

# Mulgrave Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100163
<b>Local Authority</b>	Greenwich
<b>Inspection number</b>	295316
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 April 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ann Sydney

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	521
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr T Slack
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms B Freeman (Acting Headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 February 2006
<b>School address</b>	Rectory Place Woolwich London SE18 5DL
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8317 9211
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8319 5721

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Mulgrave Primary was given a Notice to Improve at its previous inspection a year ago because of low standards and achievement. It is a larger than average primary school in an area of high deprivation. Attainment on entry is very low. Mobility and the percentage of pupils with English as an additional language and with special educational needs are all above the national average. There are 27 pupils at an early stage of learning English. While most pupils are White British, there is a significant minority of Black African pupils. The school is in new buildings and provides a community focus for education, childcare and social services.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. In accordance with Section 13 (5) HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. Following a period of declining results, Mulgrave is now improving. The acting headteacher and leadership team, with the support of local authority consultants, have prioritised actions and made effective changes. The result is that from very low standards at the beginning of Nursery, pupils are now working at average levels in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. The school has identified correctly that English, and particularly boys' writing, is still an area for development. Most pupils enter the school with particularly low skills in communication, language and literacy.

While standards in the school are rising there are variations in the progress made in different year groups. This reflects weaknesses in teaching, particularly in the level of challenge set for pupils because work is not matched closely enough to individual needs. Marking is inconsistent and the methods used do not help pupils improve their work. Often the vocabulary used is too sophisticated. While pupils have group targets, these are not specific enough for individuals. There is a satisfactory curriculum which provides a broad range of experiences for pupils. However there is no planning for pupils to practise their computing, numeracy and literacy skills outside the designated lessons.

Personal development is good and a strength of the school, reflecting the high level of care and outstanding links with other professionals. The school is a community focus for families. Good communication between services and with pupils' parents and carers underpins what the school is achieving. The impact of this can be seen on attendance, which was an issue at the previous inspection and is now average. This has had a positive impact on the quality of learning and on standards.

The recommendations from the previous report have been addressed. However middle managers have not been involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, and this has led to inconsistencies in practice. Governors have not been involved enough in the school's self-evaluation or everyday life to act as critical friends. There is still a way to go to improve teaching and learning to produce the standards and achievement that the pupils are capable of. Mulgrave has satisfactory capacity to improve.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve progress in writing across the school, especially for boys
- Strengthen aspects of teaching so that work is matched to the needs of all abilities and marking indicates how pupils might improve
- Involve governors and all leaders in the school in ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning improves.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Standards are broadly average. They are very low on entry to the Foundation Stage. For several years standards at the end of Year 2 have been below the national average. Staffing changes

and a new focus on tackling underachievement led to a big improvement in 2006. Pupils reached average standards in mathematics, although boys' writing was a weak area. Because of a higher percentage with learning difficulties, current Year 2 pupils will not reach the same levels but they are likely to meet their challenging targets. In 2006, Year 6 pupils reached the national average in mathematics and science, with English again lagging behind.

Achievement is satisfactory. It is good for pupils with special educational needs. In Reception increased opportunities for the focussed teaching of basic skills is helping children in communication language and literacy and their mathematical development both identified previously as areas of weakness. Pupils from Year 1 to 6 make satisfactory progress but extra still needs to be done to ensure that all children are consistently challenged. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because of the many services and extra help that they get. Black African pupils make progress as well as others, as do pupils with English as an additional language.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well-being are good and strengths of the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is good. Pupils are confident and happy and all races and religions work and play together in harmony. A Somali girl said 'This is a brilliant school. I'm so pleased my mother chose it. If ever I am unhappy or have a problem, the other children help me straightaway.' Adults and children have good relationships and this helps pupils learn. Attendance has improved dramatically since the previous inspection and it is now average. This reflects the work that the school has put into improving attendance and also shows how much pupils enjoy their learning. Behaviour is good in class and around the school and pupils treat their new buildings and lovely gardens with respect. There is a low incidence of exclusions. In class, pupils work cooperatively in pairs and groups as well as independently. They know how to keep themselves healthy and safe. They volunteer for posts of responsibility, for example older pupils run a dance club for younger ones. However their below average skills in writing and lack of opportunities in information and communication technology disadvantage them at secondary transfer.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory overall and good in Nursery. Staff across the Foundation Stage know the children very well, keep a good check on their progress through regular assessment and plan interesting activities indoors and outside. Staff promote children's speaking, self-esteem and independence very well. In Reception classes they do not intervene sufficiently in children's free choice activities to ensure that new learning is taking place.

