

Cooper's Lane Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100676
Local Authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	323325
Inspection dates	17–18 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Madeleine Gerard

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)	462
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	64
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Desmond Brown
Headteacher	Mr Steve Davies
Date of previous school inspection	22 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Pragnell Road Grove Park London SE12 0LF
Telephone number	020 8857 7680
Fax number	020 8857 5094

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school with Early Years Foundation Stage provision for children in Nursery and Reception. Pupils come from a variety of backgrounds, with White British, Black African, Black Caribbean and Other White backgrounds being the largest groups. The proportion of pupils who are learning English as an additional language is above the national average, and the majority of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly above the national average. The majority have specific learning difficulties or need additional help with basic literacy and numeracy. The number of pupils who join and leave the school other than at the usual times is slightly above average. There is specialist provision at the school for pupils with hearing impairment. A private company, in partnership with the school, provides after-school care.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Cooper's Lane Primary is a satisfactory school. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Pupils make good progress, and many meet and some exceed the goals expected by the start of Year 1. Progress through the rest of the school is satisfactory. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are generally broadly average.

The good curriculum ensures that pupils have a wide range of interesting work to do. It is broad and balanced, and rightly prioritises literacy and numeracy. There are very many popular extra-curricular clubs and visits to local places of interest, and two residential trips annually. All pupils are fully included in every aspect of school life. In assemblies they learn the importance of caring for one another and valuing all members of the school community. Each year, the whole school enjoys a day together in Broadstairs on the beach. Pupils enjoy opportunities to take on a very wide range of responsibilities within the school, and are proud of the changes that have been made to the playgrounds as a result of their suggestions. They speak with pride about the school's maze and the mosaics decorating the outdoor spaces. The very high-quality artwork on display around the school, including paintings showing the sky at night during the London Blitz and models of Anderson shelters, reflects the school's recent success in achieving the Artsmark Gold award for the second time.

Relationships between pupils and adults are strong, and classes are managed well so that behaviour is good. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching is sometimes good, but it is not consistently good enough across the school to ensure that all pupils make good progress. Because planning does not always ensure that work is well matched to pupils' needs, some pupils are not achieving as well as they could. Whole-school systems are in place to check the progress that pupils are making, but this information is not always used to ensure that all of them are set suitably challenging tasks. There is some useful target setting. However, this does not consistently identify the next steps in each pupil's learning precisely enough to ensure that all pupils are moving up rapidly to the next level in their learning.

There is strong pastoral care. This starts in the Early Years Foundation Stage with individual home visits conducted by staff before children join the Nursery and Reception. The school is working hard to harness the support of the parents, for example by means of workshops for parents to boost children's literacy skills through games and fun activities. The school has played a leading role in a nationally recognised scheme encouraging fathers to support their children's learning and emphasising how much 'Dads Matter' in children's academic and personal development. Despite the school's appropriate strategies to monitor and promote regular attendance and for chasing up absence, attendance is only satisfactory. This means that the attendance of some pupils is not as good as it should be.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is a popular leader and is well supported by other senior staff. Together with governors and subject managers, they work closely together as a team with a shared vision for the school. Despite successes in enhancing the curriculum, the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils' personal development, monitoring has not always been used effectively enough to bring about an increase in pupils' achievement. Consequently, the school has a satisfactory capacity to make the necessary improvements.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. Adults quickly assess the individual learning needs of all the children, including those learning English as an additional language and children with learning difficulties. The school's most recent records show that children join the school with a range of skills and capabilities, but more children than previously are below the expected levels for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy, in their personal development, and in learning English. Close partnership with parents, carers and external agencies ensure that all children are extremely well supported and that their welfare is a priority. Very caring support and warm relationships ensure that children make friends, treat each other and adults with respect, and become happy, confident learners. One parent of a child in the Nursery wrote, 'My son can't wait to come to school every day.' They take turns and share resources very well. For example, children practising numbers in the Nursery enjoyed challenging each other to count coloured rings. Established routines ensure that children are keen to take on responsibility, including helping to tidy up. There is an appropriate balance between adult-led tasks and activities for children to choose for themselves. However, opportunities to spend time outdoors are more restricted. This limits opportunities for children to develop their skills outside in all six areas of learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement by ensuring that teachers consistently match work to the learning needs of different groups of pupils.
- Make greater use of assessment information to set challenging targets that inform pupils about how to improve their work.
- Increase the rigour with which monitoring identifies what could be improved, and sharpen the use of data in self-evaluation.
- Work closely with parents and carers to ensure that all pupils attend regularly.

