

Monks Orchard School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101730
Local Authority	Croydon
Inspection number	323514
Inspection date	8 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Peter McGregor

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)	455
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	Mrs Jane Smith
Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Misson
Date of previous school inspection	2 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	The Glade Shirley Croydon CR0 7UF
Telephone number	020 8654 2570
Fax number	020 8662 0423

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

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

- the extent of children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the quality of teaching
- pupils' attendance and the procedures being used to reduce persistent absence.

Inspectors gathered evidence by observing lessons, including joint observations with senior managers, and holding discussions with staff, pupils and governors. Pupils' work, 144 parental questionnaires and a range of school documents were also scrutinised. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Monks Orchard Primary School is larger than average. More pupils than usual are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also above average. The main language spoken other than English is Albanian. A higher than average proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly Black or Black British Caribbean and African. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Difficulties predominantly relate to speech, language and communication or to behavioural, emotional and social issues. Difficulties also lie in the areas of moderate learning and autism. The school has Early Years Foundation Stage provision in its Nursery and Reception classes.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Monks Orchard is a good school. High expectations and a shared ethos and vision have enabled the school to make excellent progress since the last inspection three years ago. Several areas are now outstanding and the school has excellent capacity to improve further under the leadership of the headteacher.

Pupils' standards and achievements are good. They enter the Nursery or Reception classes with broadly average skills for their age except in language for communication and dispositions and attitudes where they are below. Pupils make very good progress as they move through the school to attain standards that are above average in Year 6. Over the past four years, there has been an upward trend in standards throughout the school as staff have focused on the needs of individuals and responded to them. The quality of pupils' writing has lagged a little behind their reading, mathematics and science but it is improving as whole-school policies are rigorously implemented. Pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills have improved greatly through effective use of a new computer suite. The standard of boys' work in general has been higher than that of girls. The gap is narrowing as all staff ensure that quiet girls are given as much attention as more confident boys. Each year, governors have increased the challenging targets that pupils should achieve and each year these have been exceeded. Pupils of all abilities, including those for whom English is an additional language, those who have statements of special educational needs, and those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress in their studies.

The quality of teaching is good and a key contributor to pupils' academic success. Detailed analyses of pupils' assessment, and evaluations of observed lessons, have enabled senior leaders to identify the strengths and points for development of individual staff. Lessons are generally characterised by high expectations, careful and appropriate planning, excellent behaviour and challenging work matched to the needs of the pupils. Occasionally, teaching assistants are not deployed for maximum benefit to pupils, and opportunities for pupils to be fully engaged in their learning are reduced by teachers talking for too long. The outstanding curriculum is also a strong element in promoting pupils' success. A focus on literacy and numeracy is balanced by high-quality specialist teaching in areas such as music and physical education, and a programme of work that helps pupils develop important skills such as enquiry, problem solving and the use of ICT. Interesting topics engage pupils, with many built-in 'wow' factors. Visitors and visits, such as to a residential Tudor centre, capture pupils' imagination.

In many ways, pupils' personal development is excellent. They adopt very healthy lifestyles, commenting that, 'lunchtime supervisors would not be happy if we brought chocolate or fizzy drinks in our lunchboxes!' Regular physical exercise lessons and energetic playtimes, as well as popular after school sports clubs, ensure pupils have active lives. Pupils say they feel extremely safe - 'there's always someone there for us if we need help' - and they report that school is a great place to be. Behaviour is excellent, both in lessons and around the school and pupils take their many responsibilities, such as 'squabble busters' and membership of the school council, very seriously. They are very well prepared for the next stage in their education and have excellent economic awareness through, for example, the management of a sum of money by each class as they prepare items for the school fete. Attendance is satisfactory. Despite recent improvements and the involvement of expert external staff, persistent absence remains too high. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent, as exemplified in an outstanding assembly where the theme of integration involved smiling at one another,

'welcomes' in a range of pupils' languages and joyful, uplifting singing. The overall quality of pupils' personal development and well-being is good.

