

Purley Oaks Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101733
Local Authority	Croydon
Inspection number	335778
Inspection dates	26–27 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Sarah McDermott

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	424
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Eileen Pears
Headteacher	Susan Chrysanthou
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The team observed 25 teachers in 25 lessons. The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, governors, staff and groups of pupils. They scrutinised pupils' work and looked at the data the school had collected on pupils' academic progress and attendance. They also looked at the school development plan, investigated procedures for keeping pupils safe and analysed pupil, staff and 69 parent and carer questionnaires.

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

- the achievement in English, mathematics and science is good enough, particularly for mid-year admissions and girls, to raise attainment
- attendance is improving because of effective support and encouragement
- teaching and the curriculum are lively and exciting enough to accelerate learning
- all leaders and managers, including the governors, are sufficiently ambitious and know what needs to be done to raise attainment.

Information about the school

Purley Oaks Primary is located on the edge of Croydon and is bigger than most primary schools.. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than average. The greater proportion of pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic groups and more pupils than usual do not have English as their home language. Higher than average numbers of pupils leave or arrive at school other than at the usual times. About a quarter of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities which is above the national average.

A children's centre shares the same site and an after-school club is run by a separate organisation. The school holds Healthy School Status and the International School Award. It currently has an acting headteacher and an acting deputy headteacher.

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

Purley Oaks is a satisfactory school that cares well for pupils arriving from many different backgrounds at different times of the school year. One parent commented, 'My child has only recently started and is already thriving at school'. The acting headteacher and her staff are good role models and successfully encourage pupils from a diverse range of ethnic origins and faiths to get on well together. Pupils feel safe in school, knowing that adults or older pupils will look after them. They behave well, moving around the long corridors sensibly and rarely interrupting learning in the classrooms. Inspectors were impressed with the courtesy of pupils and the speed with which doors were opened for them. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning. They arrive in school with a wide span of abilities but with skills generally below the expected levels, and a sizeable number do not speak English. They achieve satisfactorily and leave at the end of Year 6 with below average standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Girls make similar progress to boys. However, not enough of the more able pupils achieve as much as they should to attain the higher Level 5. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, but tends to be insufficiently ambitious for the higher-attaining pupils. Teachers do not always make good enough use of the information collected on pupils' individual progress to make sure work is sufficiently challenging. Lessons are well organised and relationships are good, but too often learning is flat and uninspiring, particularly when teachers talk too much and pupils do not have enough chance to be creative and independent. A few teachers are starting to introduce exciting activities, but these are not sufficiently planned for the curriculum in every year group. Year 2 pupils' knowledge of the Great Fire of London was greatly boosted when they made model houses, took them out to the playground and set fire to them. Safety was ensured through the close attention of the local fire brigade! The school maintains good links with other schools to bring in expertise, especially for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The acting headteacher and her deputy headteacher are working satisfactorily to improve learning, particularly by ensuring teachers mark work constructively and set useful learning objectives for each lesson. However, a high turnover of senior leaders has hindered a consistently effective approach to improving teaching and the curriculum. Subject leaders do not spend enough time in lessons experiencing what learning is actually like for the pupils so they can give an effective lead to their colleagues. They are growing in confidence in analysing data on pupil progress, but do

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not yet all have a sufficiently clear 'big picture' of where the school needs to improve. However, the senior leadership team know the school's strengths and weaknesses through effective self-evaluation. Consequently, the school currently has satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate learning and achievement for all pupils, and in particular for the more able pupils, so that by the time they leave in Year 6 more attain the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science than they do currently.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that more lessons are good by:
 - checking that work and activities are matched accurately to the needs and abilities of the individual pupils, especially for the more able pupils
 - moving lessons along at a brisker pace with more opportunities for creative, lively and first-hand learning experiences
 - ensuring pupils know and use their longer-term targets so they can take more responsibility for their learning across the range of subjects.
- Develop the role of the subject leaders in contributing effectively to school improvement by:
 - increasing the opportunities for them to observe teaching and learning across the school
 - boosting their confidence in accessing and using assessment data effectively.

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

Most pupils enjoy coming to school to be with their teachers and to catch up with their friends. They are happy and at ease in their lessons. They know the expected routines and it is unusual for inappropriate behaviour to spoil learning. However, pupils too often expect to be told what to do, rather than offering suggestions themselves and taking the lead in their learning. When given the chance in lessons, pupils work well in pairs and groups to share and bounce ideas off each other. Pupils made good progress in a mathematics lesson about the 'trim trail' because they agreed in groups how best to tackle measurement tasks. Most pupils listen carefully, but on occasions get down to work with insufficient clarity on what they are meant to be doing. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have been below average for several years. The school's tracking systems indicate that attainment is slowly beginning to rise, especially in Key Stage 1, but achievement is still variable between classes. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress. Progress is better for the few pupils who are taught regularly in the Rainbow Room where they grow in self-confidence because of the good personal attention they receive. Pupils who arrive during the school year settle in quickly and make similar academic progress to their classmates. In some classes the more able pupils do not make the progress normally expected of them.

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Pupils have a good knowledge of each other's religions and ways of life, often showing interest in finding out more. They feel safe at school and are clear who they can turn to if worried. They know how they should lead healthy lives through regular exercise and healthy eating. However, not enough pupils put this into practice by eating vegetables, fruit or salad at lunchtimes. Pupils take on a satisfactory range of jobs around the school. School councillors are proud of their role, particularly in helping design the 'trim trail', and are ready to take on more responsibility for their meetings. Attendance rates are broadly average for most pupils, although a few have missed school due to long-term illness, domestic problems or flight delays linked to the Icelandic volcanic ash. Together with their growing skills in literacy and numeracy, pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education.

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	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
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?

