

# Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101794
<b>Local Authority</b>	Croydon
<b>Inspection number</b>	307811
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lynn Bappa

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	196
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms A McGowan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr D O'Brien
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 July 2003
<b>School address</b>	Dunley Drive New Addington Croydon CR0 0RG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01689 841771
<b>Fax number</b>	01689 843341

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school, serving an area of considerable socio-economic deprivation. Nearly one-third of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. Well over three-quarters of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and well over half is learning English as an additional language. The largest ethnic group is Black African. A much higher percentage of pupils than is usual come from the Traveller community. Nearly a quarter of the pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. Mobility rates are higher than average. The school has had an unsettled recent history with the first substantive headteacher for five years being appointed in April 2005. There have been many recent staffing difficulties, including high turnover.

## 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 standards reached and the progress made by pupils in Years 1 to 6. As a result, the school's overall effectiveness is inadequate.

For the past three years standards have been too low and achievement inadequate. Serious staffing difficulties hampered the efforts of school leaders in attempting to maintain a watchful eye on how well the pupils were doing. During the last two years, these difficulties have been resolved. Teaching has got better and is now satisfactory throughout the school, although further improvement is necessary. Although academic guidance has improved, the quality of marking is inconsistent, for example, and rarely shows pupils what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils' progress is beginning to accelerate and standards are rising. There has not yet been enough time, however, for the improvements in teaching to have had a full impact on standards and achievement, as these remain inadequate.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. School leaders have a realistic view of the school's performance and understand that the keystone for the future must be to achieve higher standards. The headteacher is developing the role of subject leaders but more remains to be done to ensure that they are all accountable for standards and achievement in their areas or subjects. The headteacher's approach is rigorous and determined, with a clear focus on how well pupils are learning and achieving. He has ensured that good foundations for learning have been laid that are beginning to have a positive impact on standards. For example, there have been significant improvements in pupils' behaviour and attendance. A budget deficit has been turned into a small surplus and the school can now afford to make improvements in resources and accommodation. Staff morale has improved and there is a sense of real teamwork and a determination to do better. These developments show that the school has the necessary capacity to improve in the future.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. They show a sound understanding of how to keep safe and are confident that bullying, if it occurs, is, as one pupil put it, 'sorted quickly'. There is good racial harmony in the school and pupils show a good understanding of what it means to be a citizen of multi-cultural Britain. Behaviour has improved significantly and most pupils show positive attitudes in lessons and around the school, although occasional disruptions to lessons still occur. Attendance levels fluctuate but have improved and are satisfactory. Punctuality, however, is poor and too often disrupts the start of the day. Although pupils are developing sound personal qualities, the standards they reach by Year 6 are not good enough to equip them adequately for their future.

Pupils benefit from positive relationships with the staff and the school's inclusive atmosphere. This is underpinned by the warm Catholic ethos that flows through the school. As a result, pupils are becoming more self-confident and try hard to be polite and courteous.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

When children start in the Nursery, their skills and levels of knowledge are significantly below what are expected of most three year-olds. There are particular weaknesses in communication, language and literacy and in their personal and social skills. In the Foundation Stage, they make satisfactory progress towards the goals they are expected to achieve, although standards remain well below those expected when they enter Year 1. They make good progress in acquiring personal and social skills and in developing positive attitudes to school and to each other. The school provides a satisfactory and improving activity-based curriculum that gives the children a sound start to their learning. Accommodation in the Reception class is good and there are firm plans to improve the outdoor facilities and the provision in the Nursery. Parents say that their children are well cared for and staff are friendly and helpful. As one parent commented, 'My daughter gets upset when she's told she can't go at the weekend and the staff listen to anything you have to say.'

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science and make sure pupils reach their potential.
- Improve the quality of teaching by improving the percentage of good lessons.
- Improve marking so that pupils know what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work.
- Strengthen the role of subject leaders so that they are accountable for standards and achievement in their areas.
- Work with parents to improve pupils' punctuality.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 4

