

# Montbelle Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100149
<b>Local Authority</b>	Greenwich
<b>Inspection number</b>	335494
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 June 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kevin Hodge

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

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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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	407
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steve Offord
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jenny Marshall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 May 2007
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 24 lessons and observed 15 teachers. They held meetings with staff, members of the governing body and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at school documents, including monitoring records, development plans and safeguarding documentation. They also analysed questionnaires from 24 staff, 89 pupils and 238 from parents.

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

- how well children achieve in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in their language and social skills
- the pupils' attainment in Years 1 to 6, particularly that of the most able pupils
- the quality of the curriculum, particularly enrichment activities
- how effectively senior leaders are promoting further improvement.

## Information about the school

The school is much larger than average. Although the majority of pupils are of White British heritage, around 16% of pupils attending are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a small proportion are learning to speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average and the range of needs includes speech, language, communication and physical difficulties. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is below that typically found. The school has awards for promoting pupils' healthy living and active lifestyles. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Nursery and two Reception classes. There is an early morning breakfast club managed by the school.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Montbelle Primary is a good school. Pupils readily say they feel extremely safe, like attending and enjoy the activities on offer. This is not surprising, as the school ensures very high levels of safeguarding, and the curriculum provides very good opportunities to extend their artistic and musical knowledge in a wide range of subjects.

Children's good start in the Nursery, where they quickly become accustomed to school life, carries on into the Reception classes where they continue to gain early reading, writing and social skills well. In Years 1 to 6, pupils' good progress generally continues, but is sometimes uneven as the quality of teaching varies between classes. Pupils reach broadly average levels of attainment, but their investigative and problem solving skills in science are not sufficiently developed. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of a range of subjects, their good behaviour and attitudes to learning, combined with a secure level of basic skills, help them achieve well. Parents add their praise for the way the school fosters pupils' motivation and desire to learn. The school council enjoys its role in shaping school direction such as helping in deciding on new playground equipment. The range of responsibilities pupils have, while not extensive, is appreciated by them. The extra help at playtimes ensures these are enjoyable, with a good variety of games keeping most pupils active. This complements their good knowledge of how to stay healthy. Pupils are tolerant of each other's backgrounds and beliefs, but their awareness of different cultures represented in the United Kingdom and beyond is too limited. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are cared for well and those with severe disabilities have excellent help and support. This ensures they make good progress and are included in activities whenever possible.

Underpinning the school's continued level of effectiveness from the last inspection is a team of senior managers, supported well by the governing body, who work well together. Priorities to help the school improve are based upon accurate and thorough self-evaluation to ensure they are the right ones; for example, in the past, the school identified differences in attainment between boys and girls. This has now been addressed. Safeguarding routines are excellent and procedures in this respect are highly effective. Given this track record of maintaining its success and the continued good outcomes for pupils over a broad front ensure the school has a good capacity to improve further. Parents are generally very supportive, although a small minority note the variations in progress that occur between classes and others would like the school to take more note of their suggestions. The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory rather than good, as links with other schools are at an early stage and do not extend widely enough to raise pupils' awareness of others with contrasting beliefs or lifestyles.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and pupils' progress in the 2010 to 2011 academic year by:
  - shortening introductions and explanations by teachers so pupils get down to tasks more quickly
  - giving pupils more open-ended tasks and opportunities to shape their learning, particularly the highest attainers
  - devising more investigative and problem solving tasks in science work in Years 1 to 6.
- Extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and backgrounds of different groups of people in this country and abroad by:
  - senior leaders extending their evaluation of existing practice in this aspect of the school's work
  - developing existing links with contrasting schools both in this country and abroad, to include more year groups in the school.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

'I really like the work we do in class □ it's fun' sums up the view of many pupils. The school's promotion of their spiritual, moral and social development is good and as a result, in many lessons, pupils' display good attitudes to learning which helps them enjoy the range of activities on offer. Activities involving real life situations, such as work on bus timetables in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, really helped pupils achieve well and extend their knowledge. Only on occasions does this good behaviour dip when a lesson slows in pace as explanations by staff are too long or pupils are not as challenged in their learning. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils really got a buzz from preparing presentations and this also developed good teamwork among pupils. In other lessons, pupils' curiosity and problem solving skills are not always stretched, particularly in science work, which is often too predictable to encourage pupils to come up with ideas or solutions to problems.

