

St Margaret's Lee C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100724
Local Authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	335589
Inspection dates	2–3 December 2009
Reporting inspector	George Rayner

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Maria Parker
Headteacher	Mrs Dionne Povey
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and some pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documents, including the school improvement plan, reports from the school improvement partner, assessment records, information from the monitoring of teaching, safeguarding records and related policies, minutes of governors' meetings, teachers' plans and records of curriculum activities. The inspectors analysed 101 questionnaires that were completed by parents, 15 from the staff and 92 from pupils.

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

- how well children make a start to their learning and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the consistency of learning and progress between different pupil groups, subjects and key stages
- how far the school's view that the curriculum and care are particular strengths is justified
- how swiftly the new headteacher has developed an accurate view of the school's quality and performance and identified clear improvement priorities and shared her ambition throughout the school.

Information about the school

The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average in most years, but slightly below average in 2009. While the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average overall, it is markedly above average in Year 5. An above-average proportion of pupils have statements. Pupils' most common special educational needs relate to moderate difficulty in learning to use speech and language. A second area of special educational needs relates to behavioural, emotional and social needs. Almost half the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, which is considerably above average. The communities most strongly represented are those with Black or mixed African and Caribbean backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with first languages other than English is slightly above average, but very few pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is provided in a Nursery and a Reception class. The headteacher has been in post since the start of the current term. The school has Healthy School Status and the Activemark 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school with some outstanding features. Exemplary steps are taken to ensure that all pupils are secure, valued and happy. Pupils say that, as a result, they feel extremely safe and hugely enjoy school. One summed up the views of many by commenting, 'This school is the best. The teachers are helpful, friendly and nice. The children are kind and fabulous.' Pupils show their enjoyment in their above-average attendance, good behaviour and enthusiasm for joining in with all that the school has to offer. The great majority of parents agree, as shown by the comment of one, who described St Margaret's as 'a lovely school with a great sense of community'.

Effective teaching and a good curriculum help pupils of all abilities to make good progress. By the end of Year 6 their overall attainment is above average. Children make a good start in the Nursery and Reception class. Progress is most rapid in Key Stage 1, because improvements to the curriculum and teaching, which are making learning increasingly exciting and creative, are having most impact there. This results in attainment being well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics by the end of Year 2. Progress is good in Key Stage 2, but not quite as impressive as in Years 1 and 2, partly because the impact of the new strategies on raising standards has yet to work its way through the school, and partly because pupils make only satisfactory progress in mathematics in Years 3 to 6. Here, opportunities for pupils to develop independence in using their skills to solve problems are limited. Staff know this and are improving the provision for mathematics, which is beginning to raise standards.

Teachers' often make excellent use of assessment to plan for all pupils' needs, identify their next steps, guide them on how to improve and carefully check that guidance has been followed. Assessment is good, rather than outstanding however, because the very best practice is not fully consistent throughout the school. For example, on a few occasions assessment does not ensure that activities are appropriate for all pupils. This occasionally results in insufficient challenge for the most able pupils, so that their progress temporarily slows. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, although assessment makes an effective contribution to children's good achievement, on a few occasions progress records do not clearly identify the next steps that each child needs to make.

The new headteacher expresses a strong ambition to make the school outstanding in all respects. She has quickly developed an understanding of the strengths to build upon and the areas requiring further improvement. The headteacher is pursuing the quest with considerable vision and energy, quickly gaining the confidence of staff, governors and most parents. The contribution of governors has been outstanding because, during a period of significant change following the retirement of a highly regarded headteacher,

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followed by interim headship, they have been key to ensuring the school has maintained its strengths and remained well poised to improve further. Aply supported by well-established senior leaders, governors have succeeded exceptionally well in maintaining continuity of direction and drive during this period. This clear, shared commitment is already having impact in, for example, raising the quality of teaching and the curriculum in Key Stage 1 and beginning to raise standards in mathematics in Key Stage 2, showing that the school has a good capacity to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in mathematics by increasing opportunities for pupils to learn to use their skills to solve problems, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Increase the impact of assessment on learning and progress by ensuring that:
 - records of children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage always clearly identify the next steps that each child needs to take
 - the very best practice is fully consistent throughout the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

While there is considerable variation in the range of knowledge and skills when children enter the school, it is broadly at expected levels. They make good progress overall and pupils in Year 6 reach above-average standards. Good progress was also evident during the inspection, particularly in English throughout the school. Pupils greatly enjoy reading and become very proficient in tackling new texts. Workbooks show that they learn to write well in a range of styles.

