

South Rise Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131183
Local Authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	315742
Inspection dates	20–21 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Margaret Coussins

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	666
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms L Hazelwood
Headteacher	Mrs S Mathison
Date of previous school inspection	19 January 2004
School address	Brewery Road Plumstead London SE18 7PX
Telephone number	020 8854 6813
Fax number	020 8854 2768

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

South Rise is a very large primary school, which serves a diverse community. Over two-thirds of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds with the largest group from Black or Black British African heritage. The proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language is much higher than found nationally. The proportion with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average and their needs relate mainly to speech, language and communication difficulties and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Mobility is high and many children who start school at different times of the year are refugees or asylum seekers. Sixty children attend the Nursery part time and 20 full time. The headteacher was appointed in September 2007. The school has a Healthy School Award and an Inclusion Chartermark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

South Rise is a satisfactory school. It is quickly improving because of the good leadership of the headteacher. She has a clear vision for the school, based on raising expectations and aspirations for pupils, parents and teachers and motivating them all to improve attainment. Links with parents and the community as a whole have been strengthened. Parents are very pleased with what the school offers and in particular with the work of the headteacher. One parent wrote, 'Since the new headteacher has taken over there has been a huge improvement in the school. I believe she has had a very positive effect on the school aided by some very professional and passionate teachers.'

The school successfully includes families from many backgrounds and this has resulted in a happy working community. The school has a good ethos in which all pupils feel valued and included. The good pastoral care and welfare develops pupils' confidence and self-esteem and successfully raises pupils' often low expectations of themselves. This contributes effectively to their good personal development and well-being. Inspectors were very impressed with pupils' politeness and courtesy at all times and their enthusiasm and willingness to express how much they liked their school and enjoyed their learning. Pupils behave well and feel very safe. The school council is active and a strong voice in the school. Pupils welcome the responsibilities they are given and take their roles very seriously.

Standards in the national tests have been exceptionally low over the past two years. School information and pupils' work show that although remaining below average by the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are rising and achievement is satisfactory. This is a result of significant changes made by the headteacher, which are helping to improve and accelerate pupils' achievement from very low starting points. Pupils are learning more effectively because of more successful teaching which is satisfactory overall. Strategies used to improve pupils' ability to learn more effectively are not yet consistently applied to raise achievement in all subjects. Pupils do best in writing because there is a clear structure to the way writing is taught. The planned introduction of a reading scheme next term will provide the structure that is currently lacking in the teaching of reading. Satisfactory use is made of assessment data but it is not always linked to teachers' marking and target setting so that all pupils know how to further improve. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress. The school has particular success with pupils who are learning English as an additional language. They make similar progress as others in the school and sometimes better. This is because the school successfully works with pupils and their families. Pupils new to the school are fully and quickly integrated into all aspects of school life so that they learn as well as others. Satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further and meet the higher expectations and targets it has set.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

When children join the school in the Nursery or Reception, their skills and knowledge are well below average. In particular many find it hard to work with other children or talk about their ideas and feelings. Children make steady progress and standards are beginning to improve. Although some meet the early learning goals, many do not and standards remain lower than usually expected by the end of the Foundation Stage. This is evident in their communication skills as many are still at an early stage of learning English. Children receive a friendly and

secure introduction to school that helps them settle quickly and get used to classroom routines. They are happy and develop good attitudes towards adults. Achievement is satisfactory but there is more to do in ensuring activities link well together to make learning as meaningful as possible. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Planning covers the areas of learning well but does not incorporate opportunities for learning in the outdoor space which could be more beneficially used.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve pupils' reading and speaking and listening skills to help raise standards in all subjects.
- Improve the use of assessment, data, marking and target setting so that all pupils know how to further improve.
- Ensure that successful learning strategies are applied consistently across all classes and subjects so that every lesson is at least good.

