

# Dogsthorpe Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110719
<b>Local Authority</b>	Peterborough
<b>Inspection number</b>	337555
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sue Hall

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>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	270
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Stephen Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Gwyneth Mantom
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 July 2008
<b>School address</b>	Central Avenue Dogsthorpe, Peterborough PE1 4LH
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 18 lessons taught by ten teachers in the nine classes in school. Meetings were held with the headteachers, groups of pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation including: the tracking of pupils' progress, school improvement planning, the monitoring of teaching and learning, minutes of the governing body's meetings and samples of pupils' recent work. They also scrutinised responses to the inspection questionnaires from 40 parents and 14 staff.

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

- Whether the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school is sufficiently rigorous to identify accurately the quality of provision and areas for further improvement.
- Whether all groups of pupils and particularly those from minority groups and the girls make good enough progress.
- If the behaviour and attendance of the pupils is well managed and improving.
- How well teachers use assessment information to provide challenging activities in lessons, especially for those pupils of higher ability.

## Information about the school

This is a larger than average sized infant school in an urban area of Peterborough. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is a little above the national average. Almost half the pupils are from a range of minority ethnic groups and 14 different languages are spoken at home. While mobility in and out of the school other than at the usual time is close to the average, that within certain cohorts is higher with some of these families being new to this country. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is double the national average. The school holds Healthy Schools status and an award for safer journeys to school. There is childcare provision before and after school in the 'Dogsthorpe Den', run by the governing body and included within this report. The headteacher and deputy currently share the role of leading the school. The school was taken out of special measures at its last inspection in 2008.

**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

This is a school that continues to improve and now provides a good quality of education. Several parents commented that their children are helped and encouraged well with more than one noting that their children had thrived since starting school. Staff are unanimous that they enjoy working here and are proud of the improvements made in recent years. Pupils' behaviour is good and most know how to keep themselves and others safe, including at very well organised playtimes when there are lots of opportunities to be active. Many pupils readily take on responsibilities in and around school and say they like being here.

Children often enter the school with quite limited language skills. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage where provision is a strength of the school because it is imaginative and stimulating. Good progress is also made in Years 1 and 2. Standards have gradually risen in the last few years and are in line with national averages. Because the school has well organised systems to support different groups of children, most settle happily and those new to learning to speak English often make rapid progress. Pupils of all ages and abilities achieve well, although they generally do better in mathematics and reading than they do in writing. This is because some pupils do not record their ideas regularly enough and with sufficient detail, accurate spelling and neat handwriting. The school has prioritised support for the highest and lowest attaining pupils and at times those of middle ability do not always make quite enough progress.

The quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum is good with effective cross-curricular links. Staff give lots of praise which builds pupils' self-confidence and skill levels. Teaching usually provides good opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas and record these in detail, but occasionally such opportunities are not taken. The school has good systems to check and track the progress pupils make. However, the use of this information to provide challenging tasks that meet the needs of all pupils is still a little variable. The care, guidance and support of pupils and their parents is good, with particular strengths in the support for those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. The setting of individual targets and the marking of pupils' work is not consistently effective as they are insufficiently precise to help pupils improve their work.

The model of two leaders sharing the headteacher's role is working well because those involved have complementary skills and a determination to keep the school moving forwards. Together they have successfully implemented many initiatives including the effective tracking of pupils' progress and improving school self-evaluation and development planning. Middle managers, key support workers and governors are developing their effectiveness well. This shared responsibility for improvement and action planning provides the school with a good capacity to improve further.