In mathematics, progress was more variable last year, particularly in Years 3 to 6, but it is improving. Assessment records show that attainment in mathematics is beginning to rise. This is supported by evidence from pupils' workbooks and lesson observations. Pupils relish opportunities to use their skills to solve problems, as seen for example in a Year 6 lesson that combined mathematics with history. In using skills such as multiplication to grapple successfully with code-cracking problems to identify the target of a Second World War bombing raid, pupils showed high application and perseverance. A boy said, with evident and well-deserved satisfaction, 'It was hard but I got there in the end.' Pupils from minority ethnic groups succeed as well as their classmates, because their engagement and endeavour match those of the other pupils. Those with English as an additional language do equally well. The difficulties of pupils with special needs and/or disabilities are carefully identified and effectively provided for. As a result, their progress is also good.

Pupils' personal development is also good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They cooperate together exceedingly well, know a great deal about their own and other cultures and reflect deeply on, for example, the benefits that they have that are not shared by all children. Pupils' enjoyment and willingness to work hard contribute exceptionally well to their learning. They show great interest in

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their work and behaviour in lessons is generally outstanding. A small number of pupils find it difficult to maintain this good behaviour around the school, but pupils say that this is improving because the adults are giving them clearer guidance on what is expected. Pupils understand how to keep themselves healthy and live active lives, demonstrated by very good participation in extra-curricular activities. Pupils make an excellent contribution to school life, diligently carrying out a variety of roles, such as school councillors. They are equally committed to helping those in the wider community less fortunate than themselves. By enthusiastically taking part in a sponsored 'soccer challenge' they recently raised ££1,000 for good causes, including the SOS Children's Villages Appeal for orphans worldwide. Cooperating together in such activities, together with the progress that they make in most subjects, prepares pupils well for the next stage in their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan worthwhile, interesting activities. They ensure that these move on briskly so that time is used well and the pace of learning is good. These qualities, together with

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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teachers' enthusiastic and encouraging approach, ensure good relationships, so that pupils are very willing workers. Teachers are increasingly involving pupils, for example, in contributing to teaching by showing classmates how they have succeeded in their tasks. Effective teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants ensures that pupils finding the work particularly difficult receive the help they need to keep up with the pace of learning.

A major part of the school's strategy to raise attainment has been to make the curriculum more creative, by giving pupils opportunities to combine their skills from different subjects in stimulating tasks. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, for example, the pupils were thoroughly engrossed in using their skills to help Santa Claus fit all the presents onto his sleigh. The effective use of resources and the highly engaging activities along with skilled teaching ensured all pupils' learning progressed exceptionally well. This kind of exciting activity is working well in most subjects. While there are some good opportunities such as this in mathematics, they are less consistent than in other subjects because the approach has only recently been introduced. Pupils participate in a good range of extra-curricular activities to extend what they learn in the classroom and boost their enjoyment. These include popular clubs and sessions led by visitors. For example, police officers not only support pupils' personal development by delivering sessions on issues such as drug awareness and internet safety, but also come dressed as Victorian policemen, which really enlivens history studies.

Features of the outstanding care that the school provides for the pupils include the extremely well-organised systems, high diligence in carrying these out and links with specialist agencies to provide high quality additional care for those pupils who need this. There is exemplary support for pupils who arrive with significant behavioural issues, which enables them to settle into the school community. Excellent guidance includes the support given to pupils for moving on to secondary school. Year 6 pupils say that this is already helping them to prepare for next year.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is effectively spreading leadership responsibilities throughout the school. Staff are relishing the additional opportunities that this is giving for them to contribute their own ideas to whole-school initiatives. While this means that several are in the process of developing new skills that they need to be fully effective, they are

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doing so well. Leaders know that the current impact of their work is providing good teaching and learning. They have clear ideas about how to improve this further. Self-evaluation is rigorous and provides a generally accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. This has helped leaders to introduce well-focused strategies that are beginning to have clear impact, for example in beginning to raise attainment in mathematics.

