

Castilion Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101444
Local Authority	Bexley
Inspection number	335717
Inspection dates	7–8 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Susan Thomas-Pounce

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	283
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stella Baggaley
Headteacher	Alan Childs
Date of previous school inspection	3 July 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 22 lessons and saw all 11 teachers teach. Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and pupils. Inspectors looked at the written records for tracking pupils' progress, the school improvement plan, local authority reviews and a range of school documents. The inspection team analysed questionnaires completed by 74 parents and carers, 113 pupils and 29 staff.

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

- how well pupils in Key Stage 1, especially higher-attainers, make progress
- how well pupils are taught, and whether approaches to learning are different from one key stage to the next
- the impact of leadership and management on achieving the best possible outcomes for pupils.

Information about the school

At this average-sized inner city primary school, nearly two thirds of the pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The vast majority of these pupils are Black African. A small majority in the school speak a language in addition to English. A few are in the early stages of speaking English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above that found nationally. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is below average. Their needs mostly relate to language, literacy and communication, and emotional difficulties. A few pupils leave or join the school partway through the year. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is in the Nursery and Reception classes. The headteacher was invited to become a Local Leader in Education by the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services. Consequently, this school shares its expertise to support a school in a neighbouring borough to help raise pupils' attainment. The school holds a number of awards, including Activemark and the Healthy School 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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Castilion is an outstanding school that has been very successful for a number of years. It has improved since the previous inspection in 2007, when it was judged to be good with several outstanding features. The inspirational leadership of the headteacher has been the driving force in moving the school still further forward. There is a calm, purposeful and positive atmosphere. Pupils, staff, parents and carers are very proud of their school. First-rate outcomes in terms of how well pupils are doing academically, combined with their outstanding personal development, are a result of high-quality provision. Outstanding teaching, the good use of accurate assessment of pupils' learning, an outstanding curriculum and highly effective support systems ensure that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds learn rapidly. Pupils learning English as an additional language, including the small number at an early stage of learning English, are fully integrated through the school's high level of commitment to equality. The high regard the school has for its community, and the celebration of the many cultures and traditions represented, have enabled pupils to value differences and to recognise similarities. There are no cultural barriers; pupils work and play together, demonstrating consideration and respect for others. Staff know their pupils as individuals and treat them with respect.

Teachers and all other staff in school have very high expectations of themselves and the pupils. Consequently, pupils' all-round development is outstanding. A range of systems have been adopted to record and analyse pupils' attainment so that underachievement can be readily identified and tackled promptly. Pupils make outstanding progress from when they enter the school and they reach above-average standards by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. Underpinning the pupils' progress is the outstanding teaching and learning. The best lessons focus on very challenging targets and are very well tailored to enable all pupils to attain them. The quality of teaching is guided and monitored exceptionally well. The school recognises there are elements of teaching, especially the use of assessment information to match work to pupils' needs, that could be more consistently outstanding.

A notable feature of this school is the ambitious vision for excellence in all areas. The highly experienced and well-respected headteacher is ably supported in achieving this by a strong and dedicated leadership team, including middle managers. The correct priorities for improvement have been identified and acted upon. All who work in the school are secure about the direction the school must take to sustain its progress. An example of this is the development and piloting of the 'Creative Learning Journey' project. The success of this curriculum innovation has been recognised by the Department for Education Innovations Unit and through the achievement of the

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nationally recognised 'Leading Aspect' award. High-quality links with parents and carers ensure that they play an increasingly active role in their children's learning, often developing their own skills at the same time. An example of this is the successful yoga and story-telling sessions run for families. The school's track record of improvement, accurate self-evaluation and relentless impetus to become even better, demonstrate clearly its outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make all teaching outstanding by:
 - ensuring that the best elements of teaching are disseminated across the school
 - making sure all teaching is closely matched to pupils' needs.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

