

Parish Church CofE Nursery and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101791
Local Authority	Croydon
Inspection number	307810
Inspection date	7 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Juliet Ward

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	338
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Canon Colin Boswell
Headteacher	Ms Janet Sullivan
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2003
School address	Warrington Road Croydon CR0 4BH
Telephone number	020 8688 5844
Fax number	020 8686 8091

Age group	3-7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues;

- how effectively teaching contributes to pupils' academic and personal achievements
- the improvements in the provision of information and communication technology (ICT) since the last inspection
- the standards the pupils' attain.

The inspector gathered evidence from jointly observed lessons with senior managers, discussions with staff, governors and pupils, pupils' work, parental questionnaires, the school's records of checks on the quality of its work, and tracking pupils' progress. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given by its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a large infant school, which shares a site with a junior school. There is a 16 place Day Care setting within the Nursery. The school is about to undergo building works to accommodate existing extended school services including family support groups, a crand;egrave;che and a 'stay and play' facility. The school holds an Investor in People award, Active Mark, Basic Skills Quality Mark award, Artsmark Gold award, Inclusion Quality Mark, Green Guardian Primary School of the Year 2007, Continuing Professional Development Awards and has gained Healthy Schools status; several of these awards have been re-validated since 2000.

The school population has changed significantly over the past year. The proportion of pupils from ethnic groups is well above average as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language. Twenty-eight different languages are spoken. The proportion of pupils in school with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average; the difficulties are wide ranging and include pupils with specific learning difficulties, such as poor communication skills, and behavioural problems.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school held in high regard by parents and pupils. One parent, reflecting the views of many others, said 'We have been totally delighted with the progress our son has made at school. He thoroughly enjoys school and is confident and happy'. The success of the school is evident in the excellent progress made by pupils. From slightly lower than average starting points in the Nursery, they reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2, which have been consistently above average for the past five years.

Pupils are thriving academically and personally for very clear reasons. With an inspirational and outstanding headteacher at the helm, leadership is excellent at all levels, providing clear direction and promoting high expectations. The school keeps its work under close review and constantly seeks to be better. Accurate identification of strengths and areas for improvement informs the well-targeted school plan for improvement. Pupils enjoy school, feel safe and are very eager to tell visitors what they love best about school; for example, pupils love going out on visits and are very sure about what needs to be done to make sure they are safe in and out of school.

Staff give pupils outstanding academic and personal guidance. Everyone knows what is being done well and how each can do better. For example, feedback on teaching is highly constructive. Marking in books points out the way forward and pupils are very clear about what they need to do to succeed in lessons. One parent commented that 'Parish Church School works well to focus on the needs of each child; our child has been made to feel valued, her particular strengths enhanced, and this has greatly and positively influenced her learning.'

The climate for learning is outstanding. Everywhere, the agreed behaviour code is displayed and followed. Behaviour is excellent and, because the curriculum is so motivating, pupils are focused intently on whatever they are doing. The consistency in promoting this atmosphere throughout the school is an exemplary feature of the outstanding teaching. Parents from a family of pupils for whom English is an additional language wrote 'I could not think of a better school than Parish; besides the excellent learning progress my children are making, this is a fantastic place where my children can learn tolerance and good behaviour.'

Scrupulous attention is given to promoting each child's welfare and progress. All the necessary procedures are in place to safeguard pupils in a secure environment. Excellent support is provided for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as the school is quick to respond to need. For example, in providing nurture support for children entering the Nursery with challenging behaviour. In many cases, these needs are successfully addressed in a relatively short space of time. The needs of the rapidly increasing number of pupils with English as an additional language are also carefully addressed, so they learn English rapidly. Consequently, all groups of pupils achieve outstandingly well.

The school is undergoing some change, both in the pupils' skills on entry to the Nursery, and in the proposed building works to accommodate the extended day provision. The number and range of backgrounds of the pupils increased as the school moved to three-form entry. The staff and governors embrace changes as an enrichment of their school and what it has to offer. The needs of the community are being carefully considered to ensure that all the pupils continue to flourish. The wise financial decisions governors make about staffing levels and staff deployment ensure resources are well matched to the pupils' needs. In addition, to ensure that governors are well placed to play their role in school leadership, they value their own training

and keep their effectiveness under regular review. Some governors lead aspects of governance training locally and nationally.