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

- Ensure assessment information is used effectively to:
  - provide a consistently high level of challenge for all pupils and particularly the middle achieving groups
  - make clear to pupils in the setting of individual targets and the marking of their work exactly what they need to do to improve.
- Raise standards in English by:
  - providing more structured opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas with others
  - providing time for pupils to write more regularly and developing their strategies for spelling accurately and writing in more detail.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children make good progress in all areas of their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They enter Year 1 with skills that are close to the expectations for their age although communication skills often lag behind other areas. In Years 1 and 2 pupils generally make good progress although this is a little variable. They make good progress in lessons, for example in Year 2 when finding out more about the life of Florence Nightingale. The pupils enjoyed asking questions of their teacher in the role of Florence and made good progress in using the prompt words of 'who, why, when, why and where' to extend their questioning skills. Data from teacher assessments show that attainment has gradually risen over the last three years and lesson observations and samples of recent work confirm that standards are in line with national averages. This level of attainment, their attitudes to learning and the almost tangible growth in self-confidence helps pupils prepare well for their future. While data indicate there has been some difference in the achievement of boys and girls, this is largely related to the abilities of the cohorts and over time there is no significant difference. Several pupils join the school other than at the usual time and are new to learning English. They are well supported and make good progress. The school has been successful in identifying pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities and meets their needs well, although at times the average attaining pupils do not progress quite as well as other groups.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good because the school places great importance on meeting every pupil's needs well, as epitomised in a mirror in the entrance hall labelled 'this child matters'. Behaviour is consistently good. Pupils develop good physical skills through the many opportunities provided and benefit from the on-site swimming pool. Although the school provides good quality cooked meals which many pupils take advantage of, they do not all make healthy choices in their packed lunches. Pupils like taking on responsibilities appropriate to their ages, including as members of the school council. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good and many develop a clear awareness of right and wrong and what is socially acceptable. Attendance is close to the national average and the school does much to make clear to parents the importance of regular attendance.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

## How effective is the provision?

The proportion of teaching that is good has improved since the previous inspection and there is none that is inadequate. The best teaching is seen in the Early Years Foundation Stage where its quality is consistently good and with some very strong features. In Years 1 and 2 teaching and learning are more variable but without fail staff encourage and praise pupils' efforts well. For example in Year 1 pupils make good progress in identifying the properties of shapes because the adult support skilfully ensures that all children actively seek solutions to the problems they are set. Staff use interactive whiteboards well to explain things to pupils and provide illustrations where appropriate. Most teaching assistants are deployed effectively in all parts of lessons, but at times there are missed opportunities to make assessments of what the pupils are learning or to support activities in other ways. The planning of lessons is conscientious but at times the main task is not challenging enough because the good range of assessment information is not used fully to ensure the best level of challenge for each group or set of pupils.

All staff in school know and value the children well and have created a welcoming environment for learning. Midday staff work very effectively by providing a wide range of equipment for active play and using this with the children, which promotes enjoyment and active lifestyles well. The family support worker and learning mentor work closely with identified pupils and their families and provide effective support for those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. The school has well organised systems to support

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pupils new to this country. There is some mother tongue support available as seen in the work of a Polish speaking worker helping children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The special educational needs coordinator manages the processes to support all pupils needing additional help effectively. Children who attend the 'Dogsthorpe Den' activities are well looked after and this provides a good start and end to the school day for these pupils. While there are some very effective elements to the care, guidance and support of pupils they are rarely set individual 'next step' targets for improvement and the marking of work does not consistently identify what else they need to do to improve.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The staff's enjoyment of working at the school was summarised by one who noted, 'I feel there is a strong sense of "belonging" here and that all who have contact with the school are afforded the same care and respect.' Senior leaders have succeeded in appointing skilled staff, including in support roles, who have a clear commitment to the school community. The leadership team has provided strong pastoral care for pupils over many years and has now improved the focus on providing them with more challenging work. Key to several improvements has been the increasing role of the deputy headteacher in leading initiatives. The monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's work is now good because productive use is made of data to track individual, group, class and cohort improvement and trends over time. The governing body has developed its role well in holding the school to account. It is well led and fulfils its statutory duties effectively. Governors are currently planning to develop their programme of focused visits to the school to extend their knowledge of curriculum provision.

