

# Noak Bridge Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114894
<b>Local Authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	326086
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 September 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sheelagh Barnes

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)	198
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	10
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs S New
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms H Karim
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 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>	Coppice Lane Basildon Essex SS15 4JS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01268 282433
<b>Fax number</b>	01268 281125

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 September 2008
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average size primary school situated in Noak Bridge village near Basildon. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds and none is at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language. Overall, children's attainment on entry to Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in Reception is below the expected level for their age. The school has recently undergone a period of turbulence, with many changes to teaching and non-teaching staff, including some who stayed at the school for only a very short time. This was reflected in an above average pupil turnover in some year groups. Currently, the school is popular and has a waiting list. Many members of the senior management team are new to their posts. A significant proportion of the new teachers are at an early stage in their career. The school has recently gained Healthy Schools and Active-mark awards. It is currently working as an Enquiry School as part of the National Creative Partnership scheme.

There is a privately run pre-school on the school site. This facility was inspected by another inspector at the same time as this inspection, and is reported on separately.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The tenacity and drive of the headteacher has enabled her to steer a consistent course towards raising standards while the school underwent a turbulent time in terms of many staff changes. A new team has now been successfully built and its members are working together with a common purpose. The care, guidance and support of pupils are a particular strength and are good. Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils in Year 6 make a positive contribution to school life in their role as 'Buddies' with Reception children and as prefects with a range of duties around the school. Pupils take good care of each other and relationships are good. Pupils enjoy lessons and this is reflected in the recent improvement in attendance to above the national average. One parent wrote a comment that was typical of several: 'To know that your child is happy in school is a huge relief!'

Pupils of all levels or prior attainment are now making good overall progress. As a consequence, standards in English and mathematics have risen in the past year and are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. A high proportion of teachers have expertise and interest in science. As a result, successful action has led to a significant improvement in pupils' skills and knowledge in the subject. Standards in science are above those expected of pupils by the end of Year 6. Teaching and learning are good overall, and consistently good in Reception and Years 2 and 6. However, the quality varies in some classes from satisfactory to good. This has been recognised by senior leaders and managers who have developed a rigorous system of monitoring and support.

The curriculum is undergoing a review. New schemes of work and good initiatives are being undertaken, such as the recent introduction of the teaching of Spanish. However, the headteacher acknowledges that while information and communication technology (ICT) is taught appropriately as a subject in its own right, its use in lessons to facilitate the learning of other subjects is currently underdeveloped. Teachers' confidence with the newly installed systems is satisfactory and more training is planned.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

As a result of good leadership and management, the good provision found at the time of the last report has been maintained. The quality of teaching is good and the teacher and support staff work together effectively. They provide a range of well-organised activities that develop skills well. Some children initially display challenging behaviour, but there are high expectations and staff work hard to address this. As a result, personal development is good and children quickly get into good routines. There have been recent improvements to the facilities and the school improvement plan rightly identifies the need to further develop opportunities for outside work. The area is secure and is discrete from other areas of the school so the children can work outside in safety, which they enjoy. Care and welfare are good. From the initial baseline assessment undertaken on entry, progress is monitored formally through a computer based commercial assessment system and more informally through noting when new skills are mastered and by keeping examples of pupils' work. The data gathered support the judgement that children make good progress in all six areas of the curriculum.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency of the quality of teaching and learning in line with the best.
- Increase the opportunities pupils have to use ICT to develop links between learning in one subject and another.
- Develop the outdoor learning opportunities for children in the EYFS.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Children make a good start in EYFS and achieve well in all areas of the curriculum for their age. In Key Stage 1, pupils of all levels of ability continue to make good overall progress. Standards are in line with those expected by the end of Year 2. In Key Stage 2, in the recent past, progress has not always been good enough, although in some classes it has been more rapid than expected nationally. Currently, pupils always make at least satisfactory and in many lessons good progress. Standards attained in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 are in line with those expected for pupils' ages. Consistently good progress in science has led to standards that are above average at the end of Year 6, with a high proportion of pupils than would be expected attaining Level 5. Pupils from different groups, including those who are potentially higher attainers and those who need extra support with their learning, achieve in line with their peers.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