A good partnership with parents includes links with the Friends of St Margaret's, which has raised significant amounts of funds for such things as playground improvements. Parents recently told the school that it could give them more guidance on how to help their children to learn at home. Leaders listened and are planning ways to do this. The school works exceptionally well with a range of partners, including the local church, police and fire service, to enhance pupils' learning, care and personal development. It succeeds very well in tackling discrimination and ensuring that every child is valued. Equality of opportunity is good rather than outstanding because pupils' progress is currently more rapid in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2.

Safeguarding procedures are extremely thorough and exceptionally well organised. Records are maintained to a high standard and easily accessible to all who need to refer to them. The school has evaluated its contribution to community cohesion and correctly judges this to be good. While it succeeds well in promoting a harmonious school community and helping pupils to grow up as confident, valuable members of their local community, more needs to be done to develop links further afield. Plans are in hand to tackle this, for example by developing a link with a school with pupils from different backgrounds.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

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Early Years Foundation Stage

The classes provide calm environments for learning and personal development. Activities are varied and purposeful. There is a good balance of activities that children choose for themselves and those that are led by adults. In the latter the adults sometimes make too many of the decisions, which temporarily reduces children's opportunities to develop their independence. Staff are diligent in identifying children's special needs and very effective in meeting these, for example by making sure that suitable resources are available and can be taken home if necessary.

Children settle in quickly and happily and their skills and confidence develop well. Following good progress, children reach the standards expected by the time they leave the Reception class and many are developing skills and knowledge that are above average for their age. The adults identified that physical development has until recently been children's weakest area. They have made improvements to the outdoor resources to really encourage children to be active, with considerable success, as achievement in this area of learning now matches that in the others. Close links between leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage and that elsewhere in the school ensure consistency with whole-school vision. Good teamwork secures consistency of practice between the Nursery and Reception class.

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

A high proportion of parents and carers responded to our questionnaire. The great majority of responses show that parents are happy with the school. Additional comments included praise for the efforts made by the school to meet their child's particular needs. Several parents are impressed with the start made by the new headteacher. A small number of parents raised concerns about behaviour and how staff respond to misbehaviour. Inspectors observed mainly excellent behaviour in lessons, but also saw evidence, for example in school records, that a small number of pupils find it difficult to maintain this throughout their day. This term, the school has introduced enhanced systems to encourage good behaviour and some parents commented that these are beginning to have the desired effect. A few parents believe that the school could do more to inform them about their children's progress and involve them more in

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supporting learning. The headteacher agrees that, for example, sessions for reporting back to parents could be more informative and is developing plans to achieve this.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Margaret's Lee C of E 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 101 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 209 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	76	75	23	23	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	62	61	35	35	2	2	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	40	40	58	57	1	1	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	41	53	52	6	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	56	55	43	43	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	45	51	50	3	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	43	53	52	2	2	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)	32	32	51	50	7	7	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	43	48	48	6	6	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	26	59	58	12	12	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	30	57	56	6	6	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	40	40	57	56	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	58	57	40	40	2	2	1	1

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.



17 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Margaret's Lee C of E Primary School, Lewisham SE13 5SG

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors to your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and are grateful to you for sharing your work with us. We found that yours is a good school. Some things are outstanding, which means that they are very good indeed. You told us that you feel very safe and enjoy school a great deal. We could see that this is true because of the outstanding way that the grown-ups care for you. You show your enjoyment by coming to school regularly, behaving very well and happily joining in with all the things that happen in your school. This really helps your teachers to help you to do well and makes it really worthwhile for them to put on extra activities for you.

You make good progress in your learning, especially in reading and writing. Your progress is not quite so strong in mathematics. The adults know that this is because they need to give you more chances to practise using your skills to solve problems. We could see that they are working hard to make improvements by giving you really exciting things to do. I did enjoy watching the Year 2 pupils using their mathematics skills to help Santa Claus to fit all the toys onto his sleigh! We have asked the teachers to make all of their improvements as quickly as possible, so that there can be brilliant tasks in all mathematics lessons.

Another thing that we have asked the adults to do is to ensure your work is at the right level for you all to make good progress. We would also like them to always show you how to improve your work when they mark it. Your teachers often do this very well, but not all the time.

Your new headteacher and the staff know how to make your school even better and are working hard to do this. You can help them if you continue to work as hard as you do now. Well done and very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

George Rayner

Lead inspector

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