

# Lonesome Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102636
<b>Local Authority</b>	Merton
<b>Inspection number</b>	323670
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Natalia Power

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	385
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Janet Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr David Winters
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 November 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>	Grove Road Mitcham CR4 1SD
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8648 1722
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8640 8662

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 June 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This two-form entry school is larger than average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than average. Around two thirds of pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, with pupils from Black African and Pakistani heritages forming the largest groups. Over a third of pupils have first languages other than English, most commonly Tamil, Urdu and Polish. A higher than average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Of these, pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties form the largest group.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school in which pupils from all backgrounds thrive. It enjoys the support of the great majority of parents. One commented, 'It is a bright, welcoming and friendly school where my child and I feel safe and at home whenever we are there.' The headteacher has created an ethos whereby everyone feels valued. In this secure and peaceful environment, pupils develop good social and personal qualities. They behave well and are friendly and considerate towards others. Pupils feel safe and the very few instances of bullying or unkindness towards one another are quickly dealt with. One parent summed up the views of many in the comment, 'It is a happy school.'

Children enter the Nursery with skills that are well below those expected for three-year-olds. They make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. School leaders recognise that, despite recent improvements, children do not always learn language and number skills quickly enough in Nursery and Reception. Good teaching and a good curriculum enable pupils in Years 1 to 6 to make good progress and to leave with standards which are close to national averages. The teachers are popular with pupils. One pupil commented, 'Teachers make us good learners.' Teachers plan lessons well to ensure that there is always work suitable for pupils of differing abilities. They manage pupils' behaviour well, so that learning can continue without interruption. The quality of marking in English books is very good and ensures that pupils understand clearly what they need to do to improve. However, marking in mathematics books offers insufficient guidance on how pupils can improve the quality of their work.

The school cares for its pupils well, providing effective support so that those from all heritages make good progress. Pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties, and those for whom English is not their first language, also make good progress because they are given good care and support. The school works in effective partnership with a range of external agencies and with local secondary schools to prepare pupils well for the next stage in their education.

Leaders and managers know their school's strengths and weaknesses well and provide clear direction, with a good focus on raising standards. They track pupils' progress accurately and use the information to provide effective specialist support for those who need it. They promote community cohesion well, ensuring, through effective links with the local and global communities, that pupils have a good understanding of the world around them. Leaders and managers recognise that, despite their efforts, attendance is below average and not enough has been done to ensure that pupils attend school regularly. Standards are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection, and the drive and determination of all those connected with the school give it a good capacity for further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children enter the Nursery with communication and language skills well below those expected for their age. They quickly settle in and develop good personal qualities, taking turns and playing well together. Children are well looked after and their varied needs are effectively met. Parents appreciate the good partnerships between home and school, and one commented, 'The staff have welcomed my son and me with warmth and care and made his transition easy and reassuring for us.' Through satisfactory teaching, children make satisfactory progress through

the Early Years Foundation Stage. Opportunities are sometimes missed to develop children's skills in linking sounds and letters, and in problem solving and reasoning. The recently appointed leader is making effective changes, for example improving systems for recording how well children learn, and these are beginning to raise achievement. However, the leader's role in monitoring and evaluating lessons across the Early Years Foundation Stage is still at an early stage and has not yet made a full impact.