Teaching and learning from Years 1 to 6 are satisfactory. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and manage their classes effectively. Teaching assistants support pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities well. As a result, pupils are motivated, well behaved and concentrate well. Lessons are planned carefully but not enough account is given to matching work to the needs of all pupils. The more able, in particular, do not consistently receive challenging activities. Pupils discuss their learning with partners, which helps to strengthen their understanding, but

too long is spent on this. In the best lessons, teachers use a good range of challenging questions to stimulate thinking and vocabulary and consequently the pupils make good progress. Pupils' work is regularly marked but the quality is inconsistent and does not guide pupils on what they need to do to improve.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is broad, balanced and contributes satisfactorily to pupils' learning. The school recognises the need to establish more links between subjects and to give more opportunities for information and communication technology, literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. New home reading books and extra practical resources for mathematics and science are beginning to enhance pupils' learning.

The school has effectively introduced intervention groups to support pupils with learning difficulties and to boost the progress of the middle ability pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported satisfactorily from the Foundation Stage onwards. Those at the very early stages of English are given good support to settle in and to acquire basic knowledge of the language.

There is a wide range of visits but they are not planned systematically to fit in with other learning. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities including dance, choir, art workshops and various sporting activities. These are well attended and appreciated by the pupils. Music has a high profile in the school and the pupils clearly understand how music can reflect emotions. Special curriculum activities such as Black History month and visitors with special expertise contribute positively to pupils' understanding of world-wide issues. For example, the Ecology Centre was involved in improving the school environment and highlighting the importance of recycling.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support for pupils are good. Pastoral support for pupils is a particular strength and the school meets pupils' personal needs extremely well, leading to good personal development. Very good induction and transfer arrangements help children to settle quickly into school and enable pupils in Year 6 to approach the move to secondary school with confidence.

Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Staff promote pupils' confidence and self-esteem very well, ensuring that they are fully included and that their needs are addressed very sensitively. The school has developed very strong links with parents, health professionals and external agencies to ensure pupils' well-being, even providing classes for parents. The school has rigorously tackled the poor attendance of some pupils, resulting in a sharp increase in overall attendance and an improvement in learning.

Pupils are well supervised when moving round the school and outdoors, and there are good procedures for checking staff and the school site. Pupils' views are regularly sought, listened to, valued and taken into account. Although teachers encourage pupils and praise their efforts, the quality of marking and the use of individual targets is not robust enough to ensure that pupils know what they need to do to improve their written work.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The acting headteacher, in her calm, approachable manner shares a clear vision of where the school needs to improve. She is well supported by the senior leadership team and local authority consultants. Consequently, standards are improving, particularly in mathematics and science. This improvement is underpinned by high quality professional training for all staff.

School self-evaluation is satisfactory. Areas of underachievement have been identified and training and resources allocated, for example to begin to raise standards in English. The senior management team has an accurate view of standards and the quality of teaching, but the overall monitoring judgments do not give sharp guidance to teachers on how to improve teaching and learning. Middle managers, some new in post, are developing their roles through monitoring pupils' books, but do not have a clear view of the quality of lessons. Governors, again many new to the role, are keen to be involved in school but are not sufficiently knowledgeable and challenging in their questioning of the school. They are rightly proud of their school and recent improvements. Coupled with sound financial management and a purposeful sense of direction, the school is satisfactorily placed to improve further.

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## Annex A

## 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>
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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?	1
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	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	2

### 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.

## Annex A

**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	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**

3 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Mulgrave Primary School, Rectory Place, Woolwich, London, SE18 5DL

We enjoyed visiting your school recently. You and your parents have told us some very nice things about your school. Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming. It is only a year since your last inspection but many things have improved since then. We think the school is now satisfactory. You are making better progress and more of you are reaching higher levels in your tests. The school looks after you well by bringing together lots of services for you and your families. We were very impressed by the way all of you get on well together. Most of all 'well done' on your attendance which is now one of the highest in Greenwich.

To make your school even better, we would like the staff and governors to make sure that

- the standard of your writing improves, especially for boys
- teaching improves so that the work really stretches you and marking shows you how to improve your work
- the governors and teachers help the headteacher to check that all this is happening.

Best wishes for the future,

Ann Sydney

(Lead inspector)

PS We've tasted a lot of school dinners and yours are some of the best. They are delicious.