaching and learning. This work is being helped through the very good partnership with the deputy headteacher, and the vision for the school is shared and very well supported by the senior leadership team. However, the overall capacity for improvement is satisfactory, as the roles of other staff and governors in monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the school's work need development, although recent progress in this work indicates that the capacity has the potential to become good. Staff feel valued and involved and this process has regained the momentum for school improvement. Governors now understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and are being very supportive as they challenge the school with increasing confidence.

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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?	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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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 welcoming us when we came to inspect your school, and for being polite and courteous when we talked with you. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education and has a number of important good aspects. Like you, we could see that your school is improving and that the standards you reach in your work are getting better because you are making better progress.

Other good things about your school, some of which you told us about, are that:

- your headteacher, the staff and governors are working well together to help you to improve and to give you the best opportunities
- you enjoy school and you understand what you should do to be healthy
- your school works very hard and successfully to help all of you when you have problems, and especially those of you who have to move home and change schools.

We have asked your school to:

- help you do even better in your work and improve your standards in English and in mathematics
- make sure that your teachers and support staff use what they know about how well you are doing to plan work that helps all of you in each class to make the best progress through better teaching and learning
- help those of you who have problems to improve your behaviour and attendance
- work closely with your parents and carers to help you to behave well and see that you come to school regularly.