

St Cyprian's Greek Orthodox Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132009
Local Authority	Croydon
Inspection number	341270
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Kevin Hodge

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	392
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	His Eminence Archbishop Gregorios
Headteacher	Kate Magliocco
Date of previous school inspection	19 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 21 lessons and observed 16 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 analysed questionnaires from 51 staff, 133 pupils and from 135 parents and carers.

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 communication, language and literacy
- the attainment of pupils in Years 1 to 6, particularly in mathematics and science and for those who are higher attaining
- how well the school supports vulnerable and smaller groups of pupils to achieve
- how senior leaders use self-evaluation to judge improvement since the last inspection.

Information about the school

The school is larger than is typical and is the only Greek Orthodox Primary School in England. Pupils come some distance to attend this school. About 60% of the pupils come from families of Greek origin or other European backgrounds. About 10% of the remaining pupils are from White British backgrounds with others being from Black British, Black African, Black Caribbean and others from mixed backgrounds.. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is nearly twice the national average and includes those with behavioural, social, emotional or language difficulties. The number of pupils leaving or joining the school other than at the normal times is much higher than normally found. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises of a Nursery and two Reception classes. The school has awards reflecting its commitment to develop pupils' healthy lifestyles and in promoting teaching of a modern foreign language.

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

St Cyprian's is a good school. It has successfully navigated through recent changes in staffing since the last inspection. Its major strength is in the way it cares and supports pupils to feel settled and secure, encouraged by its unique perspective on promoting Greek culture to create a caring family atmosphere. Although a small number of parents and carers voice concerns and areas that they would like improved, most indicate their high satisfaction with the school.

Pupils' attainment in their academic work is broadly average by the time they leave and, this year, pupils' attainment is set to rise to just above average, particularly in writing and mathematics. Children have a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes, but the outside areas in the Reception classes are not enticing or large enough to fully extend their creative and physical abilities. Progress through the school is generally good, but is uneven at times between classes due to some variations in the otherwise good quality of teaching. Pupils' science skills are comparatively weak, because their problem-solving skills are not developed enough. The school's focus on teaching the Greek language is particularly successful so by the time they leave, some pupils reach high levels of fluency, both written and spoken. The good curriculum and high levels of care and guidance are part of the reason why pupils generally make good progress and achieve well. They are brilliant at adopting healthy lifestyles, are mature and enjoy school. Pupils of differing abilities and backgrounds are catered for well so they make the same good progress as their classmates. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of the very clear identification of their needs and the high levels of support they receive.

The headteacher, governing body and staff work well together and the focus on raising pupils' attainment appears to be paying off this year. They acknowledge that while many parents and carers recognise the improvements achieved, for others there is still room for more. The school's clear priorities are based on good self-evaluation routines, including the results of recent questionnaires sent to parents and carers, and the views of pupils. The school promotes community cohesion very well within the school to promote harmonious relationships within the locality. The school's capacity to improve is good, as staff and the governing body have improved several key areas since the last inspection. They diagnose next steps to improve accurately and ensure that safeguarding arrangements are good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and pupils' progress in the 2010/11

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academic year by:

- shortening introductions and explanations by teachers so pupils get down to tasks more quickly
- ensuring that the school's marking policy is consistently applied in every class
- devising more investigative and problem solving tasks in science work in Years 1 to 6.
- Increase pupils' independence, physical and creative abilities in the Reception classes by:
 - improving the quality of the outdoor provision where possible
 - intervening more skilfully to extend childrens' learning during their self- chosen activities.

