

Merryhills Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	101999
Local authority	Enfield
Inspection number	376655
Inspection dates	7–8 March 2012
Lead inspector	Susan Williams

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	474
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Penny Deller
Headteacher	Michele Motley (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	24–25 September 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Susan Williams	Additional inspector
Allan Barfoot	Additional inspector
Anthony Mundy	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 27 lessons which included a range of curriculum lessons and phonics (pupils learning letter patterns and the sounds they represent) sessions, of which two were joint observations with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors spent a total of 11 hours in lessons. Meetings were held with the acting headteacher, governors, staff, groups of pupils and a local authority representative. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at the school's monitoring and assessment records, self-evaluation documentation, improvement plans, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance documents. Inspectors spoke to parents and carers and scrutinised the returns from 131 questionnaires together with those returned from pupils and staff.

Information about the school

Merryhills Primary School is a larger than average primary school. Almost half of the pupils are of White British origin with a small minority from Other White backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is lower than nationally. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and pupils with disabilities is also lower than the national figure. There are a small minority of pupils whose first language is not English. The school meets the current government floor standard which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The headteacher left the school in January this year and the deputy headteacher has taken on the position of acting headteacher until a new appointment is made. The school provides a breakfast club and after-school club.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. The reason why it is not yet good is because although leaders and managers have made improvements in teaching since the last inspection it is not consistent enough across the school to ensure the good achievement of all pupils.
- Achievement is satisfactory, but is stronger in the Early Years Foundation Stage where children make good progress. As one parent commented, 'The early stages of the children's learning journey are an enjoyable experience.'
- Teaching is satisfactory although a significant proportion is good or better. In good lessons, pupils learn well, inspired by teachers' good subject knowledge, a range of activities and pupils' involvement in their learning. In some lessons teachers talk for too long and do not always plan for the needs of all groups of pupils.
- While satisfactory, behaviour and safety have correctly been identified as an area for improvement. Questionnaires completed by parents and carers, pupils and staff, and discussions with pupils, indicated that there were some concerns. While behaviour seen on the inspection was always satisfactory and in many lessons good, inspectors agree that behaviour and anti-bullying procedures can be improved. Almost all parents and carers said their child felt safe in school and most pupils said they felt safe in school.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. The acting headteacher and governors are clear about the school's priorities for improvement. They have led developments in teaching and learning and managed the performance of senior and middle leaders ensuring development plans are in place for key areas, and actions taken are starting to have a positive impact on improvement. The school has moved to a new system to collect data on pupils' progress but the extent to which this is used effectively to support all pupils to progress well is not yet developed.

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Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To increase the proportion of good lessons to at least 80% by summer 2013 by:
 - ensuring the pace of lessons enables all pupils to make good progress
 - matching work to the full range of learners' needs ensuring challenge for all pupils
 - ensuring teachers plan the effective use of additional adults in all lessons so they make a full contribution to pupils' learning.
- To improve behaviour so that it is consistently good by:
 - making the policy, procedures and routines clear to the whole school community and applying them consistently
 - giving anti-bullying a higher priority and raising the awareness of all types of bullying so that pupils, staff and parents and carers understand this is not acceptable and what action will be taken
 - improving the behaviour log so it contains full details of incidents and actions by the school.
- For leaders and managers at all levels to improve the use of school tracking data so that pupils making less progress are identified and interventions put in place to support their improved achievement.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those expected for their age. They make good progress to be around expected levels on entry to Key Stage 1. The Year 6 cohort last year had made outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage entering Key Stage 1 with attainment above that expected for their age. They left Key Stage 2 reaching attainment above average having made satisfactory progress across the key stages. Attainment at Key Stage 1 was broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2011. Attainment in reading is above average by the time pupils leave school.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Work in lessons, in books and the school's information on pupils' progress confirm that all pupils are making at least satisfactory progress. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and pupils with disabilities is satisfactory. There is little difference in the achievement of different groups.

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A very large majority of parents and carers think their child is making good progress at school. Inspectors found pupils making good progress where there was better teaching but this was not consistent enough across the school to ensure all pupils make this consistently good progress. In good lessons observed during the inspection pupils were encouraged to work independently on a wide range of activities such as in a Year 6 mathematics lesson where pupils worked at problems according to their ability which enabled them to make significant gains in their learning. Learning was less effective in lessons where teachers spent too much time talking from the front or spent too long on one activity. Not all pupils took part in whole-class discussions where questions were answered by volunteers only.

On some occasions, the additional support in class supports pupils' good progress, such as in a Reception phonics lesson where adults enhanced the learning of the children they supported in a whole-class session led by the classroom teacher. This was not a consistent pattern across the school where some did not develop their learning further from the additional support they received.

Quality of teaching

At its best, teaching provides pupils with lessons that have pace, are engaging and provide a range of interesting activities. Teachers draw on their good subject knowledge to plan activities which engage pupils in learning. They use real contexts to give purpose, such as in a Year 4 mathematics lesson where the teacher linked learning about area to reasons for finding the area of a field so the mathematical concept had real purpose. The large majority of pupils respond well to teaching. Relationships between adults and pupils are good.

