

Gordonbrock Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100684
Local Authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	307439
Inspection dates	8–9 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Sue Frater HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	480
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	73
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Rob Naybour
Headteacher	Ms Sue Blyth
Date of previous school inspection	6 June 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Gordonbrock Road London SE4 1JB
Telephone number	020 8690 0704
Fax number	020 8314 1073

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Gordonbrock Primary School is larger than average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. About two thirds of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, mainly Black Caribbean and African. This, and the number of pupils at an early stage of learning English, is high. A broadly average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, relating mainly to speech and language, physical and moderate learning. The school is equipped to support pupils with hearing impairment and, currently, supports one child. Fewer than average pupils leave or join the school other than in Year 1. The school provides a family learning programme. It has achieved the Healthy Schools award, Activemark, and the Clean and Green bronze award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector 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 achievement of pupils and the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils make insufficient progress in both Key Stages 1 and 2, and in specific subjects across the school, because assessment systems are not used effectively. A key issue from the previous inspection relating to the effective use of assessment, remains. As a result, information from monitoring pupils' academic performance is not used well enough to sustain previous satisfactory achievement.

Progress is satisfactory in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) enabling pupils to enter Year 1 with skills and knowledge in line with those expected for their age. Inadequate progress across Key Stage 1 has resulted in a decline in standards from well above average in 2006 to well below average in national assessments in 2007. The 2008 provisional results indicate some improvement but standards remain below average. At Key Stage 2, where hitherto standards had been average, 2008 provisional national test results indicate a significant decline in mathematics and at the higher levels in science, and a rise in English. Lesson observation, work samples and teachers' assessments, show underachievement of current pupils in Years 5 and 6, given their well above average starting points, and particularly for more able pupils in mathematics. The school is aware of this inconsistency in achievement and variation in standards. To address the issues, it has put in place a comprehensive system to track pupils' progress.

Substantial changes in the senior and middle leadership teams during the past two years have contributed to the recent decline in standards. The relatively long-standing headteacher, supported well by the governors, is developing a new and capable senior leadership team. The headteacher and senior leaders know what needs to be improved and they are beginning to raise standards in Key Stage 1. They have rightly identified the need to develop the skills of key stage and subject leaders in monitoring and evaluation. These middle leaders are beginning to monitor assessments, teachers' planning and pupils' work samples. The school has rightly identified the need for a more systematic approach to monitoring lessons, with a clearer focus on pupils' progress. Given developing strengths in senior leadership, the school has satisfactory capacity to make the necessary improvements.

Teaching and learning are inadequate because expectations are low and lessons are not pitched at the levels needed to accelerate pupils' progress. This is particularly so for more able pupils. The headteacher and governors have set challenging targets to raise standards, but these have not yet been shared with teachers. While the curriculum is satisfactory, the school is currently reviewing it to ensure it meets pupils', and particularly boys', interests and aspirations. Girls outperform boys in all key stages in English, although not in mathematics.

The school promotes community cohesion well. A particular strength is the way in which classes are named after countries to encourage pupils to explore other cultures and to counter stereotypical images. For example, pupils are aware of Africa's diverse economy. Parents value extended services such as family learning which help them to support their children's learning. Through specialist teachers to support pupils with English as an additional language or with learning difficulties and/or learning disabilities, the school works hard to eliminate discrimination and to provide equal access to its provision for all pupils.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Their behaviour is good. They feel safe and know how to keep healthy. The school's procedures for care and support are good, but academic guidance, for example in teachers' marking, is limited.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy their learning in the EYFS and teachers know their needs and capabilities well. However, this information is not used well enough to plan and deliver challenging activities, especially for pupils of higher ability. This leads to progress being no better than satisfactory. With the appointment of a new EYFS leader, practice is improving through monitoring and support. As a result, there are some examples of good teaching. Activities are well organised and provide a good balance of adult-guided and child-selected experiences. Careful guidance and support ensures children feel secure. The outside area, although small and with an uneven surface, supports children's physical development well. At the end of Nursery and Reception, achievements are in line with the expected goals for children of that age.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate pupils' progress across the school to raise standards.
- Ensure teachers use challenging targets to match learning to the range of pupils' capabilities.
- Develop the monitoring and evaluation skills of middle leaders to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to sustain improvements.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

From a starting point of achievement being in line with expectations in Reception and Year 1, pupils make inadequate progress across Key Stage 1. As a result, standards in the 2007 national assessments were well below average in reading and writing, although broadly average in mathematics. This represented a significant decline from previous standards that were well above average. The 2008 results indicate standards in reading and writing have improved to below average. While boys outperform girls in mathematics, girls outperform boys in reading and, more significantly, in writing.