The school is effective in promoting the personal development and well-being of pupils. From the start there are high expectations and teachers work hard to ensure that behaviour is good. Pupils are friendly and enthusiastic and show increasing maturity as they go through the school. They are given insights into the multi-cultural nature of British society and to other cultures and religions around the world. Moral elements in particular are strong and, as a result, pupils work together and support each other effectively. For example, Year 6 pupils give very good support to Reception pupils. Pupils enjoy school and have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and safe. Attendance, which was an issue at the time of the last inspection, is now above the national average. Pupils make a positive contribution to community life. Within school there is an effective school council and prefects accept responsibility readily. In the wider community, there are positive links with a wide range of groups, and pupils take part in fund raising activities with enthusiasm. Support for their future economic well-being is satisfactory, limited somewhat through the rather limited application of ICT skills within the wider curriculum.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The good overall quality of teaching in the school enables pupils from all groups to make good gains in their learning. There are a number of positive features in teaching which are consistently good throughout the school. Behaviour management is good and teachers have good relationships with their pupils. As a result, little time is wasted and pupils enjoy their lessons. Assessment is accurate and is used effectively when planning lessons to meet the needs of

pupils from all groups. Marking and target setting gives pupils good information about what they need to do next to improve still further. Teachers' expertise and interest in the teaching of science is a particular strength throughout the school and, as a result, progress in this subject is particularly good. However, there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and the pace of lessons. While this is less so than in previous years and all teaching during inspection was at least satisfactory, this is an aspect that the leadership has already identified for further improvement.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented and the required curriculum is in place. The formal curriculum is very well complemented by a range of activities and visits. For example, a science week, young enterprise and a visit from 'The Bug Man' have made positive contributions to supporting learning. There is a good range of clubs and teams and most pupils are members. Many pupils are involved in sporting activities, which promotes healthy lifestyles. Pupils with learning difficulties are given effective support, which enables them to make progress in line with their peers. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and programmes implemented that provide them with extra challenges to help them maximise their potential. Specialist facilities for ICT, science and music add a positive dimension to the curriculum. However, there is currently little use of ICT as a tool for promoting cross-curricular links. Modern foreign language teaching is being introduced, but remains an area for further development.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The positive atmosphere within the school enables pupils to thrive from the start. Pastoral care is effective and pupils feel well supported. Pupils have targets to achieve in their work, which they know and work towards with good help from their teachers. Assessment of work is good and the strategy of teachers providing 'next steps' enables pupils to know what they have to do in order to make their work better. However, sometimes they do not have the opportunity to make corrections before the teacher moves on to the next topic. All the necessary safeguards to ensure the safety of pupils are in place. These include risk assessments and fire safety procedures. Bullying is not an issue and pupils say that when there have been incidents they have been dealt with firmly. There have been no reported racist incidents. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties are given effective support with teachers and teaching assistants working together effectively to enable these pupils to be full members of their class and of the school community.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher, effectively supported by the newly appointed deputy head and senior staff, has set a clear priority on raising standards. She has ensured that the school has kept in focus the necessary vision and strategic direction for school improvement. The new senior team has forged together effectively to ensure that challenging targets continue to be set and met while teams of teachers collaborate to promote effective curriculum development. Systems for checking on and evaluating the work of the school are suitably rigorous and result in appropriate plans for continued school improvement. For example, these plans accurately identify the most

important things the school needs to do to raise standards still further. Governors are supportive of the school and, particularly those who have been in post a while, are increasingly able to hold leaders to account. However, there are a number of vacancies in the governing body and training is planned for those who are new to their role. There are effective community partnerships, which are having a positive impact within the school and wider a-field. This is reflected in the overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire saying they were highly supportive of the school's work.

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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?	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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
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 <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

<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	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	3

## 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?	3
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	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**

29 September 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Noak Bridge Primary School, Noak Bridge, SS15 4JS.

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. I would like to tell you what we think about how well you are getting on and how well your school is helping you to learn. There are many good things about your school. Some of them are:

- You make really good progress in science and reach standards which are above those expected in this subject by the end of Year 6.
- Your behaviour is good and you all support each other really well.
- Teachers give you good information on what you have done well and what you need to do next to do even better.
- Teachers and other staff take good care of you.
- You learn a lot about being healthy and looking after yourselves well.
- There is a good range of extra activities and clubs that make learning interesting.

Your headteacher knows you all well and works hard to make your school even better.

Your headteacher and staff are always working to improve things for you. We agree with them that you would all make even more progress if:

- the lessons you have are more consistently like the very best ones we saw
- you have more opportunities to use computers to help you in your work in other subjects
- the outdoor area for the children in Reception is developed further so that they can have more chance to learn outside.

I am sure that Ms Karim and all the other staff will continue to do everything they can to help you. You can play your part by continuing to behave well, working hard and coming to school every day.

I would like to wish you the very best for the future.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs Barnes

Lead inspector