

Muschamp Primary School and Language Opportunity Base

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130934
Local Authority	Sutton
Inspection number	315664
Inspection dates	10–11 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Ann Berger

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	417
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alex Fitzgerald
Headteacher	Miss Heidi Westley
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2004
School address	Muschamp Road Carshalton SM5 2SE
Telephone number	020 8669 2514
Fax number	020 8669 5764

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	10–11 June 2008
Inspection number	315664

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Muschamp Primary School is a large community school. A higher than average number of pupils are registered for free school meals. The school also has a 56-place Language Opportunity Base which serves a wide area. The pupils spend time in mainstream classes and time receiving specialist teaching in small groups. All these pupils have Statements of Special Educational Needs and as a result the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is exceptionally high. A new children's centre has been built which opens in September 2008. The new headteacher started this term. She was previously the deputy headteacher in the school.

Although the school has a high number of pupils of White British heritage this is changing and the numbers of pupils representing a range of minority ethnic groups is increasing.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Muschamp Primary provides pupils with a satisfactory education. The school judges itself to be good. The inspectors agree that there are some good elements, particularly in the standards reached in literacy and numeracy. Provision is good in English and mathematics but only satisfactory in other subjects. The school's procedures for self-evaluation are not sufficiently robust to ensure that it identifies all its strengths and weaknesses. For example, it does not have an accurate picture of the quality of teaching in several subjects or of children's progress in the Foundation Stage. Consequently, because the shortcoming is not identified, the school is not doing enough to ensure that pupils make good progress across the curriculum. This means that the school's capacity to improve is satisfactory rather than good.

The school is settling down under the leadership of the new headteacher. Governors, staff and parents have welcomed the appointment of the deputy to this role. Most parents are happy with the school and what it does for their children, typically saying, 'my child is working hard and doing well at this school'. A few commented that they do not have as many opportunities to express their views as they would like and the inspectors agree that more could be done to gather the views of pupils, teachers and parents to inform the school's development plan. Though the school conducted a useful survey of parents' views in relation to the children's centre, there is no regular and systematic canvassing of parents to ensure their perceptions are taken into account. Overall, parents do not make as strong a contribution to the school as they could.

The senior leadership have taken robust steps to improve the pupils' basic skills since 2004 and this major focus has paid dividends. Despite low standards on entry, by the time pupils leave most now make good progress and attain the national expectation in English, mathematics and science. Pupils from the language opportunity base make particularly good progress because of the high levels of expertise within the school and the extensive support available.

Less attention has been paid to the development of subjects like music and the arts and, although the basic requirements of the national curriculum have been met, the day-to-day experiences for the pupils lack vibrancy. There are too few opportunities to stretch the most able, teaching is too often uninspiring in these subjects and the curriculum overall is insufficiently engaging. Opportunities are therefore missed to increase pupils' motivation and attitudes and to improve their very low levels of attendance. This is further exacerbated by the lack of parental involvement in the work of the school.

The quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory in English and mathematics and sound overall. This consistency has been achieved because expectations about what is to be delivered in English and mathematics are clearly laid out for teachers and many lessons follow a specific programme. Although this has been effective in ensuring that nearly all children achieve the national expectation, it limits the teachers' opportunities to match the work to the individuals learning on a day-to-day basis. As a result, the more able pupils in a class are not always sufficiently challenged. As one pupil explained, in answer to a question about what he does when he is finished, 'I wait'. Too little work is done to ensure the most able pupils are stretched although the less able pupils are usually well supported. Many pupils benefit from the good teaching in the language opportunity base and these pupils achieve well.

Information about the performance of pupils in English, mathematics and science is gathered and analysed well. Systems are in place to observe teaching in these subjects each term but

this information is not drawn together sufficiently well to inform whole-school initiatives and, though feedback is given, there are too few systems to ensure weaknesses are addressed. Overall, the school's view of the quality of teaching is too positive. Information about the quality of teaching in most subjects is limited and the school is not fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching of these subjects on a day-to-day basis.

