

# Clare House Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101638
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bromley
<b>Inspection number</b>	323494
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Laver

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	195
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	13
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Janette Tibbalds
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Fiona Mills
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 September 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Oakwood Avenue Beckenham BR3 6PJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8658 4633
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8658 4445

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- How well pupils presently achieve, especially in literacy.
- The quality of Early Years Foundation Stage provision.
- The quality of teaching and the quality of the guidance for pupils in the classroom.
- The effectiveness of leadership and management in monitoring and sustaining improvement, particularly at middle management level.

The inspectors gathered evidence from discussions with staff, pupils, and representatives from the governing body and the local authority; from observations in lessons; from analysing a range of documents, assessment and tracking data; and from analysing replies to the parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments of these areas, as given in its current self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

## Description of the school

The school is of below average size. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportions of pupils from ethnic minorities, with English as an additional language, and with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are all below average. The headteacher has been in post for less than half a term. The school makes provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in its Reception class.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Clare House Primary is a satisfactory school. Although standards of both seven and eleven year-olds are above average, some pupils do not make as much progress as they should. This is because there are weaknesses in monitoring and inconsistencies in the way teachers teach what is, in some respects, an innovative curriculum. The school has strengths, particularly in pupils' personal development and in provision for children in EYFS.

Pupils join Year 1 with above average standards. By the end of Year 6 standards remain above average overall. However, there is variation from year to year and between subjects. This has been evident in recent test results. Standards in boys' writing in Year 2 in 2007 were below the national average, whereas the 2008 unvalidated test results showed boys in Year 6 performing well and a higher proportion gaining the higher Level 5 in English. While achievement is satisfactory overall, including for those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, a small number of pupils do not make the progress they should. This is particularly true of some more able pupils. The new headteacher has an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She has initiated plans for improvement but it is too soon to judge their effectiveness.

The school's curriculum has some strengths, but is satisfactory overall. There is good quality, specialist teaching in music, art and physical education. The linking of different areas of knowledge and skills within lessons, sometimes with pupils of different ages working together, and the encouragement of independent and collaborative learning, have both had a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes towards learning. However, the school has not effectively planned or monitored this curriculum. Too often the topics do not encourage work with an appropriate level of challenge for some pupils. Whilst some of the topics are effective in extending pupils' skills and knowledge, others, for example some of the history ones, are dominated by worksheets and simple tasks. These do not allow pupils to meet the appropriate learning objectives. Although, teaching is satisfactory overall, teachers put insufficient emphasis on developing good writing skills...They manage classes well, and in the best lessons give pupils considerable responsibility for their learning. Pupils respond well to these opportunities. However, in some lessons expectations are not sufficiently high and the tasks are of too low a level. Teachers sometimes give good verbal feedback but marking does not always show pupils how they have done and how they can improve. There is minimal use of targets to help pupils' learning. Therefore, the quality of academic support and guidance is only satisfactory and does not match the very good pastoral care of pupils.

A few parents express concerns that the school does not give pupils, particularly the more able, appropriately challenging work. The inspectors share these concerns. However, the great majority of parents praise the way in which the school enthuses pupils and cares for them well. Typical of written comments were, 'There is a positive focus on each child as an individual' and 'All the teachers are caring and understanding of the children.' Inspectors agree that there is a very good level of personal care. Pupils' enjoyment is reflected in the consistently above average attendance and the very high take up of the good range of enrichment activities, for example the many clubs and residential visits such as the Norfolk Broads adventure. Particularly impressive is the enthusiasm older pupils show in organising activities for younger children, and ensuring that the school council represents pupils' views well. Pupils' involvement in the school and the locality, as well as links the school has made further afield, mean that the school makes an excellent contribution to the community. Pupils behave very well, feel very safe and

have an extremely well developed understanding of why they should have a healthy lifestyle. They talk confidently about the things they like in school, particularly the opportunity to learn actively in subjects such as art and drama. Their spiritual, moral and social development is excellent and they also develop a good understanding of other cultures, as witnessed during the 'Malawi morning' during the inspection, and seen in the work done on Islamic geometric patterns.

The new headteacher knows the strengths of the school and areas for development well. However, improvement is at a very early stage, because subject coordinators have only just been appointed and monitoring procedures have only just been formulated. Therefore, although the headteacher has an impressive grasp of what the school needs to do to raise achievement, this understanding is not yet shared by all staff. Because the governing body and senior staff are becoming more aware of how the school can be moved forward, and there has been some improvement in standards since the previous inspection, the school currently has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Parents greatly appreciate the high standard of care for children in the school's EYFS. The EYFS offers good provision, which prepares children well for transition to Year 1. Children join the Reception class with above average levels of skills and knowledge in most areas of learning. Good teaching ensures that they make good progress overall, and particularly good progress in the areas of physical development, knowledge and understanding of the world. Progress in developing basic writing skills is variable, with the most able making most progress. Good achievement is allied with outstanding personal development. Children discover how to work independently, socialise very well and take their turn at activities whilst retaining a very strong enthusiasm for learning. The school assesses children's progress well. Good leadership ensures a good blend of teacher-led activities and those initiated by children. Parents are very well informed and actively involved in their children's learning. This all contributes to the excellent way in which children's welfare is promoted.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Increase monitoring at all levels of leadership and management, to ensure more rigour and challenge in teaching and the curriculum.
- Raise the expectations of teachers, particularly in developing writing opportunities and meeting the needs of the most able pupils.
- Raise achievement by ensuring better marking and use of targets so that pupils have a better idea of how well they are doing and how they can improve their learning.

A small proportion of schools where overall performance is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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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 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 <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## 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 eliminated	3
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**

07 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Clare House Primary School, Beckenham, BR3 6PJ

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school recently. We were particularly impressed by your politeness and the confident way in which you talked to us about your activities in school, and especially about what you liked most.

Your school gives you a satisfactory education. There are some good things happening. We know that you enjoy coming to school and that you attend school more regularly than children do in many other schools. You behave well and you feel safe and well cared for. You talked to us enthusiastically about how you enjoy the many clubs and visits. You also take the opportunity to help others, by serving well on the school council and organising activities for younger children. You like subjects like art and drama, and you are very good at working together on projects. Most of you do well in your work, and reach standards higher than many pupils do in other schools. However, some of you are not quite so good at writing, and some of you who find learning easy could do even better.

We have asked the school to help you in three ways. One is for teachers to give you more challenging work, so that when you do your projects in particular, you can write more interesting things and achieve even more. We have also asked your teachers to give you more information and better targets when they mark your work, so that you have a better idea of how to improve. Finally, we have asked your headteacher and other teachers to keep a better check on what you are learning, so that your lessons help you learn better as well as being fun.

We know that your headteacher is determined to help you succeed, and you can help her and all the staff by making sure that you also try your hardest.

Thank you again for your warm welcome.

Yours sincerely

John Laver

Lead Inspector