Standards and achievement have not been good enough for the last three years. Assessments at the end of Year 2 show that standards have been well below average for several years, with a decline in 2007. These standards are much lower than they should be, even given pupils' low starting points. Pupils continue to underachieve significantly in Years 3 to 6. Although national test results show that standards in Year 6 rose in 2007, they remained well below average in science, and exceptionally low in English and mathematics. Very few pupils gain the higher levels in the national tests. Writing is a particular weakness and pupils have too few opportunities to write at length or extend their literacy skills. Handwriting is often untidy and the presentation of work is poor. Senior leaders are fully aware that this situation is unacceptable and have taken firm actions to tackle it. They are now interpreting the data about pupils' progress more realistically and are beginning to use it more effectively to help all pupils improve the speed at which they learn. The rate of pupils' progress has begun to increase. However, although this is an improving picture, achievement remains inadequate overall for all groups of pupils, irrespective of their gender, home language or ethnicity. The more able are capable of better progress and higher standards, which school leaders recognise. Most pupils have a great deal to catch up on because of a legacy of weak teaching in the past. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties or disabilities, including those with statements of special need, receive good pastoral support but their academic achievement is inadequate.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Most pupils are happy in school and enjoy their lessons and other activities. Behaviour has improved because teachers provide pupils with clear boundaries and expectations. As a result, the learning atmosphere in most classrooms has improved and most pupils settle quickly to work. Although they do as their teachers ask them, they find independent work difficult and are limited by insecure basic skills that prevent them from applying their learning effectively. Pupils have a sound understanding of how to stay healthy although they do not always make healthy eating choices at lunchtime. They have increasing opportunities to contribute to life in school and they know that their views are important. The school councillors, peer mentors and playground buddies are proud of their roles which they carry out with care and dignity.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The legacy of some poor teaching in the recent past has had a negative impact on pupils' progress. Determined leadership by the headteacher, good support from the local authority and some new staff appointments mean that teaching is starting to improve and has been strengthened in key parts of the school, but overall is only satisfactory. The proportion of pupils who gained the nationally expected levels rose in 2007, for example, as a result of better teaching. The school's 'language for learning' initiative is new but is beginning to have an impact on increasing pupils' confidence in understanding their learning. Although there are some strengths in the teaching, particularly in the Foundation Stage and Year 1, there is not enough good teaching to make a consistent impact on pupils' longstanding underachievement. The relationships in most classes are good and pupils are willing to learn. Teachers manage their pupils' behaviour well, although there are still some occasions when lessons are disrupted by a small number of pupils. In most lessons, pupils understand what is expected of them and try hard.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils. Good links are developing with other schools to enhance the provision in music and art. Pupils do not have enough opportunities, however, to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. An improving scheme for personal, social and health education contributes positively to their personal development. There is a satisfactory and increasing range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities to enhance the learning experiences of all pupils.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school provides a caring environment where pupils are known and treated as individuals. As one pupil commented, 'Everyone in this school works together.' Requirements for child protection are in place. The school works well with outside agencies and with parents. Good links have been established, for example, with the local Traveller community. Significant progress has been made in improving attendance. Vulnerable pupils are given good support. There have

been significant recent improvements in the quality of the academic guidance given to pupils and this is now satisfactory. Senior leaders now collect a good range of information about the standards pupils attain and the progress they make. Nevertheless, not all teachers use the information to best effect. Some pupils know their targets, but their use across the school is not yet fully embedded.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Since the last inspection, there have been several changes in staffing and leadership at the school that have hindered its improvement and resulted in low standards and inadequate achievement. Staffing is now much more stable and senior leaders are beginning to make inroads into the legacy of underachievement. They are well aware, however, that standards remain too low and that much more work needs to be done to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve as well as they can. The headteacher provides the necessary commitment and direction to take the school forward and is building a leadership team with the capacity to make key improvements in the future. Governors are supportive, but their skills in calling the school to account are under-developed. The school takes good account of parental opinion and responds well to suggestions made by them. The headteacher and staff have tackled the issues raised in the previous inspection report satisfactorily.

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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	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	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

<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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	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

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

25 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School, Croydon, CRO ORG

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed our visit very much. Thank you particularly to those children who talked with us or showed us their work and a special thank you to the Reception class who made us some sandwiches.

I am writing to tell you what we found. By now, you have probably heard that we think your school needs some extra help. We have decided that it needs something called 'A Notice to Improve'. Although there are many good points about your school, we think there are some important things that need to be put right. These things need to be improved:

- your teachers need to make sure that you learn as quickly as other pupils do in schools like yours; this should help you get much better results in tests when you are in Year 6
- your teachers need to explain to you exactly what you do well and what you need to do to improve your work
- more of you need to make sure that your parents bring you to school on time every morning; if you are late, you are missing out on your learning and are disturbing other children who have already settled down to their work
- we think your teachers have worked hard to make lessons better so that you learn more quickly; we have asked them to carry on doing this, so that even more lessons are good ones
- the teachers who are in charge of subjects need to make sure they check to see that everyone is doing as well as they can.

You can play your part by behaving as well as you can and by working hard in lessons. We know there is a lot about your school that you should be proud of. The adults in the school work hard to take good care of you. You try hard to behave well and do your best. Your headteacher and everyone else in the school is working very hard to improve things and they have already started to be successful. We are confident that they will carry on with these successes.

We wish you every success in the future.

Lynn Bappa

Lead Inspector