

Plumcroft Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100140
Local Authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	335493
Inspection dates	21–22 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Linda Pickles

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	533
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Kennett
Headteacher	Richard Gray
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 19 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and external partners. They observed the school's work, and looked at the data the school has collected to monitor pupils' progress, school policies, including safeguarding procedures, strategic planning and children's work. In addition, 55 parental questionnaires were returned by parents and scrutinised by the inspection team, as well as pupil and staff questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the attainment of pupils on entry to the school and the progress made by the oldest pupils
- the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning, particularly for pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who join the school outside of usual admission dates
- the extent to which the provision, including care, guidance and support, has improved outcomes and attendance
- the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage in developing pupils' language and communication skills
- the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels in driving forward improvements based on self-evaluation.

Information about the school

Plumcroft is a larger than average primary school. The large majority of pupils are from a wide range of ethnic groups, of which the majority are from a Black African background. A small minority of pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is well above the national average and a few are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. These pupils have a range of difficulties but most relate to speech, language and communication. Pupil mobility is well above that found nationally. The school has Healthy School Status, Walk to School Charter Mark and Woodland Trust Gold Award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Plumcroft Primary is a satisfactory school where pupils from culturally diverse backgrounds work and play together harmoniously. Parents appreciate the school's work, particularly the good care and support provided for pupils and their families. The very large majority of responses to the parent questionnaires distributed as part of the inspection were positive. As one parent stated, 'There is a very welcoming attitude and a positive approach.' Pupils' attitudes towards the school are positive and their high levels of enjoyment are demonstrated through their good behaviour and good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As one pupil said, 'At my school they care about us a lot.' Pupils enjoy the opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life and make a good contribution to the school and wider community.

The quality of pupils' learning and the progress they make overall are satisfactory.

Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and progress well.

Pupils make satisfactory progress across the school and standards are broadly average in the core areas of English, mathematics and science. Pupils from different ethnic groups, including White British and Black African pupils, make expected progress from their starting points. A minority of pupils with a first language other than English make good progress in their learning, as do pupils who join the school outside of the usual dates of admission. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress in line with their peers. Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes contribute to their learning and they engage enthusiastically in lessons.

Teachers plan lessons to reflect pupils' interests and manage calm and well-ordered classrooms. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported by additional adults, both in classrooms and through small group intervention programmes. In lessons where the pace of learning is slower, tasks do not provide sufficient challenge to enable all pupils to make good progress, there are limited opportunities for pupils to share what they know and what they can do and too little attention is paid to tracking the progress of different groups of pupils.

Transition arrangements are well established and contribute to the good progress made by the high number of pupils who enter the school outside of the usual admission dates. Action taken by the school to raise attendance levels is starting to have a positive impact, particularly on those pupils who are persistently absent.

Leaders and managers have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Although they have been successful improving the overall quality of teaching, outcomes from monitoring and evaluation are not applied sufficiently rigorously to ensure all pupils make the progress of which they are capable. There are

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limited opportunities for middle managers to monitor and evaluate teaching and progress in their subject areas. This restricts the school's capacity for sustaining improvement which, as a result is satisfactory rather than good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- What does the school need to do to improve further?
- Raise pupils' attainment and accelerate their progress in reading, writing and mathematics by using the outcomes of monitoring more rigorously to improve the proportion of good or better teaching by:
 - sharing existing good and outstanding practice within the school
 - using assessment information more rigorously to plan work which challenges all pupils and enables them to make good progress
 - providing more opportunities in lessons for pupils to show what they know and what they can do.
- Strengthen existing tracking and assessment systems to monitor the progress of different groups to ensure all pupils make consistently good progress.
- Improve the leadership of middle managers by improving the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and the progress made by pupils in the foundation subjects.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils generally make satisfactory progress in lessons. They behave well and display positive attitudes towards learning, particularly when they are given opportunities to actively participate in lessons. An example of this was seen in an outstanding science lesson in Year 2 where pupils showed extremely high levels of engagement while investigating the weight and distance travelled by model cars. Well-planned activities provided high levels of participation and challenge for all pupils and enabled them to make outstanding progress in their learning. Questioning was used effectively to extend pupils' scientific knowledge and assess levels of understanding. In a few lessons, pupils have limited opportunities to demonstrate what they know and can do because teacher-led discussion lasts too long and activities do not provide sufficient challenge for all ability groups.

