

Perry Hall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101640
Local Authority	Bromley
Inspection number	323495
Inspection dates	19–20 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Margaret Coussins

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	421
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ian Black
Headteacher	Mrs Angela Ward
Date of previous school inspection	19 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Perry Hall Road Orpington BR6 0EF
Telephone number	01689 820313
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Perry Hall is a large primary school. Most of its pupils are from White British backgrounds. The largest other groups are from other White and Black African backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is around half of that found nationally. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average and their needs relate mainly to speech, language and communication difficulties. There are 60 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, organised into two Reception classes. The school has been accredited with Healthy School and Activemark awards. There is a breakfast club on the school site, which is managed by a private provider.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Perry Hall Primary is a good school. The headteacher and senior leaders have been successful in creating a school where pupils achieve well, teaching is good, and standards are above average by the time pupils leave in Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when the school was judged to be satisfactory. Parents agree that there is not only a good emphasis on academic achievement, but also on developing the whole child so that pupils are well equipped for later life. One parent wrote, 'Our child has become a good, well-rounded individual who enjoys her learning and is gaining her independence ready for senior school.'

The inclusive ethos and good care, guidance and support make a very positive contribution to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils say their school is good and that they enjoy their education. As a result, their attendance is good. One pupil said, 'I hope I'm never poorly again because you have to miss school and it's fun.' Parents agree that their children are well cared for and make good progress. One parent commented, 'We are very pleased with the progress our son is making; the school offers a very safe and happy environment for children'.

Pupils' attitudes and their behaviour are good, which helps them achieve well. Pupils play and work together well and feel safe and free from bullying. Relationships are good, and pupils say that they can always talk to the headteacher or a teacher if there is anything they are worried about. The school council is active, and pupils said that adults listen to their opinions. Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they are given around the school, and take them seriously. Older pupils said they would like to do more. Pupils of all ages have a good understanding of the need for regular exercise and a healthy, balanced diet to keep fit and well.

From average starting points, standards in English, mathematics and science are above average by the end of Year 6. Good teaching means that most lessons are planned well to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities. There is an important focus on increasing pupils' pleasure and interest in books. As a result, pupils do particularly well in reading, and develop well as enthusiastic and interested readers. This reflects the positive impact of the school's work in this area, which includes a more in-depth approach to using literature in the curriculum, which is satisfactory overall. This was seen to good effect in Year 4 lessons, where the study of a novel was deepening pupils' understanding of their history work on the Victorians. This approach stimulates and interests pupils, but there is scope, as the school has identified, for curriculum planning to provide more opportunities to create meaningful links between other subjects, and consequently enliven learning. The use of literature is beginning to have an impact on writing skills, but writing remains the relatively weaker aspect throughout the school. A very careful check is kept on how well pupils are doing over time, and support is provided at an early stage for those who need additional help. Consequently, most pupils, whatever their backgrounds or abilities, have the same opportunities and make good progress.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher is well supported by senior leaders, and the impact of their work in school improvement is considerable. There is a clear and accurate evaluation of the work of the school, and challenging targets have been set for further improvement. Staff feel valued and supported in developing their skills and expertise. The governing body provides good strategic leadership and a good balance of support and challenge to the school. There is good capacity to improve further, as demonstrated by the effective drive to raise standards and the successful improvement since the last inspection.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children come to the school from a wide range of nursery and pre-school settings and, on entry, their skills and knowledge are generally in line with those expected for their age. Children and their parents benefit from a good induction procedure, which helps children to settle quickly and happily, and establishes good communication between the school and home. One parent wrote, 'We were very pleased at the arrangements for her first day, and also how active a role the headteacher played in making it a special day for my daughter and us.' Relationships are friendly and trusting, and the good provision for their welfare ensures that children feel safe, grow in confidence and develop independence.

There have been recent changes in staffing, assessment procedures and the organisation of the curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff have worked effectively with the local authority to ensure that judgements on the progress made by children are more rigorous and secure than was previously the case. There is a better balance between adult-led activities and those that children undertake independently. Children enjoy their activities, but they are not always sharply focused enough and children do not always gain as much as they could from them.

Staff make good use of cramped conditions inside and outdoors, but the lack of space and uncovered outdoor area restricts the range of learning opportunities. The improvements, which have been well led and managed by the headteacher and the Early Years Foundation Stage leader, are beginning to have an impact; many more children are reaching, and sometimes exceeding, the goals for their learning by the end of the Reception year. The impact of good leadership and management is also evident in the good quality of children's personal, social and emotional development. Overall, children's achievement is satisfactory. There has not been enough time for new staff and new approaches to have a more marked impact on their learning and development. However, good foundations have been laid down by the leadership, particularly regarding the areas of assessment and curriculum.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the learning and development provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that children achieve as well as they can.
- Ensure that learning is linked more meaningfully across different subjects, and in particular that the curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to use writing for different purposes in order to improve standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils start at school with skills and knowledge that are in line with that expected for their age. Following a sound start in the Reception classes, the rate of progress increases and is good. Pupils achieve well, and standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. Standards have varied between year groups, but recent improvements in the use of assessment information to inform teachers' planning are having a positive impact. Consequently, school data and pupils' work show that standards are on track to be above average by the end of Year 6, and better than the previous year's results. The school's systems for tracking the progress of individual pupils are extremely thorough and robust. This results in effective additional support being provided to ensure that overall, pupils make good progress. Pupils with learning

difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who are more able, achieve as well as others. Standards in writing across the school have improved since the last inspection and are above average, although they remain lower than in other areas.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, respect each other and take responsibility for their own actions. They take pride in and care for their school environment. As a result of the work the school has done to gain a Healthy School Award and the Activemark, pupils have a good awareness of how to stay fit and healthy. They participate in a good range of physical activity and make good healthy eating choices. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider communities. The school council has been instrumental in making recommendations for improved school meals. Its members feel their views are valued, and as one member said, 'Our job is to help make the school a better place.' Pupils delight in each other's successes, as demonstrated in the 'star of the month' assembly. The good level of their basic skills and their good personal skills prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress in lessons, because teaching is good. Teachers plan lessons carefully. They use assessment information well to match work to pupils' needs, whatever their ability, so that in most lessons there is a good level of challenge for learners. On occasion, when the level of challenge is not quite right, teaching does not fully engage and sustain the interest of a small minority of pupils. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning as they are well trained to provide good support to individuals and small groups. Pupils are offered many opportunities to work together, which they enjoy, and which make a considerable contribution to their speaking and listening skills. Pupils understand what it is they are learning in each lesson, and what it is they need to do to be successful. They check and heighten their understanding by evaluating their own work and that of others.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a broad curriculum while maintaining an appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics, an area cited for improvement in the last inspection. There is an increased focus on linking together different subjects to make learning more meaningful for pupils, and on providing them with opportunities to use their literacy skills in other subjects. This is beginning to have a positive impact in certain areas. One pupil said, 'It's more exciting learning about Victorian workhouses in the novel we're reading rather than in a history book.' The school has plans to extend this to other subjects to enliven learning in all areas of the curriculum and increase opportunities for writing. Information and communication technology provision has increased, but sometimes opportunities are missed to use it to enhance pupils' learning across a range of subjects. Events such as science week, and visits and visitors to the school, successfully add to the richness of the curriculum. Pupils appreciate the wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs that help them keep fit and healthy, and those where they can learn new skills such as gardening and Spanish. Pupils benefit from the specialist skills of teachers in

music, French and Spanish. The good personal, social, health and citizenship curriculum makes a notable contribution to pupils' good personal skills and well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Good care and support are based firmly on the positive and caring values that the school promotes and which are well understood by pupils. As a result, pupils learn to value and respect others, and work hard. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are well established and effective. Regular risk assessments and health and safety checks are carried out to ensure that the school is a safe and welcoming environment. The school works in good partnership with parents and a wide range of external agencies to support pupils' needs. There are effective and vigilant measures to maintain and further improve pupils' good attendance. Senior leaders use information from progress meetings very effectively to target support for pupils. Most, but not all, teachers consistently provide feedback when marking on the next steps in pupils' learning, and pupils are becoming increasingly skilled in evaluating their own learning and achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's evaluation of itself is accurate, and clear plans are in place to improve the school still further. New responsibilities have been given to middle managers, subject leaders and class teachers, so that leadership is shared in teams of key staff. As a result, leaders are taking more accountability for their areas of responsibility. The school does not always use its progress data strategically enough to give a clear overview of achievement across the school. The quality of teaching and learning is carefully monitored, and senior leaders provide effective guidance and support and good role models for their colleagues. As a result, teaching has improved since the last inspection. There is an increased emphasis on professional development, and staff commented that, as a result, they feel valued and inspired. Community cohesion is good. The school works very effectively with its parents, local schools and partners in the local community, and promotes knowledge, understanding and tolerance of the diversity in society, both in this country, where pupils are involved in many fund-raising and charity events, and other countries, as in the school's link with a school in Zimbabwe. Governors provide good support. They know the school very well and have taken action to help it to improve.

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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?	2
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	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
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

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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	2
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

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

01 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Perry Hall Primary School, Orpington, BR6 0EF

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 found out that yours is a good school, and here are the reasons why.

- You like being at the school, and get on very well with each other and all of the teachers. Well done for attending so regularly and not missing out on important learning and all the fun.
- Teachers provide lots of extra things for you to do in school.
- Your behaviour is good, and this helps you learn well in your lessons.
- You work hard and achieve well. Well done! This means that the standard of your English, mathematics and science work is above average when you go to your next school.
- Teachers have helped you to enjoy reading and really do well. Well done for this.
- You know what to do to keep fit and healthy and make good choices for yourselves.
- Everyone in the school looks after you well and helps you to succeed.
- Your headteacher and the senior leaders do a good job in running the school.

These are the things we have asked your headteacher and teachers to do to make your school even better.

- Help children in the Reception classes to achieve as well as they can.
- Make sure that when you learn new things, you can use your skills across different subjects. In particular, we have asked them to give you lots of opportunities to write for many different reasons, and help your standards in writing to be as good as those in reading.

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

Yours faithfully

Margaret Coussins

Lead Inspector