Pupils from all ethnic backgrounds make equally good progress, as do those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Those with severe needs often make excellent progress, due to the skilful contribution of adults to their learning. The pupils like helping each other and they enjoy being involved with their local community when joining in local events such as 'Eltham Lights up', local music festivals, artistic and fund raising events. While these contributions help extend their experiences, pupils' wider cultural, and particularly multicultural, awareness is a weaker aspect of their personal development. Pupils at the early stages of learning English achieve in line with their classmates, often due to the effective help of specialist teachers. Within the school, pupils willingly take on responsibilities and this ensures that playtimes run smoothly. Their knowledge of healthy eating is extended by each class tending its own vegetable

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patch and then enjoying eating the fruit of their efforts. Pupils' levels of basic skills, including secure abilities in information and communication technology, prepare them well for their next schools, as does the mature approach of many pupils. Although pupils enjoy attending, their level of attendance just falls short of being above average this year, although good routines to promote regular attendance with rewards for each class and individuals work well for most pupils.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

## How effective is the provision?

A broad curriculum gives pupils a wide diet of activities, ranging from studying the Great Fire of London and Britain since the 1930s to musical activities and modern language skills. Topic books help record and illustrate their efforts to good effect, although many follow a similar format rather than reflecting pupils' individual styles or approaches. Extra-curricular activities are particularly wide-ranging, covering sports, music, drama and cookery. Basic skills are covered systematically from Nursery to Year 6, although science activities are not planned to good effect to promote investigative or problem solving skills.

<sup>1</sup> 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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Teaching is generally good, if occasionally uneven at times in quality, through the school. Teachers promote good relationships within classes so that pupils want to learn and activities are usually pitched at the right level for most pupils. Those that are higher attaining are not always fully stretched in their thinking as questions are sometimes too closed. When explanations or introductions by teachers are sometimes too lengthy, pupils' attention wanders and the pace of lessons is too slow. In the best teaching, activities are very relevant to pupils' interests, usually practically based, and pupils get on with work quickly with the freedom to shape their own learning.

Teachers' marking is regular and helpful in guiding pupils about how to improve. Ongoing assessment for the whole class gives teachers a clear overview of which children need extra help. Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are integrated very effectively into lesson activities and teaching assistants make a valuable and skilful contribution in this respect. The school's conscientious approach to caring for pupils results in them feeling extremely safe and having an excellent awareness of safety-related issues. Links with outside agencies, particularly related to the needs of those pupils with specific and severe difficulties, are excellent so these particular pupils take a full part in the life of the school and achieve well. Extra support for pupils comes from a range of helpers such as a learning mentor and in pupils providing mutual support as helpers in the playgrounds. Many like attending the breakfast club which gives them a good start to the day.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The senior leadership team has embedded good routines throughout the school to ensure that it runs smoothly and has tried to drive up improvement in areas such as communication with parents through the school website as well as email contacts and alerts. Teaching is monitored regularly and to good effect in most classes, although occasionally there is insufficient focus on pupils' learning. Safeguarding routines, particularly for the vetting of staff, were all found to be of outstanding quality during the inspection. Risk assessments are carried out regularly and site security has recently been enhanced, which pupils have said they appreciate. Staff are very mindful to include all pupils in activities to ensure equal opportunities, and discrimination is not tolerated. Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit particularly in this respect. Although the school monitors the performance of different groups closely, there