Pupils ultimately reach high standards in their academic and personal development because of the richness of the curriculum and the outstanding quality of teaching and care. Teachers' knowledge of key skills in literacy and numeracy is very strong so pupils make huge strides in their learning and are well set up for future success. The use of everyday assessment to plan the next steps in learning for each pupil is a significant factor in the high levels of achievement. While standards reached in reading and mathematics are very high, the school has identified that the pupils are not attaining a similar proportion of higher levels in their writing. This rightly features as a key priority across the school, and the extended writing sessions provided for more able pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are showing success.

Pupils' personal development and well-being and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are excellent. The very strong links with the church and with other agencies ensure that what can be done for each pupil is done. The partnership with parents to strengthen their contribution to their children's learning is highly effective and much valued. Several parents echoed the view of one who wrote 'It is so good how the school invites parents to participate in activities.' Pupils and parents share together the important things about keeping healthy, such as having the right food in their lunch boxes; the governors have led work in the area of 'Healthy Eating' and encouraged the school to gain the Active Mark Award.

The school makes every effort to encourage parents to bring children to school every day that it is possible to do so, stressing the importance of regular attendance from the Nursery onwards. The systems in place are very rigorous and consistently applied. Attendance improved to good levels in 2006 to 2007. Even in the Autumn term 2007, when an epidemic of winter sickness swept through the school and locality, attendance was maintained at average levels.

The outstanding curriculum ensures pupils have an exceptionally good grounding in key skills and develop a sensitive understanding of their own needs and those of others, for example through focused themed weeks and mini enterprise events. The teachers are creative in planning for links between subjects; for example, in an outstanding lesson the teacher made excellent links between geography and ICT to enable the pupils to share knowledge and experiences in programming a roaming toy to collect and deliver artefacts from different continents.

The opportunities pupils have to shoulder responsibilities and contribute to the development of the school enable them to become well-rounded and valuable human beings. The school admirably lives up to its mission of ensuring that 'no child slips through our net'. Parish is a caring school, valuing children as individuals and offering a wide range of good quality learning experiences, which encourage them to fulfil their potential. Pupils take leads in roles beyond the school community; they have strong links with a Nursery in a township in South Africa and raise money every year for these children. The capacity to continue to improve is outstanding.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The provision throughout the Foundation Stage is outstanding. Children settle happily in the Nursery where there is a strong emphasis on developing communication. The children's attainment on entry is slightly lower than average, and some have weakly developed social and communication skills. The many opportunities provided to develop spoken language and cooperative play mean these children rapidly catch up with their peers. Children's oracy and early writing skills are developed extremely well, often through structured role-play. For example,

pupils were compiling shopping lists ready for their trip to the class greengrocer. The teacher and the Nursery staff encourage children to talk about activities such as the way dough and clay feels when squeezed and shaped. Many of the new arrivals in the Nursery find communication very difficult, however, and cannot easily find the words to express their thoughts clearly and confidently.

In the Reception classes, there is a strong emphasis on developing early reading and writing skills. The links between letters and the sounds they represent are taught rigorously and this gives children a flying start in learning to read and write. In one lesson, the children had built up a very good bank of words for their 'Z' books. Relationships are warm and friendly and children thoroughly enjoy their learning. They make exceptionally good progress in all areas of learning, especially in their personal development, and become chatty and confident when meeting new visitors. By the end of the Reception Year, standards are close to national expectations, pupils are independent workers and co-operate well with each other.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing, particularly by challenging more of the very able pupils to reach the higher level 3.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

20 May 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Parish Church CofE Nursery and Infant School, Croydon, CR0 4BH

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to your school. I really enjoyed visiting all of your classes, looking at your work and talking with you. I am sad not to have been able to spend much more time in each class. I am especially pleased some of you came to talk to me about your work, and showed me lots of it.

Your school is an outstanding school with lots of really special features. All of the adults working with you care very much about you and want you to do well. Your headteacher leads and manages your school very well indeed. You make very good progress during your time at Parish and are ready to manage even harder work when you move to the junior school. Your teachers make lessons exciting. Your behaviour is excellent, you listen very well in lessons and work hard. Your parents said how much they like the school and lots of them and lots of you told me how well you get on together and how helpful the teachers are. It was good to see how kind you are and how willingly you help each other.

I have asked the teachers to make the work even harder for some of the older children in Year 2, especially in writing, so that you will become even better writers; beware Year 2!

Please thank your parents for kindly sending in the letters and responses to the questionnaire. These helped me to understand how well the school is doing. I think your parents enjoy joining you in your learning, especially when they all make things with you. Your parents are right to think Parish Church of England Nursery and Infant School is a 'fantastic' school.

Yours sincerely

Juliet Ward

Lead Inspector