From low starting points when children enter the Nursery at the age of three, children make outstanding progress in the welcoming and stimulating environment of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This excellent start is the platform for the outstanding progress all groups of pupils make through the rest of the school. They attain standards that are above average for 11-year-olds by the time they leave, which represents outstanding achievement given their starting points. The inspectors were especially interested in the learning of the more-able Key Stage 1 pupils. This was because in 2009 the results of tests showed that the proportion of pupils who exceeded national expectations by achieving Level 3 had dropped slightly in writing and mathematics. Senior leaders immediately acted on this information and implemented a range of initiatives to raise the level of performance. These included school booster groups and 'ability sets' to ensure that attainment improved. Inspection evidence shows that these measures have been successful. The more-able pupils throughout the school benefit from specialist support for a wide range of experiences and are suitably challenged, so that they now consistently make outstanding progress. Pupils with special educational needs and or/disabilities make outstanding progress as they are quickly identified and provided with the support they need.

Pupils feel extremely safe, know really well how to be healthy and are keen to be so. They respect each other and get on very well with everyone. The impact of the outstanding support, guidance and care is evident in the pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Throughout the school pupils demonstrate consistently high standards of behaviour and social skills. The school's Activemark and Healthy School awards reflect the very effective provision to promote pupils' excellent awareness of healthy lifestyles. Pupils acquire a very good grounding in citizenship and make a substantial contribution to the community through, for example, appointments as Active Play Leaders, Junior Road Safety Officers, or members of the school council. On a day-to-day basis pupils are keen to take on monitorial responsibilities on a rota basis. An example of this is the lunchtime table support where older pupils teach the younger pupils good table manners and social graces. They also willingly clear and clean

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the tables after lunch as well as sweeping up the dining hall.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

In the best lessons observed teaching was tailored to pupils' backgrounds and interests. There was urgency about it and time was not wasted. A good example of this was in a Year 6 lesson when pupils were competing to identify the places the teacher was describing in French. This lesson went at a cracking pace and all pupils were totally involved. In certain classes teaching did not always take into account the needs of individuals quite so well because activities for different groups and individuals who needed either more challenging or supportive work was not so well focused. During the inspection many examples were observed of the way teachers provide clear explanations about new concepts and demonstrate good skills in managing pupils. Most teachers assess as they teach and adapt their lessons accordingly with skilful questioning. Work is marked diligently and as a matter of course. The children know their levels and targets and how to improve.

The rich curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of exciting experiences, which are

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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individualised to reflect pupils' starting points, abilities, needs, interests and cultural backgrounds. It is full of highly memorable experiences, such as the termly educational visits to places such as Legoland, which are fully integrated into pupils' learning and act as a focus for each term's topic work. A summer term visit to the British Museum was used as a focus for the topic, 'A Cruise down the Nile'. During the inspection pupils in a Year 5/6 class were intrigued as they used information and communication technology (ICT) to explore Egyptian tombs. They successfully brought together their knowledge of burial rites and the artefacts they had seen on the trip to help them as explorers. This was also a good example of how foundation subjects are linked. The core subjects of literacy, ICT and mathematics are included as appropriate in topic work across the school. A large majority of pupils engage in the wide and innovative range of extra-curricular activities, with music and sport high on the agenda. ICT is used well to boost skills and enthusiasm.

All pupils, including the most vulnerable, are exceptionally well supported and cared for. Staff have a very detailed knowledge of pupils and work very closely with families and external agencies to ensure their well-being. Excellent transition arrangements help children settle quickly into Nursery, Reception and later into secondary school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

For many years the headteacher has given outstanding direction to the work of the school. He has ensured that significant progress has been made in improving the quality of learning, and maximising the potential of every pupil in a structured and stimulating environment. Central to the school's work is rigorous self-evaluation. There is outstanding leadership and management at all levels, well focused on raising the achievement of all pupils whatever their circumstances. Staff feel valued and supported, and morale is very high. Ensuring that each and every pupil has the best possible education is at the heart of the school's work. The school's commitment to equality of opportunity is outstanding. Consequently, the school is very successful in removing the barriers to learning for all pupils, improving their life chances and tackling discrimination. The systematic monitoring of planning, scrutiny of work and observation of lessons provide very useful and accessible guidance to teachers on how to improve teaching and learning. Governors are extremely committed. They regularly monitor the school's work and are increasingly confident to act when necessary to support improvements and hold