By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are broadly average. All pupils make satisfactory progress from the end of Key Stage 1 and some pupils make good progress. Pupils make better progress in writing than in reading and mathematics.

Attainment and progress in writing has improved because pupils have been given more extended writing opportunities across different subjects and marking has informed them how they can improve their work. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is low but improving and pupils make satisfactory progress from attainment on entry that is well below national expectations.

The school provides a calm and happy environment where pupils enjoy their learning

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and behave well. Pupils feel well cared for by staff and feel that any problems they have will be sorted out. Pupils from many different cultural and religious backgrounds work and play together harmoniously as a result of their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They make a good contribution to the school through the school council and their roles as buddies for new pupils and as monitors. They enjoy having the opportunity to contribute to the wider community, shown by their generous donation of food during the Harvest Festival, and understood that they were helping people who were less fortunate than themselves.

Pupils have a good understanding of why a healthy lifestyle is important and speak positively about the quality of the school meals in helping them to keep healthy. They participate enthusiastically in a range of sporting activities and clubs held after school. Pupils' attendance is broadly average and the extent to which they develop basic skills prepares them adequately for future economic well-being.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some good and outstanding lessons

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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observed. Classrooms are calm and well organised and pupils behave well and enjoy their learning. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and deploy teaching assistants effectively to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities who need extra help. Good and better lessons have a swift pace, activities require pupils to actively demonstrate what they can do and skilful questioning extends and assesses their understanding. In lessons where progress is slower, pupils have limited opportunities to demonstrate what they know and spend too long listening to the teacher. Work is regularly marked and informs pupils of how they can improve. Intervention programmes for pupils with a first language other than English and pupils who join the school outside of the usual dates of admission have been successful and contribute to their good progress. The use of assessment information, however, to plan activities which challenge and accelerate learning for all groups of pupils is not yet consistent across all classes.

The curriculum is adequately matched to pupils' needs and interests and provides enrichment opportunities which reflect the cultural diversity of the school and wider community. Cross-curricular links, for example the water project, had a positive impact in improving progress in writing for Year 5 pupils and extended their understanding of life in Mozambique. The school provides satisfactory opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology. Visitors, such as musicians, storytellers and local artists, and visits to local places of interest, including places of worship, support learning in different subjects. After-school clubs are well attended and reflect pupils' enthusiasm for sport and cultural activities, such as dance. Pupils speak positively about the Scout Club, which is attended by pupils of all ages and promotes their skills of independence and well-being.

The staff take good care of the pupils and all have regular training in different aspects of child welfare. Transition arrangements for pupils who arrive outside of the usual dates of admission, many of whom have a first language other than English, are well established and enable them to settle quickly and make good progress. Pupils who require additional academic or pastoral support are identified early and targeted support for vulnerable pupils has resulted in significant improvements in their attitudes and behaviour. Links with external agencies are strong and the school works in close partnership with parents and carers where there are concerns about behaviour and attendance. Transition arrangements for pupils moving to secondary school are clear and the school regularly provides parents and carers with information about how they can support their child's learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

<p>The quality of teaching</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</p>	<p>3</p>

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The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2
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How effective are leadership and management?

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The headteacher and senior leaders have a clear vision based on continuing improvement which is understood by all staff. They have established a good climate for learning and consolidated improvements in pupils' behaviour and attitudes since the last inspection. Regular monitoring of teaching and learning has highlighted strengths and weaknesses, which have been shared by staff. This has resulted in improvements to the quality of teaching, although there is a recognition by senior leaders that outcomes from observations need to be more systematically evaluated to ensure all pupils make good progress in both key stages. The school has been successful in improving standards and progress in writing, which was a whole-school development priority. Targets set by the school are challenging and senior leaders acknowledge that pupils must make good progress in order to reach them. Middle managers monitor their subject areas, but have limited opportunities to observe teaching and evaluate its impact on pupils' progress. The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination is satisfactory because not all groups of pupils make similar progress.