Behaviour is satisfactory overall and the school is a safe and orderly community, although the low interest levels in some lessons results in pupils becoming distracted and disengaged with learning. The development of the new children's centre as part of the school has provided a positive boost to assist the school in reaching out to its community and further develop relationships with other agencies. Other partnerships are underdeveloped though this has been recognised and links with other schools and local businesses have been instigated.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The school has judged children's standards by the end of the Foundation Stage to be above average, but they have rightly recognized that the systems for measuring children's levels across the six areas of learning are not rigorous enough to ensure the assessments are absolutely accurate. The school is now taking action to rectify this. However, through scrutiny of children's work and direct observations, inspectors confirmed that children are making good progress in Nursery and Reception in nearly all areas. They respond well to the additional speech therapy provided. They benefit from a good range of activities which sustain and develop their interests and understanding. Children are encouraged to develop independence, behaviour is good and children play well with each other.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop more rigorous self-evaluation systems, which include gathering the views of pupils, parents and teachers to ensure all leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Focus on developing the curriculum to ensure it is motivating and engaging.
- Create more opportunities for pupils to work at their own level in lessons to further stretch the most able.
- Improve attendance rates by engaging more effectively with the whole community.

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.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils start the Foundation Stage at levels that are below national average and improve to levels that are broadly in line with national average. This good progress is sustained in Key Stage 1 where indicative results show an improvement this year in the proportion of pupils attaining nationally expected standards. There has also been a small increase in the proportion of pupils gaining higher levels although this remains too low. Last year no pupils achieved level 3 in writing but this year three pupils have reached this level. In Key Stage 2, the pupils continue to make progress and achievement is good in English, mathematics and Science. Progress in other subjects is more variable. For example, on one hand, the school uses specialists to assist

them in improving the progress the pupils make in their physical education. On the other hand, very little work has been done to enhance learning in music and there are many missed opportunities to provide a good musical education. There are few references to the progress the pupils make in these subjects in the schools self-evaluation and insufficient emphasis has been placed on gathering information about these aspects of learning.

There are no significant differences in the achievement of different groups of learners although those with speech and language difficulties do make particularly good progress. Overall, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities benefit from good support, which enable them to make similar progress to their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and usually work and play together well. Although some parents expressed concerns about a few instances of bullying, the evidence suggests that reported cases are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Nevertheless, a few pupils felt they were 'picked on' by others because they were different and celebrating diversity is not given as high a profile as needed to address such problems fully.

The pupils' behaviour is satisfactory, though there is too much off-task discussion in a few lessons and pupils do not show as much self-control as they could when they are not directly supervised in public spaces. There are good, consistent behaviour management strategies employed by staff. Pupils know about healthy eating and are actively encouraged to try new foods through the exotic food club and theme days. However, their awareness is not yet impacting fully on their ability to make healthy choices at lunchtime. There are good opportunities for pupils to be active, which include a range of after-school sporting clubs, although arrangements to ensure pupils have opportunities to learn to swim at a suitable age were rightly criticised by parents.

Pupils have opportunities to contribute to their school community through being given class responsibilities and participating in the school council. Their much improved basic skills ensure they are well prepared for their secondary education.

Attendance is well below average. It has remained stubbornly so for three years. Systems are in place to record and monitor absences but these have had limited impact. Some of the non-persistent absenteeism is for relatively minor reasons and the school has not yet found effective means of addressing this problem.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory across the school. It is always satisfactory and often good in English and mathematics and this enables pupils to make good progress. However, in all subjects too many lessons observed were characterised by children of different abilities doing the same work, the more able pupils finishing quickly and remaining insufficiently challenged. Teaching varies in other subjects dependent on the strengths and interests of individual teachers. There were examples of good lessons where the teacher had provided interesting activities and pupils

were fully engaged. Other lessons lacked vibrancy and there were many missed opportunities for pupils to develop independence and make connections between different subjects.