Across Key Stage 2, the pace of learning is slow and inadequate overall. In the 2007 national tests in Year 6, standards were average in English, mathematics and science. Provisional results in the 2008 national tests indicate a significant decline in standards in mathematics and at the higher levels in science, although a rise in standards in English. The school is taking appropriate action to address underachievement in mathematics. It has yet to do this in science. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress due to effective specialist intervention and the support of teaching assistants in lessons.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of pupils' personal development are good. This is apparent in the way pupils celebrate the many different cultures they represent and through focused weeks such as Black History Week. Pupils enjoy coming to school. 'I love coming to school, teachers make learning fun', said one pupil. Behaviour is generally good. Pupils say

there is little bullying. They are confident that adults will deal with any problems they may have. Pupils know how to keep safe and healthy. Many enjoy the school's numerous sports activities and take part in Healthy School Week. The school council acts as a voice for all pupils and contributes to improvement projects such as the new playground equipment. Attendance is satisfactory and the school is working hard to encourage and reward improving attendance. Pupils make a good contribution to the wider community through local events such as harvest festivals and developing local nature trails. While pupils' personal skills are good, their below average skills in numeracy mean their preparation for the next stage of their education is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Learning is not good enough to ensure good progress and therefore to raise standards further. Although some good lessons and one outstanding lesson were seen, overall learning is not underpinned by activities that are carefully designed to reflect pupils' varying stages of development. A feature of the outstanding lesson was the rapid progress made by all pupils due to the use of a variety of teaching strategies. Effective strategies include modelling the writing task on the interactive whiteboard, asking questions at different levels to challenge all pupils to extend their vocabulary, and encouraging pupils to discuss ideas and evaluate each other's work using clear criteria for different capabilities. Time limits and regular feedback from the pupils sustained the pace of learning. In all lessons, pupils listen attentively but all too often the work they are presented with is not sufficiently geared to their targets for improvement. Planning is in many cases too general and in some instances does not include activities that inspire pupils. In some lessons, introductions are too long. When pupils are working independently, insufficient attention is given to providing tasks that support them so that they make better progress. Recorded work in books shows uneven progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school has mapped out the curriculum for learners and so all subjects are suitably covered. Specialist provision, particularly in physical education and music, is strong. Lessons in these areas show what can be achieved in pupils' learning. The school recognises the need to continue to improve the curriculum and is currently working on this. The level of detail covered in classes does not yet assure continuity and progression between year groups. This is particularly so in literacy and numeracy. To address this, teachers are adopting the new Primary National Strategy Frameworks. The school runs a good range of well-attended extra curricular activities, visits and residential experiences that benefit pupils' learning and personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Strong partnerships with parents, carers and external agencies result in pupils being well cared for. Health and safety, risk assessments and safeguarding procedures are secure. Specialist teachers and teaching assistants play a significant role in helping new arrivals settle. All children in the nursery have a home school visit. This, together with induction afternoons for children who come into reception from other nurseries, ensures children settle quickly to routines. Good

links with local secondary schools help the transfer process for Year 6 pupils. However, academic guidance, particularly marking in pupils' books, does little to indicate the next steps that pupils need to take in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher engages all staff and governors in self-assessment and identifies appropriate priorities for improvement. As a result, standards are beginning to rise again in Key Stage 1. Senior leaders are implementing a more coherent system to track pupils' progress. They are beginning to develop the monitoring and evaluation skills of middle leaders, although this does not yet extend to lesson observation. Challenging targets have been set by the headteacher and governors to raise standards. However, these have not currently been shared with teachers to raise their expectations of all pupils. Middle leaders are rightly prioritising the need to help teachers standardise their assessments to ensure progress tracking is accurate.

Governors fulfil their statutory duties and challenge the school's performance. However, currently, they are unable to identify underachievement before the end of key stage tests and assessments. The school is addressing this issue appropriately with the introduction of the new system to track pupils' progress.

Pending a possible new school building, a large budget has been reserved to address deficiencies in the current building. The headteacher has appropriately identified the need to address major deficiencies now, and to increase the number of computers to support the learning of current pupils.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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	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?	Yes

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

04 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gordonbrock Primary School, London, SE4 1JB

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school recently, and for contributing to the inspection. We enjoyed talking to you in lessons and around the school. We were pleased to see that you enjoy school and that your parents support the school well. The school takes good care of you. You behave well, feel safe in school, and take opportunities to keep healthy. You contribute well to helping others in the community and in school, for example as playground friends. Many of you could make better progress in your lessons. For this reason, the school has been given a notice to improve. This means some more inspectors will come back to see how well you are all progressing.

Senior teachers know what needs to be improved, and have started to take the right actions to do so. However, we have asked them to make the following improvements in particular:

- to speed up your progress across the school, so that you achieve well
- to help teachers make sure your work in lessons is not too easy
- to help more of the senior teachers to monitor your learning in lessons, and to help teachers make sure you are all making good progress.

Your good attitude will help the school to improve. You can help further by monitoring your own progress towards your targets for literacy and numeracy.

We wish you success in the future

Yours sincerely

Sue Frater

Her Majesty's Inspector