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: 3

Standards have improved from an exceptionally low level and are currently below average by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. From their starting points, which are well below expectations, pupils make satisfactory overall progress. National test results at the end of Year 6 were exceptionally low in 2006 and 2007 in English, mathematics and science. Standards at end of Year 2 dipped significantly from 2006 to 2007, especially in reading. School information and pupils' work show that standards are now rising and achievement is improving. This is because the impact of the work of the headteacher is successfully improving teaching and learning and ensuring that teachers and pupils have higher expectations. As a result, pupils are making progress at a faster pace. In English, reading remains the weakest area across the school. Some headway has been made in raising achievement in reading through an increased focus on teaching children to link sounds and letters and guided sessions. In mathematics and science, pupils' investigative and problem solving skills and a lack of understanding of technical terms and vocabulary can hold them back.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are enthusiastic about their school. They are very polite, friendly and well mannered. Behaviour is good and they feel safe and secure in school. Pupils are thoughtful and considerate and accepting of differences in others' social and cultural backgrounds and as a result work and play together well. As a result of these attributes, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils develop a good understanding of keeping healthy by eating a balanced diet and keeping fit and participate enthusiastically in the wide range of physical activities that are offered. Pupils contribute well to the local community through many sports and musical events and the school council has a strong voice in the school. Attendance has improved, although it remains below average. Improving standards in basic skills are helping to prepare the pupils adequately for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The school's focus on learning has helped teachers to raise expectations of what pupils can do and how they can learn. As a result, pupils have developed more effective learning skills and are beginning to make better progress. Assessment, marking and target setting are not sufficiently well threaded together to enable all pupils to know how they can improve. In many lessons teachers pose good questions to encourage pupils to give extended responses, improving their speaking, language, and thinking and communication skills. This is not consistent in all lessons. Teachers generally plan lessons well to engage the interest of all learners. Pupils are particularly motivated and inspired by the use of interactive whiteboards. There is an opportunity for the structured teaching for learning seen in writing, which has helped to raise attainment, to be spread across other subjects. Support for pupils who need additional help is satisfactory but the systems lack rigour to ensure best progress is made. Teaching assistants are well deployed and mostly support pupils' learning well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is enriched and enhanced with a very effective school enrichment programme that makes a significant contribution to pupils' good personal skills. Pupils really enjoy this provision, which gives them many opportunities to stay fit and healthy or learn new skills. Visits and visitors to school inspire and motivate pupils. The new computer suite enables a whole class to work on computers to help them learn in different subjects. Intervention programmes, which provide extra support for pupils in their basic skills, are established as part of the curriculum and help pupils to make satisfactory progress. The curriculum has focused on English and, while meeting statutory requirements, some aspects of mathematics and science are not covered sufficiently, notably problem solving and investigative work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral care and well-being is good. There are trusting relationships between pupils and staff. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. The school provides a popular breakfast club, giving many pupils a good start to the day. One child said, 'Breakfast club is great, it sets you up well for the day so that you can learn well.' The school works successfully with a range of outside agencies to ensure the well-being of all pupils. Good links with parents help to make sure that pupils are happy and settled in their learning. New pupils integrate quickly into the school because of effective systems of support, but mainly because pupils themselves welcome new arrivals so warmly and see it as their responsibility to look after them. Systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress are not currently used well enough to support, challenge or guide individual pupils. Teachers' marking does not explicitly reflect pupils' targets, or their progress towards them. Opportunities for pupils to evaluate the quality of their own work are not always evident.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The experienced and very effective headteacher has developed a very clear vision for the school since arriving last September. She has concentrated the efforts of the staff in improving standards through a range of initiatives that focus on learning and teaching. The staff have confidence in her. The governing body takes a very active part in the life of the school but does not hold the school to account well enough for its standards. The headteacher works very closely with governors to evaluate and improve the provision, but the outcomes of evaluation are not currently documented to share with all stakeholders. Parents are strongly supportive of the school. As one parent said, 'I have noticed a marked improvement since the new headteacher has taken the helm. Staff and children's attitudes have changed for the better.' Subject leaders have a good knowledge of the area they are leading. Some senior and middle managers roles are new and although it is too early to accurately assess their impact on school improvement a good start has been made.

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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?	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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	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
How well 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 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.

Annex A

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	2
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	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

04 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of South Rise Primary School, London, SE18 7PX

I am writing to let you know how much my colleagues and I enjoyed our visit to your school and what we found out. Thank you for making us so welcome, for talking to us about your work and telling us what you think about your school. We really appreciated seeing your smiling faces and hearing your cheery, 'Good mornings'. We were very impressed with how polite and well mannered you are. Your school is satisfactory which means you learn new things steadily, but there is still more to do to make the school even better.

These are the things we think are best about your school.

- You are thoughtful and caring and you respect those who have different backgrounds and beliefs. This means you get on well together, you feel safe and secure and your behaviour is good.
- You are proud of your school and enjoy being part of a friendly, caring community and everyone looks after you well.
- You really enjoy the enrichment programme and appreciate all the extra things your teachers work hard at to provide for you.
- Your headteacher does a good job in running the school.

We want the school to work on the following important things.

- Your teachers should help more of you get to a good level in English, mathematics and science by the time you leave Year 6, so that you have the best possible chance to do well in the future.
- We were pleased to see how much you enjoy writing and we would like you to work really hard at improving your reading, and speaking and listening skills in lessons.
- The school keeps a close check on how well you are doing and everyone should use this information to make sure you know how you can improve your work and how well you are making progress to reach your targets.
- In some lessons, your teachers have helped you to find lots of different ways to learn, we would like you to be able to use those skills in all of your lessons to help you do as well as you can.

Thank you again for all your help and for being so friendly, polite and interesting to talk to.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Coussins

Lead Inspector