

# Cypress Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101715
<b>Local Authority</b>	Croydon
<b>Inspection number</b>	335775
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 January 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Natalia Power

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	321
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Kathy Bee
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Nicky Godetz
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Cypress Road London SE25 4AU
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 86534203
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors spent three quarters of their time looking at learning. They observed 21 lessons covering eleven different teachers and talked to governors, staff, parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked in particular at its self-evaluation and plans for improvement, the data collected on pupils' progress, safeguarding information and the minutes of governing body meetings. Responses to questionnaires had been returned by 92 parents and carers.

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

- the quality of learning and the progress made by all groups of pupils, including those from ethnic minorities, those at an early stage of learning English and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the progress made since the previous inspection on raising pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics
- the effectiveness of the school's actions to improve the attendance of the very small minority of persistent absentees.

## Information about the school

This school is larger than average. It consists of a nursery, which children attend either in the morning or the afternoon, three Reception classes, and three classes in each of Years 1 and 2. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is slightly higher than usual. Four out of five pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, with pupils from Black Caribbean, Black African and Mixed White and Black Caribbean backgrounds forming the largest groups. Slightly more pupils than usual speak a first language other than English, primarily Urdu, French and Somali. Of these, few are at an early stage of learning English. A higher-than-usual proportion of pupils has a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities. Of these pupils, speech, language and communication difficulties are most common. The governing body manages both breakfast and after-school clubs, which are run by school staff.

**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?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

### Main findings

- This outstanding school provides an inclusive and stimulating environment, where pupils thrive and make excellent progress. Inspectors agree with a parent who commented, 'Cypress is an excellent community school and works hard at developing all aspects of children's development.'
- Children get off to an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make outstanding progress. Pupils continue to make excellent progress in Years 1 and 2, leaving school with high levels of attainment. This is because teaching is excellent overall.
- The inspirational headteacher guides her management team exceptionally well. Together they ensure that detailed information on pupils' progress is gathered and used extremely well to cater for the needs of all pupils. Teachers use the data to match work accurately to pupils' capabilities and to provide them with an excellent level of challenge.
- The great majority of pupils attend school regularly and are proud of their 'well done' letters for improved attendance and their 100% certificates. Attendance is broadly average for primary schools as a whole, and higher than in many other infant schools in the local authority. Nevertheless, there is a small minority of pupils who persistently miss more school than they should, sometimes because of family holidays taken during term time. This small group of pupils do not achieve as well as they might.
- The headteacher and her team are highly ambitious for the school and continually seek ways of improving it. Leaders and governors know and understand the school well. Planning for the future is excellent, and balanced extremely well between immediate needs and long-term strategic planning. The school has fully met the recommendation from the last inspection to raise standards in reading and mathematics to match the high standards in writing. The school has an excellent capacity to continue to improve.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the attendance of the few pupils whose current attendance patterns give cause for concern, by involving parents and carers more fully and working in closer liaison with local authorities.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**1**

Pupils greatly enjoy school and their overall achievement is outstanding. All groups of

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pupils, including those from all minority ethnic groups, those for whom English is not their first language, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, thoroughly enjoy their learning and make excellent progress. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with generally average skills and aptitudes but by the time they leave Year 2 they are attaining highly. The school is highly skilled at removing barriers to pupils' learning. One parent commented, 'I like the diverse nature of the school and feel it both educates and socialises the children and breaks down barriers'. A hallmark of the school is the close attention paid to the needs of each pupil. The level of challenge is consistently high, and pupils respond well. For example, in one fast-paced Year 1 lesson, pupils were busily engaged in practical activities involving the impact on speed of pushing and pulling. Pupils worked in groups, each with a high level of challenge. The lesson provided exciting opportunities for pupils to do their own research and discuss their findings. Pupils then completed worksheets tailor-made by the teacher to pupils' individual capabilities. As a result of these high expectations, pupils perform exceptionally well in the tests taken at the end of Year 2, especially at the highest levels. Pupils are polite, friendly and confident. They feel completely safe in school, and are considerate towards others. Their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in their excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning. For example, pupils were not only able to explain to inspectors the meaning of the school motto, 'Persevere', but could give examples of when they had persevered with difficult challenges. Pupils fully understand the importance of taking regular exercise and a healthy diet. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school community, including through enthusiastic participation in the school council, and in little thoughtful ways, such as reminding one another to wash hands before eating. The very firm grounding pupils acquire in the basic skills prepares them exceptionally well for the next stage of schooling.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	<b>1</b>
	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers manage pupils' behaviour exceptionally well, using a variety of rewards to ensure that they pay close attention. They use questioning skilfully to stimulate pupils to think for themselves, and encourage pupils to discuss tasks, ensuring that all are fully engaged. As a result, the pace of learning is brisk and pupils' attention rarely flags. Teachers plan lessons extremely well, and use information on pupils' progress to match tasks exceptionally closely to their capabilities. As a result, lessons provide very high levels of challenge, enabling pupils to make outstanding progress. Teaching assistants give excellent support, enabling pupils with a range of physical and learning needs to access the full curriculum. Excellent provision enables pupils who arrive at the school speaking little English to catch up quickly and make progress in step with others. The curriculum has a very strong focus on developing pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy, and this enables them to make outstanding progress in these subjects. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their trips and visits to places of interest, for example reporting excitedly about the puppets they made at the Horniman Museum. Such activities widen their horizons, and the frequent 'themed weeks' provide pupils with a rich understanding of the arts and the environment, to take just two examples. The excellent breakfast and after-school clubs, run by staff familiar to the pupils from school, give pupils further enrichment in a caring environment. Pupils receive exemplary care in the school, and this is because each pupil is known and valued. One parent summed this up by commenting, 'the school feels small despite its intake of three classes in each year group'. All groups of pupils achieve outstandingly well because their needs are fully met. Vulnerable children and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given exceptional care and support. The parent of one pupil with speech, language and communication difficulties commented, 'the school is really concerned when there is a problem with a child; now my child is doing well in school and I am happy'.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>1</b>
	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>

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<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>
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## How effective are leadership and management?