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

- Work with parents to ensure that their children attend school more regularly.
- Ensure that children make faster progress in acquiring language and number skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Ensure, through clearer marking in mathematics, that pupils understand how to improve the quality of their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils from all ethnic backgrounds make good overall progress from starting points that are well below the average for their age. By the time they leave, they reach standards much closer to, though generally still below, the average. Children make satisfactory progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage and enter Year 1 with standards that remain well below average. Pupils make consistently good progress in the rest of the school. Their progress is carefully tracked and those in danger of falling behind are given effective support from teachers, classroom assistants and outside agencies to help them catch up. As a result, standards have risen since the time of the last inspection. The school analyses the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and caters effectively for them, for instance by providing specialist help for pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties. Pupils at an early stage of learning English are supported well and make good progress in line with others.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils acquire good spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Clear rules and reward systems ensure that pupils know right from wrong. Pupils behave well in class and around the school. Racist incidents are rare and pupils are very tolerant of other cultures. Pupils show their enjoyment of learning by their eagerness to answer questions and to join in the many activities offered to them in lessons and outside the classroom. Most pupils attend school regularly, but a significant minority do not and many of these do not achieve as well as they might. Pupils say that they feel safe at school. They have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet and make a good contribution to the school community. They take their responsibilities as playground monitors or members of the school council seriously and contribute in many ways, such as by helping younger pupils. The good progress pupils make in acquiring basic skills and their good personal qualities prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers plan well to meet the needs of the wide range of abilities in their classes, ensuring that all pupils are able to make good progress. They create a calm atmosphere and manage behaviour well, so that pupils are able to concentrate and achieve. Pupils enjoy their lessons and appreciate the good relationships in the classroom. In the words of one, 'Teachers are very supportive.' Teachers use questioning well, ensuring that pupils understand their work. They give pupils many opportunities to discuss their work together. This means that all pupils are involved in learning and ensures that they develop good speaking and listening skills. Teaching assistants provide effective support for individuals and groups. Teachers mark pupils' English work carefully, offering guidance and advice on how they can improve its quality. As a result, pupils make particularly good progress in their writing. Marking in mathematics, however, does not always provide such good guidance and, in these cases, pupils make slower progress.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The strong focus on basic skills enables pupils to make good progress. Occasionally, however, pupils are given too many worksheets, which restricts their opportunities to investigate and learn for themselves. Information and communication technology is used extensively across a range of subjects, which enhances pupils' computer and research skills. A strength of the curriculum is the focus on global matters and how pupils can play their part. Pupils gain a good understanding of less privileged parts of the world, and the eco-council is effective in raising pupils' awareness of the environment. The school provides pupils with a stimulating programme of activities and visits to places of interest to enrich their understanding of other cultures and traditions. This is appreciated by pupils and one commented, 'Our school gives us lots of opportunities to go out and learn instead of being in a classroom.'

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The school has a caring culture, so that pupils feel happy, secure and ready to learn. They know they can go to an adult for help if they are worried, and that playground 'buddies' will provide good support. Vulnerable pupils are well supported and make good progress. The school works effectively with parents and outside agencies to ensure that pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties or other learning needs are fully supported. A good deal of assessment information is collected, and this is used effectively to put in place help for groups and individuals who need extra support. Child protection procedures are robust. The school monitors pupils' attendance regularly and works with outside agencies to improve it. However, not enough is done to work in partnership with the significant minority of parents whose children do not attend regularly.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher, ably supported by his deputy and senior leadership team, has created a successful and inclusive school where pupils from all backgrounds get on well together and enjoy learning. Leaders and managers promote community cohesion well, encouraging pupils to engage with the local community and the world beyond. Leaders, managers and governors have a good understanding of their school. The school improvement plan accurately identifies strengths and areas for development. However, it does not always set out with sufficient precision the steps needed to achieve improvements. The school tracks pupils' progress well, using the information to set them clear and challenging targets. These enable all pupils, whatever their needs, to make good progress. Governors have grown in strength since the time of the last inspection. They support the school well and are ready to hold it to account.

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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?	3

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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

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<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	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	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	2

## The quality of provision

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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**

13 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lonesome Primary School, Mitcham, CR4 1SD

We enjoyed our recent visit to your school. You all made us feel welcome, and we could see how well your school helps you to develop into friendly, helpful young people. It provides you with a good education. You are kind in looking after younger children. You are proud of your school, and recognise that it helps you to develop a good understanding of the world around you. Some of you told us about your role as eco-warriors, waging war against litter. Others told us how the school takes you on trips and visits to broaden your understanding of history and the arts. You told us you enjoy your curriculum project weeks and recently learnt a great deal about the world your parents and grandparents grew up in.

You enjoy learning and behave well in lessons and around the school. What a pity, then, that a few of you don't do as well as you could, because you miss too much school. Please remind your parents that every day is important and should not be missed.

You all spoke highly of your teachers, and one of you told us that your teacher 'loves, loves, loves' teaching you different subjects. We agree that your teachers are enthusiastic, and you are lucky to have so many hard-working adults looking after you. We have asked the adults to help those of you in the Nursery and Reception Years to learn your letters and numbers more quickly. We have also asked the teachers of pupils in Years 1 to 6 to give you more guidance in your mathematics books to help you to improve your work. In turn, you can play your part by working as hard as you can to become 'star of the week'.

We wish you the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Natalia Power

Lead Inspector