The school has high commitment to inclusion and the support staff are deployed well to ensure the needs of pupils with speech and language difficulties and those with moderate learning difficulties are met. Teachers know the pupils well and use good systems to manage behaviour. Pupils with social and emotional needs are also included well. Planning is clear and the pupils understand what they are expected to achieve in each lesson. The intensive focus on literacy is raising standards in reading, speaking and listening although writing still requires further improvement. Effective target setting, particularly in writing, and helpful comments on pupils' completed work assists pupils to move to the next stage in their work. Teachers maintain an accurate view of the progress the pupils make in literacy and numeracy and anyone falling behind is swiftly the focus of further action.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. A great emphasis has been placed on literacy and numeracy and teachers plan well for these subjects. Other subjects are less consistently well developed. The school is aware of the need to revise the curriculum in order to develop fully the range of pupil's interests and aptitudes. The curriculum has been enhanced by purposeful trips out of school as well as visitors to school such as the American Dance Workshop. There is good use of whiteboard technology for class teaching but there are fewer examples of pupils themselves using technology to enhance their learning when working independently. The pupils have benefited from the specialist expertise provided by a neighbouring specialist sports college but the development of music and the arts has not been given sufficient attention. Teachers do not make sufficient use of links between subjects to reinforce learning and make lessons more interesting and motivating.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils say they are well cared for. They feel staff treat them fairly and that there is always someone they can turn to if they have any worries. Safeguarding procedures are exemplary. The staff use good systems and procedures to manage pupils' behaviour in class and develop positive relationships. Many pupils spoke to inspectors about how much they like the teachers.

Whilst the school council represent the views of pupils in their classes, the views of pupils and parents are not systematically gathered and this limits their ability to have an impact on the strategic direction of the school. There are very few incidents of racism reported and pupils questioned had not experienced any themselves. Pupils who struggle with their work receive some well-focused individual support in small groups and the large number of assistants in class ensures those who struggle are helped to participate fully in the work.

There are good arrangements for tracking pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. Particularly notable are the writing progress books where specific points for improvement in the following weeks writing tasks are agreed and followed through.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership has spearheaded some major changes and there has been significant improvement since the last inspection in 2004, particularly in the progress the pupils make in literacy and numeracy. Challenging targets are set for pupils in these subjects and there are good tracking systems in place to ensure individuals achieve at the expected levels. More recently the new headteacher has put into place changes in the management structure that are having a positive impact. The school recognises that there is still much to do to ensure the middle leadership are able to analyse the weaknesses within their areas of responsibility fully and use this information to prioritise their work. There is a regular cycle of lesson observation but this is not yet sufficiently well developed to focus on the weakest elements of classroom practice. Governors are aware of their responsibilities and provide good levels of challenge to hold the school to account. They have acted effectively to build capacity in the senior management of the school. However, they do not receive sufficiently detailed information about the strengths and weaknesses within the curriculum or systematic information about the views of parents to fully inform their development plans.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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
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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	4
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	2

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?	2

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?	2
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	2
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	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	2
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

23 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Muschamp Primary School and Language Opportunity Base, Carshalton, SM5 2SE

We enjoyed talking to many of you during our visit to your school.

Your school has improved a lot over the last few years and we are impressed with how well you all do in your reading, writing and mathematics. Everyone is included very well and the children who need extra help get it. You are all working hard and making good progress in these lessons. A few of you also told us that the work was too easy sometimes and the school is going to look at how to make some lessons more challenging for those who could do more.

A number of you and your parents felt that the school does not give enough attention to helping you progress in subjects like music, drama, and swimming. Your teachers have already been thinking about this and we have asked them to make it a priority in the future. We noticed that you find some of your lessons interesting but in others you get bored and lose concentration. Because of this we have also asked teachers if they can find more ways of making learning fun.

The school keeps you safe and cares for you well. If you have a problem you know who to talk to help you sort it out and we were impressed with how well you get on with your teachers. The school is going to ask you and your parents more about your views so you can all work together to improve your school in the future.

We found that a few pupils take time off when they should be at school. We want you to help your teachers by coming to school every day unless you are really ill and by continuing to work hard.

Thank you for your good manners and for being so friendly.

Yours sincerely

Ann Berger

Lead Inspector