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the school to account. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good. The school is a cohesive community, where all members show respect and tolerance for others. In addition, there are good strategies in place for engaging with communities outside the school, but these are not thoroughly evaluated. All safeguarding responsibilities are met. Good procedures ensure high priority for site safety. Pupils feel most secure. Knowledgeable and vigilant staff identify swiftly any vulnerable pupils and put the right support in place.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The outstanding provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage gives children an excellent start and ensures they achieve extremely well. Children enter at levels below those typical for their age, particularly in language and communication. They settle very quickly into a well-structured learning environment where activities are well targeted on key learning goals that match their stages of development. Children demonstrate exceptional levels of enjoyment, curiosity, independence and concentration in all areas of their learning. As a result they achieve exceptionally well. This means that by the start of Year 1, children reach the levels expected of them, with increasing numbers having made excellent progress in approaching higher levels. Children feel extremely safe and are developing an excellent understanding of how to be healthy. They contribute very well to their own small community. Care for the children is outstanding and the learning experiences are imaginative and stimulating. Activities are well balanced, providing many memorable experiences indoors, outdoors and outside school.

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Teaching is outstanding, particularly in Reception. The practitioners monitor the children's choices diligently, and assiduously record observations of their play. The leadership and management in the setting are outstanding, with thorough monitoring of planning, lessons and children's work. As a result, all the staff work exceedingly well together and are reflective practitioners who are continually improving provision. Parents and carers value the care given, and the progress their children make, in this outstanding provision.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The parents and carers of over one quarter of the pupils responded to the questionnaire. Their responses are overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of the school. Parents and carers are hugely supportive of the school. There is strong agreement that children enjoy their work, make good progress and that the school is well led and managed. Parents and carers appreciate the high standard of education provided by a highly committed and talented staff. Inspectors agree wholeheartedly with these views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Castilion 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 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 283 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	55	74	19	26	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	56	76	18	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	53	72	20	27	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	64	25	34	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	50	68	23	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	59	27	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	58	30	41	1	1	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)	28	38	38	51	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	46	35	47	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	46	62	25	34	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	35	43	58	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	54	73	15	20	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	69	23	31	0	0	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

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). 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"> ■ 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.



13 July 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Castilion Primary School, Thamesmead, London SE28 8QA

On behalf of the inspectors who visited your school recently, I would like to thank you so much for the warm welcome and for showing us all the many different things you do every day. We enjoyed sharing lunchtime with you and seeing you while you were busy working, playing and learning lots of exciting new things. We were impressed that you helped each other so much, especially at lunchtimes when you cleared up after everyone had finished their lunch.

We agree with your parents and carers that your school is outstanding. Your headteacher and all the other adults in your school do an excellent job in making your school so excellent. They listen to you very well and they think of ways to help you learn about what makes us different from each other and how special each one of us is. You make outstanding progress and when you leave school at the end of Year 6 your standards of work are above average. Your behaviour is excellent and you all get on extremely well. You are very proud of your school and you enjoy taking responsibilities in it. Many of you are involved in improving plans for your school through your school council. There is a wide range of experiences on offer to you, both inside and outside the classroom, and a large proportion of you take advantage of these.

One of the hardest jobs when a school is outstanding is to make sure that it keeps on doing well. Your headteacher, other staff and governors are always thinking of ways to make the school even better. To help them to do this, your inspectors want all your teachers to make all your lessons as good as the best by ensuring that the work set for you is always well matched to your ability. We know they will have to work hard to keep up such high standards. You can help by trying hard and enjoying learning as much as you do now.

With my very best wishes to you and your families.

Yours sincerely

Susan Thomas-Pounce

Lead inspector

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