The governing body discharge their statutory responsibilities and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are involved in setting appropriate priorities for development and understand the challenges the school faces. Link governors visit the school and provide first-hand knowledge so that they can provide greater challenge and support to hold the school to account. Systems for safeguarding children are good and the school works collaboratively with other key agencies to reduce the risk of harm to pupils. The school is a harmonious community and senior leaders have been successful in promoting cohesion beyond the school. An example of this is the Global Folk Night, which involves the wider community and celebrates dance, food and music from many different cultures. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2

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The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Typically, the children's attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage is below the level expected for their age and well below in communication, language and literacy. The majority of children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with a first language other than English, make good progress towards the early learning goals and achieve in line with national expectations in their personal, social and emotional development and mathematical development. Boys' attainment is below average in reading and writing and improvements to the teaching of phonics have supported the good progress they make from their starting points. All children make very good progress in their physical development because of the range of provision in the outdoor environment. Relationships with adults are effective and this supports children's very good personal, social and emotional development. They develop good levels of independence because activities allow them to make their own choices.

The classrooms and outdoor environments are well organised and children settle quickly into established routines. Adults have a good understanding of the learning and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They effectively use questioning to extend children's learning and regular observations inform assessment. Activities are planned which cover all areas of learning and the introduction of 'show and tell' during teacher-led sessions has supported children's good progress in developing their speaking skills. Children's safety and welfare are promoted well and there are good levels of supervision and support for activities.

Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and planning for improvement is clearly focused in improving outcomes for children in communication, language and literacy. Provision is monitored and evaluated by the Early Years Foundation Stage leader who has accurately identified that writing activities during child-led sessions need to further reflect and engage boys' interests. Transition arrangements to monitor pupils' progress when they transfer to Year 1 are in place. The school has good relationships with parents and effective links with outside agencies.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

From the returned questionnaires, it is clear that the school enjoys the confidence and support of the very large majority of the parental community. Most responses to questions were positive and many added comments praising the school's work. In particular, parents were overwhelmingly positive about how much their child enjoys school and how well the school keeps their children safe. A small minority noted their concerns about how effectively the school prepares children for the future and a few noted their concerns about how effectively the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Most parents stated that, overall, they were happy with their child's experience at the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Plumcroft Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 55 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 533 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	76	12	22	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	78	12	22	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	38	69	14	25	2	4	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	62	16	29	4	7	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	33	60	17	31	4	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	69	12	22	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	53	24	44	2	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	23	42	20	36	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	42	28	51	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	47	20	36	3	5	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	51	21	38	3	5	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	30	55	21	38	3	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	69	14	25	3	5	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



23 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Plumcroft Primary School, Plumstead, SE18 3HW

This letter is to thank you for welcoming the inspection team when we visited your school recently and to tell you what we found out. We really enjoyed having the opportunity to talk to you and listening to your views about the school. You told us you enjoy school and learn a lot in lessons.

These are the good things we found out about your school.

- The adults in school look after you well and help you develop into caring and considerate individuals.
- Your behaviour is good and you are eager to learn.
- Pupils from many different backgrounds get on well with each other.
- You enjoy all the different activities, visits and clubs that are available during and after school.
- You are given opportunities to take responsibility and help make decisions about how to make your school better.

To help the school become better, these are some things we have asked the headteacher to do.

- Give your teachers more opportunities to share ideas with each other to improve your learning.
- Make sure all lessons give you the chance to show what you know and what you can do.
- Make sure you all learn as much as you can in your lessons.
- Check carefully how well all of you are doing in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Check how well you are learning in all your other subjects.

You can help by coming to school regularly and continuing to work hard and behave well. Good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Linda Pickles

Lead Inspector

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