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

Pupils enjoy school and their mature attitudes are the result of their good spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. From the Nursery and Reception class, where children relate very well to each other, pupils behave well throughout the school in lessons and in assembly times. Only when teachers' explanations are overly long does their behaviour dip. In the playground, pupils relate well to each other regardless of their differing backgrounds, although their knowledge of others from contrasting localities that are more distant from the school is less secure. Comments by pupils, such as 'This is like a family' and 'It feels like a second home', reflect how much they like school and appreciate the school's focus on Greek culture and traditions. Those who are play leaders, junior road safety officers, or help with recycling, enjoy the sense of responsibility. The school council influences initiatives, such as playground improvement, and enjoys representing the school further afield. Pupils understand very clearly what foods are best to eat, are strict about their eating habits and keep active around school. Pupils' positive attitudes help them settle down to work quickly and contribute to their good achievement through the school. For example, pupils in a Year 4 lesson investigating the measurement of capacity, enjoyed using their knowledge to measure out different quantities of liquid to make imaginary perfumes. Higher-attaining pupils were particularly well catered for, with harder calculations to solve. On the other hand, pupils' investigative skills in some science activities did not really stretch pupils' problem-solving skills. Pupils' level of basic skills, combined with their sensible outlooks, set them up well for their next schools and beyond. Good links with other schools and participation in initiatives run by local secondary schools support this preparation effectively. Pupils' attendance, which has been above average for several years, slipped this year to more average levels due to prolonged periods of illness for a small proportion of pupils.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Childrens' good start to school is fostered well in the Nursery and Reception classes by good levels of teaching which generally continue through the school. In some classes, the quality of teaching dips as pupils are not consistently stretched in their thinking or pace of work, so their progress is slower. In others, teachers' explanations are overly long which causes pupils' attention to wander. In well-taught lessons, pupils get down to work quickly and well-chosen activities for all abilities help them apply their skills to relevant everyday situations, such as working out bus timetables, measuring simple quantities or working out budgets in mathematics lessons. Their speaking skills are developed well by good use of 'talking partners' to help think through ideas or potential answers to problems. Interactive whiteboards are used well in classes, but not all benefit from this technology to aid teaching. Greek language activities, taught well by various specialists, help boost pupils' confidence in learning languages in general, as well as helping older pupils reach good levels of fluency in Greek.

Teachers keep a close eye on the progress of their classes to spot those needing an extra boost to their learning. Marking is regular and tells pupils what to improve, but the comparatively new policy on marking corrections is not always consistently applied. The curriculum, which is being modified to combine more subjects to make them relevant, helps pupils gain a broad range of experiences. These include language activities, popular after-school clubs, and extension days for gifted and talented pupils. Pupils say

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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they enjoyed inventing things for their version of the television programme 'Dragon's Den'. Greek language activities form a regular part of pupils' daily learning and these are planned well so they are relevant and enjoyable for pupils.

Excellent levels of care, guidance and support, particularly for vulnerable pupils, are of high quality. The pupils, their parents and carers indicate this is a real strength of the school. Pupils with special educational needs particularly benefit from the specialist help available and the close links established with other professionals beyond the school. These high levels of care ensure that pupils feel safe, that vulnerable pupils make good progress and that help is tailored carefully for pupils from different ethnic and social backgrounds. Good links with local schools help prepare older pupils for their new schools and they say they are 'looking forward to going' and 'feel confident'.

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 senior leaders work well together to drive forward the distinctive Greek Orthodox ethos that the governing body, parents and carers have established, while seeking to raise pupils' attainment and achievement levels. Equal opportunities are ensured so that pupils access all areas of the curriculum. Careful analysis of how well different groups of pupils perform, with additional help that is carefully targeted through small group work and one-to-one tuition, has succeeded in raising academic levels and meeting challenging targets. The school monitors teaching regularly, although sometimes focuses too little on pupils' learning before gauging the quality of teaching. Careful attention to safeguarding arrangements, including site security arrangements and vetting of staffing, aids pupils' general well-being and sense of safety. Links with outside agencies to help safeguard vulnerable pupils are well established and effective. Links with parents and carers are generally good and reflected in the high level of satisfaction recorded in the parental and carer questionnaires and the schools' own surveys. That said, the school recognises that for a small number, recently introduced changes to homework have caused some concern. The school discussed changes with pupils and the wider community before trying them in some classes and then adopting the changes. However, the school is monitoring how well the changes benefit pupils' learning over time. The school's good promotion of community cohesion is felt most strongly in the harmonious relationships between the various communities represented in the school. The school has made significant global links with schools in Greece and other countries.

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While pupils respect the diversity of the beliefs of their classmates, they have less secure understanding of those having different backgrounds or who live in contrasting localities in the United Kingdom, for example, those who may live in rural locations with different ways of life. The governing body supports the school effectively by visiting regularly, scrutinising policies carefully and in challenging the school's self-evaluation routines to good effect, such as how well pupils make progress, and in ensuring the schools' distinctive ethos and traditions are maintained.