One parent describes the headteacher as 'exemplary' and work(ing) extremely hard to keep the school moving forward and progressive'. This sums up the tireless pursuit of excellence which is the hallmark of the inspirational leadership of the school. The senior leadership team share the headteacher's values and aspirations, and she carefully nurtures them to build further on their skills. Governors share her determination to maintain the school's exceptional qualities, and provide outstanding support. They are fully engaged in the life of the school and are ready to take the initiative in making difficult but necessary decisions, where appropriate. As a result of the headteacher's and governors' outstanding ambition and drive for improvement, pupils' attainment has risen since the last inspection. The leaders' excellent management of the quality of teaching has ensured that learning and teaching have grown in strength. The school promotes equality of opportunity exceptionally well, tackling discrimination by removing barriers to learning so that all pupils have the chance to succeed. The headteacher and governors ensure that safeguarding procedures are robust and of the highest quality.

The school promotes community cohesion extremely well, ensuring that pupils have an excellent understanding of many faiths and ways of life in local, national and global contexts. The school works in excellent partnership with a number of outside organisations. For example, the close partnership with a neighbouring junior school greatly helps pupils to move happily to the next stage of schooling. School leaders and managers work in extremely effective partnership with parents, keeping them fully informed about their children's progress and encouraging them to bring their skills to the school community.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>

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<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

As a result of excellent teaching and care, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make outstanding progress in their learning and personal development. The school builds and maintains excellent partnerships with parents and carers. The environment is stimulating, and a great deal is expected of the children, both in choosing their own activities and concentrating on what the adults are showing and teaching them. They respond to these high expectations with enthusiasm. They hugely enjoy learning, and are happy and confident. This is because the adults know all the children so well and meet their needs so quickly. The parent of one child picked out for praise 'the customised targets for children, helping them to achieve their best potential'. In this safe and supportive environment children develop excellent personal qualities. They behave exceptionally well, and are ready to share and take turns. The children's progress is regularly assessed, and this information is used extremely effectively to address their individual needs. Teaching by all the adults is excellent, and children also have excellent opportunities to choose their own tasks and gain independence. No opportunity is missed to develop all six areas of learning in the well-resourced indoor and outdoor play areas. Leaders plan the curriculum and manage the provision extremely well. They go to enormous lengths to ensure that children settle quickly into the nursery and that their entry into Reception is equally smooth. When the time comes for children to move into Year 1, highly effective transition arrangements enable the children to move calmly and happily to the next stage.

### *These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded through questionnaires agreed that they are happy with their child's overall experience at the school. Nearly all parents and carers are pleased with their children's progress, and agree that they enjoy school. A few parents and carers raised concerns about the planned reorganisation of the school from September 2010. The planned reorganisation is beyond the remit of the inspection. Inspectors did, however, consider whether the



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prospect of this future change was having any impact on pupils at present, but found no evidence of any adverse impact. Inspectors agreed with the very large majority of parents and carers who felt that the school is led and managed effectively. Many commented on the friendly ethos of the school. Inspectors fully endorse these views. One parent commented that her child 'goes to school with a smile on his face'.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cypress Infant 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 92 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 321 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	72	24	26	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	47	51	43	47	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	46	50	43	47	1	1	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	45	49	42	46	3	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	54	59	34	37	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	56	61	33	36	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	54	39	42	2	2	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)	37	40	45	49	4	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	27	62	67	2	2	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	37	51	55	2	2	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	37	51	55	4	4	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	42	46	44	48	3	3	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	49	42	46	2	2	2	2

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



1 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cypress Infant School, London SE25 4AU

Do you remember when three visitors came to your school recently to watch you learn and play? Thank you for making us welcome. We had a wonderful time at your school, and this is what we found:

- Your school is outstanding. You are lucky to go to it!
- You get on with one another extremely well, and always share and take turns.
- Your school keeps you very safe, and you have many chances to eat healthily and take exercise. All the adults take really good care of you.
- You enjoy learning, and are given many exciting things to do. You learn an amazing amount for children of your age, and this is because the adults always encourage you to do your very best.
- The adults love teaching you, and you told us that you find learning 'fun'! The school finds wonderful ways of making you excited about the world around you, sometimes in the classroom and sometimes by taking you on trips and visits.
- The adults in charge do their very best to make your school as good as it can possibly be. They know how important school is, and give you prizes and certificates for attending every day. What a pity, then, that a few of you let the school down by taking too much time off.
- Even though you are very young, you can still do your bit to help your school by nagging your parents and others who look after you to get you to school every day!

It was lovely to see you all playing together so nicely in your beautifully equipped playgrounds. It is clear that the monkey walk is your favourite activity! We hope you continue to be as friendly and cheerful as you are at Cypress Infant School. We wish you all the best in your journey through life.

Yours sincerely

Natalia Power

Lead inspector

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