Teaching quality is satisfactory and helps pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning. Teachers are starting to introduce clear lesson objectives and make sure they mark work against the objective. However, not all teachers are ensuring pupils make

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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best use of their personal learning targets so they know how to improve their work across all subjects. In some lessons, teachers use assessment information effectively to plan for the different abilities. Nevertheless, too often all pupils, whatever their level of ability, are set the same task. Consequently, the more able become bored and the less able need extra adult support to cope. Invariably, the more able pupils have to sit through introductions that they already understand, rather than getting on with exercises on their own which are well matched to their level of ability. Good use is made of individual whiteboards so pupils can jot down words and ideas quickly and easily. Teachers are starting to take greater responsibility for drafting individual education plans for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, so they are clearer about their precise needs and can better deploy teaching assistants. A good range of visits and visitors enriches the pupils' learning, but in some lessons learning is not engaging when subjects are not linked together in an interesting way. The excellent practice seen in the Ant Letter project, where Year 1 pupils write mini letters to ants and place them in the garden, with Year 6 pupils collecting them and responding, is not yet evident in all classes.

Staff have the care of each and every pupil at heart, both for the established pupils and those who arrive during the school year. The site is safe and secure. The school has effective links with outside agencies to provide the right support for potentially vulnerable pupils, those learning English or with particular learning needs. The two 'Our Space' rooms are used well to settle and calm pupils.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher and her senior leadership team have an accurate view of the effectiveness of the school. The school development plan clearly indicates the main areas needing improvement, but is not checked regularly enough to see if progress is sufficiently swift and effective. Subject leaders are starting to get to grips with improving achievement by monitoring plans and scrutinising pupils' work regularly. However, they have not achieved a consensus on what exactly needs improving in the quality of teaching and are not all using assessment data to best effect. They have been slow to notice that work set is not always correctly matched to individual pupil need. Governors are committed to the school and very knowledgeable about its context. They are starting to evaluate the effectiveness of spending decisions in supporting different ability

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groups to get the best outcomes in personal development and academic progress.

The school communicates well with parents and carers on daily events and what is being taught. Many parents and carers make the most of this information, but there are several who, because of home circumstances, find it difficult to help with their children's learning. Good links with the children's centre and playgroups helps smooth the settling of new children into the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff work well with the local authority and other schools, such as a pupil referral unit, to improve their expertise in managing pupils' behaviour or meeting the needs of pupils who have different learning difficulties. Safeguarding meets all legal requirements. The school is a harmonious place with no racial tension or discrimination. The acting headteacher and her team ensure teaching and the curriculum cater for a diverse range of pupils, by appreciating different social backgrounds and faiths. The school promotes satisfactory links with the local area and raises pupils' awareness of different parts of the United Kingdom and the world well.

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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
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

Children arrive with skills below those expected for their age and with satisfactory teaching and support make satisfactory progress. Relationships between adults and children are very good so children, even if they have only recently arrived from another country, soon settle to enjoy learning. Children behave well and persevere with their tasks. A good balance of adult-organised and free-choice activities help them to build up their confidence to learn and investigate independently. Adult intervention is timely,

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playful and focused on developing children's language skills. However, expectations and challenge are sometimes not high enough for the more able children, particularly in extending their vocabulary and testing their grasp of grammar. An interesting array of resources is well linked to the early learning goals, particularly for physical development. Staff keep a close eye on how each child is progressing by regularly completing learning records. Parents do not have enough access to these records so that they can play a fuller role in supporting their children's learning. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage works well with other health and education professionals to support the children. As yet there are too few regular checks that the teaching and activities provided are consistently having the expected outcomes on the children's learning and development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Of the small number of parents and carers who returned questionnaires, all feel their children enjoy school and are happy with their experience. A few parents and carers have concerns that their children are not sufficiently prepared for the future. The inspectors judge that pupils leave school sufficiently ready for secondary school life, but agree that the more able pupils could be challenged further. A few parents and carers also indicated that leadership and management is not as good as it should be. The inspection team finds that leaders and managers are driving improvement satisfactorily, despite many changes in headship over the past four years.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Purley Oaks 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 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 424 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	52	32	46	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	48	31	45	2	3	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	27	39	35	51	1	1	3	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	42	37	54	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	46	34	49	0	0	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	46	30	43	0	0	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	39	35	51	0	0	2	3
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	33	36	52	1	1	7	10
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	35	38	55	0	0	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	41	31	45	1	1	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	29	38	55	3	4	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	24	35	35	51	3	4	5	7
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	49	29	42	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.



29 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Purley Oaks Primary School, Croydon CR2 0PR

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school. We particularly like the way pupils from many different religions and a wide range of backgrounds get on so well together. Most of you behave well and we know teachers are helping the few of you who find it difficult to behave properly to do your best. We are impressed with the way many of you greeted us and held doors open for us. You told us you know how to lead healthy lives, but we do not think you eat enough fruit, vegetables or salad in school.

You make satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science. Teaching is satisfactory because lessons are well organised and you know what you should learn. Your headteacher and her team of senior teachers lead the school satisfactorily and know what needs improving.

To make your education better, I have asked your school to do the following:

- speed up your learning, especially for those of you who find learning easy, so you attain higher levels in your national tests
- make sure all teaching is at least good by checking that your learning includes exciting activities and that you can take more of a lead in improving your work
- ensure teachers make sure the work you do in lessons is at the right level for each of you so it is not too hard for some and not too easy for others
- make sure senior leaders visit your lessons more often to see how you are all getting on.

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school. We know that your teachers make your school a very special place for you. You can do your bit by continuing to do your best in your learning and maintaining the lovely community feel at Purley Oaks Primary.

Yours sincerely

Sarah McDermott

Lead inspector

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