

# William Morris Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102661
<b>Local Authority</b>	Merton
<b>Inspection number</b>	308081
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joanna Toulson

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	240
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs C Young
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs M Abrams
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Recreation Way Mitcham CR4 1PJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8764 9765
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8679 7410

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

In 2003, the school changed from being a large middle school to a two-form entry primary school. In September 2008, it is due to become a one-form entry school. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is much higher than average with the largest group being of Black African heritage. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language and who are at the early stages of learning English is much higher than that found nationally. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is also much higher than average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

William Morris is a caring, well-ordered school, which provides a satisfactory and improving quality of education. Pupils are happy and enjoy school. As a parent said, 'My children actually miss school when they are on holiday!'

Pupils join the school with standards that are well below those which are expected for their age. Standards over time at the end of Year 6 have been exceptionally low in English and mathematics, but those for current pupils are better and whilst still low, are not exceptionally low. The 2007 results show that pupils make satisfactory progress in English and mathematics and significantly more progress in science than pupils nationally.

The good care and support that all pupils receive in school is due to the strong commitment of staff to breaking down the significant barriers to learning that many pupils experience. The school faces significant challenges: a large number of pupils (around 20) who are at the early stages of learning English, the often difficult socio-economic circumstances of pupils and the high percentage of pupils with learning or behaviour difficulties. The school works hard to enrich the lives of the pupils by providing good opportunities for music, dance and drama and the inclusion of three residential trips. The school provides a safe, secure environment and pupils benefit from a large building with plenty of space, both inside and out.

The quality of teaching and learning has improved over the last year although it is inconsistent, ranging from inadequate to outstanding. Where teaching is better, lessons are stimulating and pupils are appropriately challenged. Consequently, they are fully engaged and make good progress. For example, a Year 6 girl said, 'Maths is challenging, but the teacher explains things so that I can understand'.

The headteacher and her deputy have promoted a clear vision for the school. Teachers and support staff work well together to provide a safe, secure environment in which pupils feel there is someone to turn to if they need help or support. Parents are supportive of the school, but their lack of involvement in school life hinders their ability to support their children's learning. Senior leaders are committed to improving the education provided so that all pupils make at least good progress. To this end, they have put in place appropriate systems to monitor how well pupils are doing and provided good professional development for staff in order to raise the quality of teaching and learning. However, recent actions taken have not had sufficient time to result in the improvements to standards and achievement that are needed. The school has identified that opportunities are lost to apply and improve pupils' skills in English and mathematics through other subjects.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Provision in the Nursery is good. When they join the school, most children do not have the skills and knowledge expected for their age, particularly in language, communication and literacy. However, they get off to a good start because staff create a secure and welcoming environment within which children can flourish. Pupils' personal and social skills are developed well by ensuring that the relationship between children and staff is encouraging and friendly. As a result, children quickly feel safe and settled. The provision in the Reception class is satisfactory and less stimulating and exciting than in the Nursery. Foundation Stage accommodation is large but more could be done to create varied, imaginative areas for different

activities. By the end of the Foundation Stage, pupils have made satisfactory progress overall, with the best progress being in their personal and social development.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards in English and mathematics by promoting literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.
- Improve the consistency of good or better teaching and learning by ensuring that activities are stimulating, engage the interest of the pupils and are appropriately challenging.
- Engage parents in their children's learning by providing frequent, good information and by promoting opportunities to involve them in the life of the school.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

From their low starting points, pupils make satisfactory progress through the Foundation Stage. They enter Key Stage 1 with standards that are still well below average. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1 because teaching is satisfactory overall. Standards over time have been exceptionally low at the end of Key Stage 1, but pupils' work shows that the current attainment in Year 2 is better than in 2007, although it remains well below average. Progress in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall and better for the older children because the teaching here is good. The school's own assessment information, pupils' work and lesson observations show that the current attainment of pupils in Year 6 is better than in 2007 and is now below average but not exceptionally low. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English receive good support once a week from the specialist teacher and this helps them to make satisfactory progress. Pupils' particular difficulties often relate to dyslexia, behavioural and emotional difficulties, or speech, language and communication problems. The management of their needs is satisfactory and these pupils make satisfactory progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

The development of pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural understanding is satisfactory overall. There is a strong and consistent approach by staff to promoting good behaviour. However, some pupils need constant reminders and support to behave well. Personal and social development is a good feature of the provision and displays are in every classroom, reminding pupils of the importance of being encouraging to each other ('pick-me-ups'), but because of the challenges that many pupils face, the outcome is satisfactory.