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is some unevenness of progress between classes. Links with other colleges and schools locally help those with particular gifts and talents to extend their abilities and pupils benefit from local 'cluster' links to extend their sporting and artistic talents. The school's links with other schools further from its immediate area, such as those in Liverpool and Poland, have gone part-way to promoting community cohesion, but in reality the links are quite new and limited to certain year groups. Local links are a stronger aspect, but school leaders are aware of the need to extend their evaluation of existing practice in the promotion of community cohesion. The governing body gives good support and regularly visits the school to gain good levels of information and hold the school to account for its performance. Governors have recently reviewed their organisation and their committee structures to streamline their approach so they can give even better support.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's skills when they enter the Nursery are usually at lower levels than expected for their age. Children make a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes and achieve good outcomes when they join Year 1. They make up ground in their early language and number skills and in their social development. Well-planned activities in the Nursery, such as pretending to pack to go on a journey or constructing 'star wars' models, help them to gain confidence in themselves and develop their fine motor skills. In the Reception classes, children benefit from a good balance of adult-led activities and those that they follow independently. Topics such as experimenting with materials that



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sink or float and in using a simple abacus, help develop their investigative and counting skills. Other children enjoyed sewing simple pictures, taking great care to get it right. Activities led by adults are usually well taught, although sometimes children spend too long on their independent activities before being given that extra guidance to spur on their learning. Clear assessment of their ongoing needs means staff know how children are progressing. Outside activities, while enjoyed by children, do not always capitalise enough on the classroom themes or entice them to find out more about what is available, as some of the resources are well worn. That said, the children benefit from access to equipment used by the Nursery to extend their physical abilities and social skills in sharing. Childrens' welfare needs are catered for well and simple routines like washing hands are started from the early days in the Nursery through to the Reception classes. Staff work well together to support the good leadership and management of this aspect of the school's work. There is a clear sense of what still needs to be done to help children continue to reach the levels expected when they enter Year 1 and in maintaining their good progress from their starting points.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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**

There was a good response to the parental questionnaire, with around a quarter adding comments, either of praise or pointing to areas where they felt improvements could be made. Positive comments included praise for individual staff, the progress pupils make and the good ethos of the school. Those questionnaires with criticisms included some individual and particular concerns with no common theme, but there were several comments about variations in pupils' progress between classes, the communication from the school and the way the school took on board comments from others. These areas were either investigated as part of the inspection process or raised anonymously with the school. The inspection found that there are some variations between classes in terms of teaching and the resulting progress pupils make. Although the school has increased the number of routes for parents to air their views and to gain information, the school recognises that more could be done, such as making newsletters home more appealing and in seeking further ways to take on and respond to parents' views.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Montbelle 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 238 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 407 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	114	48	117	49	5	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	125	53	110	46	1	0	1	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	74	31	139	58	14	6	4	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	62	26	149	63	19	8	5	2
The teaching is good at this school	77	32	147	62	8	3	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	62	26	148	62	14	6	6	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	71	30	153	64	8	3	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)	44	18	148	62	13	5	3	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	56	24	159	67	11	5	3	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	74	31	136	57	18	8	1	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	55	23	141	59	21	9	8	3
The school is led and managed effectively	77	32	134	56	9	4	4	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	84	35	141	59	5	2	4	2

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



1 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Montbelle Primary School, Greenwich SE9 3EY

Thank you for making us feel welcome when we visited your school recently. We think yours is a good school. We liked looking at the wide range of work you cover.

Here are some of the most important things we found out:

- Younger children make a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- You reach the expected levels in your work by the time you leave and make good progress in your work.
- The range of things you cover in subjects such as history, music and art is good.
- You know how to keep healthy and we liked hearing about your vegetable allotments.
- Teachers usually make lessons interesting and give you good guidance on how to improve your work.
- Those children who have special needs or disabilities are given really good help.
- You behave well usually and are particularly well behaved in the playground.
- The headteacher, staff and governors work together well and ensure that you feel extremely safe in school.

We have asked them to look at two main areas to improve:

- To make all lessons as good as the best so that you make good or even better progress through the school.
- To help you know more about the backgrounds and beliefs of those who live much further from the local area.

You can help too by trying your best in every lesson and by giving your ideas to teachers about which ways you like to learn best.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Hodge

Lead inspector

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