The care, guidance and support given to pupils are outstanding. Each pupil's progress is systematically assessed and tracked, with half-termly focus points that result in resources and time being provided for those identified as underachieving. Pupils have aspirational targets and strive to achieve them. Staff know their pupils exceptionally well and carry out their supervisory duties with great care. The quality of pastoral care is excellent. This year a concerted effort has been made to reduce absence, with pupils working hard to achieve the attendance cup and other rewards. Rigorous weekly follow-up of unauthorised absence, using the legal system if necessary, is having a marked positive impact, although a small proportion of families are slow to respond to the various rewards and sanctions.

The school is led and managed very effectively. The headteacher, supported by her deputy headteacher and the whole staff team, has very high expectations for pupils' academic and personal development. The methodical and demanding approach employed has led to substantial changes and as a result pupil outcomes since the last inspection have improved. This success has been sustained and built upon, year on year, in all areas of school life. Together this demonstrates the school's outstanding capacity to improve. Equality of opportunity is an extremely strong focus. The school is a multi-faith community where pupils from a wide range of backgrounds learn to be tolerant and supportive of one another. Any instances of bullying or discrimination are tackled with urgency, and resolved. Evaluation is detailed and covers all aspects of school life, although not all changes in areas for improvement are yet fully implemented. Resources are very good and used effectively, providing very good value for money. Links with external agencies are very effective but a minority of parents have commented that communication with the school is not as good as it could be. Analysis of the school context, planning for community cohesion and evaluation of this aspect of the school are very effective. Strong local, more distant and global links, including pupil pen-pals in France and support for schools further afield, reflect how extremely well community cohesion is promoted. Governance is good, with supportive, constructively critical governors aware of the school's development priorities and many strengths. All required procedures concerning safeguarding pupils are met.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides an outstanding start to children's education. The high level of care and commitment shown by staff ensures that children settle into school exceptionally well. Children enter the Nursery with varying levels of skill and knowledge. These range from being in line to below those expected for their age. They make rapid progress because of the excellent use teachers make of assessment and the exceptionally strong and highly effective focus on children's language skills and personal development.

Staff have created a bright and stimulating learning environment. The well-resourced outdoor area, particularly for the Nursery, provides an excellent resource where children take great pleasure in exploring the world about them and learning through practical activities.

Adults have high expectations. They provide very clear routines and encourage children to develop strong relationships. As a result, their personal development is outstanding. Children work and play happily together. They take turns and show respect for each other. Children respond very well to the exciting challenges and concentrate intensely for long periods of time. Teaching and learning are exceptionally good because staff recognise each child as an individual

with different needs and interests. This is reflected in the planned curriculum. Children's progress is rigorously assessed and there are many opportunities for them to talk about and evaluate their learning. They achieve exceptionally well in relation to their starting points, especially in their attitudes and dispositions, and their communication, language and literacy. As a result, they move into Year 1 as confident, capable learners who largely exceed the goals expected for their age. A focus on the achievement of girls has led to a marked improvement and they are now as successful as the boys. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding, with an exceptionally good understanding of the strengths of the provision and how to make further improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the quality of all teaching to that of the best so that the highest possible standards are achieved in all classes.
- Improve communication with families ensuring, in particular, that all are aware of the impact of their children's absence on their success at school.

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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	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
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?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

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	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	3
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	1

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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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**

03 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Monks Orchard School, Croydon, CR0 7UF

Thank you very much for looking after us when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed meeting with several of you and hearing your views about the school.

These are some of the best things we found in your good school.

- You behave really well in your lessons and around the school and are making very good progress. You get off to an exceptionally good start in the youngest classes.
- You are being well taught and enjoy the many well-planned and interesting lessons provided.
- You enjoy the wide range of sports clubs and activities and live healthy active lives. You also feel very safe and are very happy to be at school.
- You really like the way staff respect you, listen to you and care for you.
- The headteacher, supported by her deputy headteacher, has very high expectations for you and is leading the school very well. We believe the school will continue to develop and improve.
- You all get on exceptionally well together.

To help improve the school further, we have asked that:

- you are all given as many opportunities as possible in lessons to become even more involved in learning
- those of you who are missing school through unnecessary absences should attend more regularly, to enable you to be more successful.

We wish you every success and hope that you continue to work hard, do well and enjoy learning.

Yours faithfully

Peter McGregor

Lead Inspector