Pupils say that name calling does happen but as a pupil said, 'You get in real trouble for it'. Links with the local Ghanaian community are strong with a teacher due to return soon from working in Ghana. These links result in good cultural development so that pupils show respect to the different cultures within the school and know that racism is wrong. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and benefit from the good range of sports played as part of PE and after school clubs. Pupils are very active at playtime. Attendance is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy school a great deal. The school council,

although very enthusiastic, meets only once a term and this limits its ability to contribute effectively to the school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, pupils enjoy their learning. This was seen in a Year 6 lesson where all pupils were able to write a persuasive letter supporting children's television, because the teacher made the learning fun and appropriately challenging. As a pupil said, 'This is exciting.' As a result, all pupils made very good progress. Where teaching is weaker, pupils' enjoyment of the learning is hindered because the activities are too dull and the pace of learning too slow. Too much emphasis is placed on managing behaviour, rather than ensuring that all children make good progress.

Classrooms are bright and inviting with stimulating displays that provide good information that supports pupils' learning. Workshops held for parents to inform them about English and mathematics in the school are a useful step to involving parents in their child's learning but parents are not sufficiently involved in the life of the school to be able to fully support their child's learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The strengths in the overall satisfactory curriculum lie in the provision for the performing arts and sport. This helps to raise the self esteem of pupils and allows them to discover talents beyond the academic. Visits and three residential trips give good opportunities for social development. The school is rightly proud of its music provision. For example on the day of the inspection, Year 5 was joined by pupils from five local schools to rehearse for a 'Music for Life 08' concert at the local theatre. The singing was wonderful. Some of the English curriculum is a bit dull and this hinders the enjoyment and achievement of some learners. The school knows that pupils are not being taught how to link letters and sounds (phonics) well enough to help them with their reading and writing. The recent introduction of a scheme of work to support this is helping, but there is still more to do. The school has identified the need to look for opportunities to develop pupils' English and mathematics skills across the broader curriculum.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

The pastoral care of pupils is good. Child protection procedures are secure and risk assessments and health and safety procedures are in place. Pupils say that if they have any concerns, there are adults they can talk to. Teaching assistants work well so that vulnerable pupils feel supported. Midday supervisors make a good contribution to pupils' well-being by organising activities at lunchtimes. Good systems are in place to monitor how well pupils are doing. The school has rightly identified that although some teachers are marking pupils' work well, this is not consistent in showing all pupils how to improve their work.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The school recognises that standards remain too low. The headteacher, with her deputy, has set a clear direction for the school which is focussed on raising standards. They make good use of support from the local authority and external consultants. Plans for improvement are clear, identify appropriate actions and are closely linked to raising achievement. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning has improved over the last year. This improvement, however, is not yet consistent across the school to have impacted sufficiently on raising standards, particularly in English and mathematics. As a result, the progress that pupils make is not consistent as they move through the school and there is still too much 'catch up' in Year 6. Governors are committed to the school and support it well. However, their ability to challenge the school about the progress that it is making is hindered by not having sufficient information about the school's plans to raise attainment. Parents are supportive of the school but opportunities are lost to involve them more fully in their children's learning.

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## 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?	3
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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

11 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of William Morris Primary School, Mitcham, CR4 1PJ

I would like to begin by thanking you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. We think yours is a satisfactory school and that your headteacher and all the staff are working hard to make sure you enjoy school and feel safe and happy. There are things the school already does well and we have made suggestions for some things that could be done even better.

While many of you behave well, some of you still need a lot of encouragement to do so. You can help by making sure you always listen when others are talking and by always being kind to each other. We know you understand how exercise and good food help you stay healthy. It was good to see how active you are at playtimes - you are lucky to have so much space to play in. Those parents who wrote to us are very positive about the school and say they are pleased with the care you receive.

We have asked your teachers to make sure that activities in your lessons are fun and challenge you to think. We have also asked that as well as in literacy and numeracy, you are encouraged to use your reading, writing, spelling and mathematics skills in other lessons, such as geography, history and religious education. We think that your parents and carers could be more involved in school life. We know they would enjoy it! We have asked that they are given more information about your school and what you are doing, and that they are encouraged to come into school to help so that they can support your learning at home.

I hope you enjoy the rest of the school year. I would like to say a special 'good luck' to the pupils in Year 6 who are taking their SATs soon. I am sure you will do your best! I would also like to say good luck to those of you taking part in the concert at the Fairfield Halls. I thought you sang beautifully so I know you will enjoy it.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Toulson

Lead Inspector