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

Following a dip in attainment in 2006, standards at the end of Year 2 and in national tests in Year 6 have risen, although they remain broadly average. From starting points that are generally in line with those expected for pupils' age, this represents satisfactory progress. The school's own assessment data and work in pupils' books show that more pupils are making good progress this year, although not consistently enough to raise standards overall. Provisional results from the most recent teacher assessments in Year 2, and in tests at the end of Year 6, show that standards are broadly average. All groups of pupils make similar progress. Pupils who find literacy and numeracy more difficult, and those who need additional help in class, make satisfactory progress as a result of the support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school very much. One pupil said, 'School is such fun. At the weekends I just get bored and can't wait to get back to school.' They have positive attitudes and are motivated to learn. A parent wrote, 'Our daughter loves school because she is so happy there.' This is due in no small part to the school's success in promoting community cohesion and in ensuring that pupils work and play harmoniously together, reflecting the school's motto, 'All different, all equal, all smiling'. As a pupil explained, 'Everyone has a friend here.' Their social and moral development is excellent, as the friendly and happy atmosphere throughout the school demonstrates. Pupils are developing a good understanding of different cultures and faiths. They make an outstanding contribution to school life and to the community. For example, the school choir sings for local elderly residents. Older pupils thrive on responsibility as peer mediators and stair monitors. Charity fund-raising develops pupils' awareness of those less fortunate than themselves. The newly launched recycling project is raising pupils' awareness of the importance of protecting the environment. Visitors to the school help pupils to develop a good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe. Strengths in teamwork and satisfactory progress in basic skills prepare pupils adequately for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Although teaching is sometimes good, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. In some lessons, teachers use assessment information well to set suitably challenging work for all pupils, but this is not consistently the case. Despite the wide range of ability in most classes, pupils are often expected to carry out very similar tasks. Expectations about the amount of work the pupils can do are not always high enough, and their progress is not as quick as it should be. Extra help in class from well-briefed additional adults for pupils who find learning difficult helps them to keep up and make satisfactory progress. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to work in groups and to talk about their learning in pairs. This promotes their very good social skills and supports their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Themed weeks and visitors to the school bring the curriculum to life. For example, pupils studying the Second World War enjoy hearing about first-hand experiences from a war veteran who lives in the local community. There are some helpful links between subjects, although opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum are not consistently offered. The school keeps a careful check on membership of the many extra-curricular clubs to ensure that all pupils are fully included. Pupils particularly appreciate opportunities to take part in music and drama performances. Children in Reception and pupils in Years 1 to 6 thoroughly enjoy participating in carnival dance and steel pan workshops with specialist teachers in preparation for the school's summer carnival parade. This, together with success in musical challenges and inter-school sports competitions, helps self-confidence and self-esteem to grow. Through links with a local secondary school, pupils benefit from a variety of sporting opportunities, and pupils in Years 4 and 5 learn to swim at the local swimming pool.

This contributes to pupils' extremely positive attitudes to keeping fit and healthy. In Years 3 to 6 they enjoy learning French.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral arrangements at the school are good. Procedures to safeguard pupils' health, well-being and safety are robust. Pupils feel safe and are confident that adults will take action should any problems occur. Parents are confident that their children receive high-quality care at the school. Strong links with a wide range of outside agencies contribute well to pupils' good personal development. Support for vulnerable pupils and their families is a strength. There are good transition arrangements for pupils who may find moving up from one phase in the school to the next difficult. Clear policies for behaviour ensure that staff set consistently high expectations, and pupils have confidence in the effectiveness and fairness of these systems. Provision for pupils with complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities, as well as those learning English as an additional language, ensures that they are fully included. Tracking procedures introduced since the last inspection enable the school to check how well pupils are doing. However, assessment information is not used consistently to match work to all pupils' needs in order to raise standards further. Although some pupils know their targets, these are not always specific enough to help pupils move up to the next level in their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has taken successful action to enhance the curriculum and has ensured that provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved and is good. Even so, the school's leaders and governors are not always evaluating the impact of the school's provision on pupils' learning rigorously enough to secure a sustained rise in standards. A programme of monitoring is helpful in checking the work of the school, although it is not always used to improve provision further. The school works well in partnership with parents, carers and outside agencies to support the specific needs of the pupils. Community cohesion is well promoted at school, local and national levels. For example, in a recent national music competition, pupils worked with others from a variety of contrasting communities. The school has plans to further develop pupils' awareness of the lives of others in global communities. Many parents praise the school, and made a point of writing to express their appreciation for the work of the headteacher and the staff.

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
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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 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?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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	3
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	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

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

30 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cooper's Lane Primary School, London, SE12 0LF

Thank you for your friendly welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit and seeing all the interesting things you do there. We particularly liked seeing all the beautiful artwork you have done which is on display around the school. Now I am writing to tell you what we found out on our visit.

Cooper's Lane is a satisfactory school, and here are some of the most important things about it.

- The youngest children get off to a good start to their learning in Nursery and Reception.
- By the end of Year 6, standards are average, but they could be higher.
- You told us you like coming to school, and your parents confirm this.
- You behave sensibly in class and around the school.
- You like the opportunities you are given to take on responsibility.
- You get on well with each other and with the adults.
- The adults make sure that you are cared for and given help when you need it.
- You know why it is important to keep yourselves fit, healthy and safe.
- You enjoy the interesting activities the teachers organise for you, and particularly like the clubs and the projects that the school organises.
- You are developing a good understanding of the lives of others who live in communities that are different from your own.

We have asked the school to make sure that all of you are set work that is at just the right level of difficulty for you, because this will help you learn more quickly. We would also like all the leaders and managers to do even more to check how well you are making progress, and to make sure that you know how to move up to the next level in your work. It is really important that you attend regularly so that you don't miss important learning. We have asked the school to work together with your parents and carers to make sure you go to school every day. You can help by continuing to work hard and coming to school regularly.

Thank you again for your help, and best wishes in the future.

Yours faithfully

Madeleine Gerard

Lead Inspector