



Davidson Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 134449
Local Authority Croydon
Inspection number 282578
Inspection dates 7–8 November 2006
Reporting inspector Wendy Simmons

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Dartnell Road
School category	Community		Croydon
Age range of pupils	4–11		CR0 6JA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8654 1460
Number on roll (school)	347	Fax number	020 8656 4794
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Ms Sandra Owen
		Headteacher	Ms Linda Watson
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large school was formed in 2004 as a result of the amalgamation of Davidson Infant and Junior Schools. This is the school's first inspection as a new primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage but others come from a diverse mix of backgrounds. The next largest groups are Black British Caribbean and Black British African. Over 35 languages are spoken. The proportion of pupils speaking English in addition to other languages is above average. A growing number are at an early stage of fluency in English when they join the school. The school educates an increasing proportion of asylum seekers and vulnerable pupils. Pupils' social circumstances and attainment on entry are wide ranging but, overall they are below average. The school has an average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Many families move in and out of the area and this means that pupil mobility is high.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and quickly improving school with several important good features. Almost all parents confirm that their children are happy at school. In the words of one parent, 'The school supports and develops pupils well.' This new school has been established quickly in two years. The school is improving because of good leadership and management.

The very effective headteacher has drive and a clear vision. She is well supported by senior staff and governors. Teamwork is strong by all staff. In the last two years the impact of their work is evident in the care given and in pupils' good personal development. Good improvements are evident in teaching, learning and achievement. As a result, standards are rising and pupils enjoy learning. Pupils learn important skills and attitudes that prepare them satisfactorily for their future lives. Pupils show positive attitudes, are keen to improve and behave well. Based on these features and the overall development in just two years, the school has a good capacity to improve.

In the last year, standards have risen to average by Year 2 and by Year 6. The achievement of different groups of learners is now satisfactory overall with pupils learning English as an additional language doing particularly well. This is because the headteacher and senior managers have focused on English skills for all groups of learners. The development of good assessment systems and an improving curriculum are helping pupils to make better progress. Since the amalgamation the achievement of pupils with learning difficulties has improved.

The school has worked well to improve teaching and learning. Prior to the amalgamation standards were low in the juniors and there was a significant amount of inadequate teaching. Now teaching and learning are satisfactory throughout the school. No lessons were judged to be inadequate and the number of good lessons is increasing. One outstanding lesson was seen during the inspection. Changes in staffing, training and development of teaching assistants has lifted the quality of teaching and learning. Good teaching and learning are evident in the Foundation Stage, where children achieve well and make outstanding progress in basic reading skills. Pupils' learning targets and marking are not precise enough to allow them to be clear about how to quickly improve their work as the school has recognised.

The school is currently developing the roles of middle managers and recognise that their monitoring of teaching and learning is the next important area for improvement in the whole school's drive to raise achievement further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Help pupils to make more rapid progress by making their learning targets more precise and ensure that they know how to reach them quickly.
- Make the marking of work focused and helpful in showing pupils how to improve.
- Develop the role of middle managers in improving teaching, learning and achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are average in English, mathematics and science by Year 2 and Year 6. The school is working steadily to increase the number of pupils who reach the higher Level 5 standard in their work by Year 6. The major focus on English is helping achievement to rise. Pupils are quickly identified if they underachieve and are given specific support to help them to do better. The school's own evaluation has led to good improvement in the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and their achievement has risen significantly. The strong focus on speaking and better understanding of how those with English as an additional language learn is helping this group to achieve well. On entry to the school, standards are below average, as some children have poorly developed speaking skills. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage because of the strong focus on language and social skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children get off to a very strong start in the Foundation Stage. Throughout the school pupils enjoy coming to school and they are keen to learn. This is reflected in improving attendance which is now average. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and make a very positive contribution to the community. For example, they have enthusiastically taking part in, and just won, a television competition to build a solar dome in which to grow their own fruit and vegetables. They know about how to be safe in school and out in the wider world and raise money for a number of charities. Pupils learn to control their anger, behave well and are considerate towards each other. Although a few parents are concerned about bullying, this is not supported by most of the pupils who say that there is little bullying but when it does occur, 'Teachers sort it out and take it very seriously.' Governors and teachers run workshops for pupils and parents to help them to understand how the school tackles bullying. Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good. They have a good knowledge about different cultural and religious beliefs. In the eloquent words of one pupil the gospel choir is, 'inspiring and magic.' When considering pupils' satisfactory progress and wide ranging development in their social development they are satisfactorily prepared for their future lives at this school and beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Lessons are well planned so that pupils understand what they are expected to do and enjoy learning. There is suitable challenge for pupils of different abilities. Teachers often demonstrate new skills clearly but some teachers are better at this than others. Support staff work well with teachers to help pupils to achieve better, as seen in the