The school has good links with parents, a wide range of external agencies and the adjoining junior school, all of which are particularly effective in supporting families. The school promotes equality of opportunity effectively by focussing on the needs of higher and lower attaining pupils well and with a growing awareness of the needs of the middle attaining pupils. Safeguarding procedures are good and the school takes very seriously its role of keeping everyone safe and secure through rigorous and regularly reviewed policies and procedures. The school promotes community cohesion well through very strong links with the local community. There are developing links with groups nationally and internationally which are relevant to the age of the children and extend their understanding of life beyond their local area.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength of the school and has some very effective features. This includes the development of attractive and very well resourced outdoor learning areas which are imaginative and stimulating. This leads children to settle well to school and promotes a great deal of interest in solving problems such as taking part in a bear hunt and making a home for the three little pigs. Key to recent improvements is the strong sense of a team approach from all staff in the three parallel classes, therefore promoting equality of opportunity well. Enthusiastic and skilful teaching leads to good learning in all areas. Children enter school with skills that are below the expectations for their age in a few key areas including their speaking skills. Some children are very quiet and a few have little English but because they are well supported, all children make good progress and flourish. Children's social skills develop well, as seen when sharing resources in the outside areas and for example when making sandwiches for a bears' picnic. However, occasionally staff miss the opportunity to develop the children's vocabulary further by modelling and encouraging the children to use key words even more. Key to the success of the provision is that staff identify exactly what the children need to make good progress and provide a stimulating curriculum to promote learning. Leadership and management of the provision are good, with the considerable work to improve the learning environment paying dividends.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

While only a very small minority of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire they are generally very pleased with the quality of care and education provided. This is shown in one response that, 'I didn't want to send my child to Dogsthorpe. But I'm so glad that I did, my child and I have been made to feel welcome and my child has thrived since starting school.' Parents are particularly pleased that they feel their children are kept safe with another parent noting, 'I love the way the teachers are with the pupils; they are very loving and caring.' Very few concerns were noted and these were of an individual nature concerning the particular needs of their child. A small number of carers feel that their children could make more progress and there could be better arrangements for transition to Key Stage 2. Inspectors found that some pupils could make a little more progress and that there are close working relationships with the adjoining junior school that appear to be effective.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dogsthorpe 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 40 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 270 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	50	19	48	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	53	19	48	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	14	35	23	58	2	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	35	23	58	2	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	20	50	18	45	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	43	21	53	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	38	24	60	1	3	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)	16	40	19	48	3	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	38	23	58	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	40	23	58	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	40	20	50	1	3	1	3
The school is led and managed effectively	16	40	20	50	1	3	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	50	18	45	0	0	0	0

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 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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"><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 pupils' 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.**



23 September 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Dogsthorpe Infant School, Peterborough, PE1 4LH**

Thank you very much for making the inspectors welcome when we visited your

- school recently. We really enjoyed chatting to you, including the group that we met who were good at explaining what you all do. We also liked meeting you in lessons, at lunchtimes and when we attended assemblies. I particularly enjoyed seeing how much fun those of you in the Reception classes had when you were searching outside for teddies with numbers on them. I also really liked seeing how good some of you and the midday staff are at joining in lots of fun activities at break and lunchtime that help you to get fit. These are some of our findings from the visit.

Your school is a good school ?well done everyone for improving things over the last few years. Most of you now make goode progress and you gain in confidence and know you can produce some good work. The staff all look after you well and make sure you are safe and happy.

To improve your school further, we have asked the headteacher and staff to:

- make sure that all the staff use the information from checking your work so that what you do next is just hard enough for all of you
- provide more opportunities for you to discuss your ideas and clearer advice to help you improve your spelling and written work.

To help your school more, you could all try even harder to join in discussion times and with your writing. You can also help your parents to try and think a bit more about what you eat in your packed lunches so that they are healthier.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall

Lead inspector

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