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make a good start to school in the Nursery where their welfare and well-being are promoted well allowing them to gain confidence in playing, socialising and role play. Children enjoyed looking at coloured liquids before exclaiming it looked like coloured rain! Adults ensure that children have a good variety of experiences, and skilful help with early reading skills prepares them well for their next classes. In the Reception classes, teaching is good in giving children a variety of activities, which promote their early skills in communication, language and literacy, and problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. Children develop early number skills well and they enjoy practical activities, such as simple construction or role play. Limited outside room for equipment means there is no climbing frame or space to regularly use large wheeled toys. This weakness is partly compensated for by the ingenuity of staff to use other spaces from time to time. However, children's physical and creative development is hindered as a result of the limited space to use their equipment or to have more frequent

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opportunities to choose more energetic activities independently. The school wants this stage of its work to be outstanding and recognises that these changes are necessary if its goal is to be realised. From the slightly below average starting points, most children are on track to exceed the expected levels, and some outcomes, such as their disposition, attitudes, communication and thinking skills, are outstanding. The leadership and management are good. The school has clearly focused upon diagnosing weaker areas of provision, such as the outside space, but has still been effective in developing other aspects of provision and in ensuring the children have an enjoyable start to school.

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

The level of satisfaction with the school in general terms is high for most, but not all parents or carers. Those who wrote comments or communicated their views directly had a mixture of positive views and those that highlighted concerns or worries. There were more comments about areas needing improvement, but these were often individual and related to parents' and carers' particular experiences. There were some common concerns, such as changes to homework, mentioned earlier in the report, the way that the school communicates with parents and carers or takes on board their views and some concerns about progress. The inspectors raised these concerns anonymously, but directly with the school. The school supplied evidence of the number of meetings, telephone calls, e-mail and text contacts that the school uses to engage with parents and carers, which seemed to be more than usually found. As a result, inspectors do not endorse parents' and carers' concerns in all areas. However, inspectors did find that there were occasions when pupils' progress slowed, but generally it is good. In respect of taking on board parents' or carers' concerns, the school has tried to balance some contrasting, and on occasions, strongly held views before making decisions on a range of issues, such as homework. The governing body are considering reintroducing an annual meeting for parents and carers so their views can be shared more openly.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Cyprian's Greek Orthodox 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 inspector received 135 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 392 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	78	58	53	39	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	74	55	58	43	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	47	35	77	57	7	5	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	46	34	64	47	21	16	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	45	33	81	60	4	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	50	37	65	48	13	10	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	59	44	65	48	5	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	40	30	77	57	7	5	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	48	36	64	47	15	11	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	56	41	63	47	10	7	4	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	43	32	64	47	11	8	7	5
The school is led and managed effectively	53	39	69	51	4	3	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	54	40	67	50	5	4	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

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.



7 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Cyprian's Greek Orthodox Primary School, Thornton Heath CR7 8DZ

Many thanks for welcoming us when we visited recently. Yours is a good school. We really enjoyed finding out more about Greek language and traditions which are promoted well. Here are some of the other things we found out:

- The children settle very well in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- You reach expected standards when you leave, and you achieve well in most aspects of your work.
- You behave well and try hard in lessons.
- You all said you feel really safe, as the school cares for you extremely well.
- You help each other a lot in school and know about others nearby, but not those further from the school, in a rural location for example.
- The range of things you do such as learning Greek, music and sports sound exciting.
- The school helps those of you who sometimes find work difficult to achieve really well.
- The staff teach you well and the staff and governors work hard to ensure your safety.
- Most parents and carers support what goes on, but some do not agree that your new project work is the best way to do homework.

We have asked the school to do two things to help it improve further:

- To make all lessons and activities as good as the best, so that you make good or even better progress through the school.
- Give those children in Reception classes more room to play outside so that they can have more equipment and choice to use their physical abilities and develop their learning.

You can help too by trying your best and by giving your ideas to teachers about which ways you like to learn best, such as your like or dislike of the project based homework.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Hodge

Lead inspector

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