'booster' and catch-up groups. Learning is good for pupils who are new to speaking English. This is a result of good training and the appointment of specialist teaching assistants. As a result, this group are now provided with more visual aids and bilingual activities, which help them to develop their speaking skills quickly. All pupils are keen to talk about their work and cooperate effectively when tackling problems. Behaviour is usually good, although some pupils become restless when lessons are uninspiring and when they are expected to listen for too long.

The outstanding focus on reading in the Foundation Stage makes learning clear, challenging and exciting. The teaching of English, throughout the school, is developing especially well. For example, in an outstanding lesson there was much fun identifying imperative verbs. In some classes, the marking of pupils work, however, does not give pupils enough guidance on how to improve their English and mathematics skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with good features. There has been a good emphasis on improving reading, writing and speaking. The school is currently focusing more on improving mathematics and in developing information and communication technology. The curriculum is developing satisfactorily, so that it is modified to meet the needs of different groups of learners. A good range of clubs and specialist teaching add to pupils' enjoyment, their contribution to the community and ability to develop healthy lifestyles, for example through netball, rugby and music. A good programme of work gives pupils clear messages about citizenship and keeping safe.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support to pupils. Child protection procedures are robust. Almost all parents confirm that their children are happy at school and well cared for. One pupil said, 'We really get to think about feelings' and many commented how much they value the help from 'playground friends.' Pastoral care is good, as evident in the support given to refugee and other vulnerable pupils, including those who are new to the school. Teachers and assistants know the pupils very well and the systems for monitoring their progress have developed considerably. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported, especially through the strong links with outside agencies. The good work by the learning mentor helps pupils to enjoy school and attend regularly. Older pupils know what level they are working at and are set suitable targets to improve over the year, but not all pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve in the short term. Very good arrangements are in place to help children to settle quickly into the Foundation Stage.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides clear and determined leadership. Senior managers support her well. Together with governors, they have developed this new school quickly. Notably, they have tackled the inadequate performance of the former junior school with speed and have amalgamated the schools successfully with a common ethos and high expectations. The last two years have been very demanding because all policies, systems and procedures had to be written agreed and implemented. Major building work has enhanced the accommodation to a good standard. There is a clear trend of improving standards and achievement. Governors give good support, they are very clear about the needs of the school and use their expertise successfully to develop the quality of provision for pupils. The school's self evaluation is accurate and there is a clear plan for further improvement. The school is correctly developing the roles of middle managers in monitoring and improving teaching and learning. Improved assessment procedures together with training and effective staff deployment are helping to raise standards and achievement.

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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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?	2

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
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	2
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

You may remember that three inspectors came to your school recently to find out how good it is and how well you are doing. Thank you for being so helpful and telling us about your school. We are writing to let you know our findings.

We think that your school has developed well in the last two years because of the good work that your headteacher, staff and governors have done in establishing this new school. The school is satisfactory and improving fast. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. We especially like the work in the Foundation Stage and the way that you are all working on your English skills. Overall, we think that you are making steady progress and, notably, many of you are doing much better this year. This is because your teachers are making sure that you are put into groups in your lessons, so that you have work that helps you to make quicker progress. We are especially pleased to hear how much you enjoy learning and well done for improving your attendance, keep this up! You are making good progress in your social and personal skills and you behave well.

The inspectors have asked your headteacher and teachers to do these important things:

- Keep a watchful eye on how well you learn in lessons, so that teachers can make all lessons good.
- Give you clearer targets which you all understand and can work on to make even quicker progress.
- Mark your work so that it shows you how to improve.

Please help them with these things when you can and many thanks for allowing me to enjoy your Gospel choir. Finally, many congratulations on winning the television competition.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Simmons

Lead Inspector