Marking has improved since the last inspection and pupils are clear on how to improve their work. Their books have levels which teachers highlight so pupils can see exactly where they are and how to improve their work which pupils find helpful. In the most effective lessons, pupils with additional learning needs are well supported to be fully integrated and achieve well. The best teacher questioning targets a mix of volunteers and non-volunteers, and the level of challenge of the questions enables lower- and higher-attaining pupils to participate.

Most parents and carers said that their children were taught well and a very large majority of pupils agreed. Inspectors found that while some lessons were good, there was inconsistency and around half were satisfactory. Teaching is less effective when the pace is slow, or is dominated by teachers talking for too long or asking questions which only volunteers answer. Pupils make less progress when they do not have opportunities to consolidate their learning through discussion or activities, or when follow-up work is not sufficiently tailored to the needs of pupils of different abilities. At times, teaching assistants and other adults are not effectively deployed to support pupils to make good progress and their role is not clearly enough defined.

Teaching promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development with opportunities in the curriculum to discuss work together and to learn about different

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cultures, such as a recent topic on India in Year 5 where pupils enjoyed the opportunity to experience Bollywood dancing.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

A few parents and carers thought that the standard of behaviour in school was not good and a small minority said lessons were sometimes disrupted by bad behaviour. A similar number of pupils did not think behaviour was good in school and a quarter of school staff felt behaviour was inconsistently managed. During the inspection behaviour seen around the school was satisfactory and in the majority of lessons seen it was good. Inspectors agree that currently there are insufficiently clear expectations of the whole school community for established routines which are then followed consistently. The school had identified behaviour as an area to work on as part of its school improvement plan and introduced new routines such as lining up in the playground to improve behaviour. Teachers ask pupils to line up and walk quietly but do not always ensure this happens. Inspectors saw improvements in pupils lining up in the playground on the second day they were in school but it was clear that high standards for these routines have not been consistently expected over time.

Case studies of pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable show the school supports pupils well. Parents and carers also commented on the support the school had given to individual pupils with complex needs. A few parents and carers and a small minority of pupils did not think the school dealt with all types of bullying well. Inspectors investigated these concerns and did find examples of good support for individuals who had been bullied and how interventions had stopped bullying so that it did not reoccur. Nevertheless, there is some confusion with some groups of pupils, staff and parents and carers about what bullying is and how the school deals with it in its different forms.

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers said their children feel safe in school and the very large majority of pupils agreed with this. The school ensures it keeps pupils safe through the safeguarding arrangements which are in place. Attendance has improved significantly and is now average and the number of persistent absentees has reduced. There have been no exclusions. Pupils are punctual to school and to their lessons. Regular opportunities for reflection support pupils' spiritual development well.

Leadership and management

The governing body and the acting headteacher have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and this is reflected in the school's self-evaluation and development plan. The governing body has acted incisively to recruit a new headteacher and have a shadow structure in place for the senior leadership team to support the school as it grows in size. Governors are linked to curriculum areas and priorities in the school development plan. The school was able to show clear impact of performance management in supporting teachers to improve their teaching from satisfactory to good. The quality of leadership of middle leaders is improving and

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they are now being more fully involved in leading developments in the school. Consequently, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

The school meets all its statutory requirements for safeguarding; it ensures that staff are well trained and that procedures are kept up to date. The school has developed a range of partnerships to support and extend their practice through links with local schools.

The curriculum is satisfactory and covers a breadth of subject areas and a wide range of extra-curricular activities while ensuring reading, writing and mathematics are given priority. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted across the curriculum in lessons and assemblies. Leaders and managers at all levels promote equality of opportunity. The school has recently introduced new pupil tracking and now sets more challenging individual pupil targets but does not use these rigorously throughout the school to ensure all groups of pupils make consistently good progress.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



9 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Merryhills Primary School, Enfield EN2 7RE

Following the inspection of your school I am writing to you to let you know what we found. We talked to a number of you in lessons, at lunchtime and in the playground as well as meeting with three groups of pupils who talked to us about the school in more detail. We enjoyed talking to you and finding out about your school. Thank you for talking to us and making us feel welcome.

Your school is giving you a satisfactory standard of education. Here is a summary of our findings.

- You are aware of the level you are working at and know what to do to improve your work.
- You enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- Attendance has improved and is now in line with what is expected of primary schools nationally.

These are the things we have asked the school to improve.

- To improve teaching so that more of you can make very good progress.
- To improve behaviour in school so everyone is aware of the rules and these are consistently applied.
- To ensure everyone is aware of what bullying is and how the school will deal with it.
- For your senior staff to use tracking information more effectively to check on your progress and support pupils who may need extra help.

You can help your teachers by following the school rules, behaving well and working hard in school.

With very best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Susan Williams
Lead inspector

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