



Dogsthorpe Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110718
Local Authority CITY OF PETERBOROUGH
Inspection number 288752
Inspection dates 22–23 February 2007
Reporting inspector Joanne Harvey

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Central Avenue
School category	Community		Dogsthorpe, Peterborough
Age range of pupils	7–11		Cambridgeshire PE1 4LH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01733 343581
Number on roll (school)	325	Fax number	01733 707030
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Elizabeth Noble
		Headteacher	Mrs Mary Foreman
Date of previous school inspection	12 November 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average size school serving an area to the east of Peterborough. A high number of pupils is entitled to claim free school meals. Most pupils are White British. There is a high proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups and many of these are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Very high numbers of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities and an above average proportion has a statement of special educational need. The school has had extended school status since 2004. It has an Investor in People Award, Healthy School Status and an Activemark for sports.

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 an improving school with some good features. It is providing a satisfactory standard of education and is satisfactory value for money. Extremely effective leadership by the headteacher supported well by governors and a hardworking staff team has ensured that everyone now works together successfully to improve the quality of education provided for pupils.

The school is happy and harmonious because it promotes pupils' good personal development and well being. Most pupils behave well and enjoy good relationships with adults and each other. Pupils become confident because they are encouraged to express their opinions and accept responsibilities. They enjoy working together, playing together and helping each other and others in their community. The combination of these well developed personal, social and emotional skills with improving basic skills ensures pupils are equipped satisfactorily for the next stage of their education and life.

Good quality care, guidance and support impacts positively on pupils' personal development and well being. Pupils' pastoral needs are well met. Care is taken to keep pupils safe and make sure they enjoy their time at school. Effective arrangements are in place to support pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language, so that they make good progress. The academic guidance given to pupils is satisfactory. New systems to check how well pupils are progressing are not yet embedded across the school. There are inconsistencies in teachers' marking of pupils' work and not all pupils have enough involvement in checking their own work. Consequently, pupils do not always know how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers promote good relationships with pupils and positive attitudes to learning. Teaching assistants work well to support individuals and groups. Despite much improvement, there is still not enough good teaching to ensure that all pupils progress well. For example, in too many lessons work is not matched closely enough to the needs of all pupils.

In national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2006 standards were low in English and very low in mathematics and science but pupils made satisfactory progress. At the time of the inspection pupils were seen to be making better progress, where teaching and the academic guidance of pupils have been improved.

The curriculum is good. A new curriculum has been carefully planned to link subjects, include all pupils and involve enrichment activities pupils enjoy. New resources for information and communication technology (ICT) are improving pupils' ICT skills.

The headteacher, supported by her able deputy, has introduced more robust systems for checking on the work of the school. She has put measures in place to improve academic achievement. However, it is too early to see the full impact of these. New curriculum leaders are not yet able to show their impact on school improvement. The school has shown that it has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

The sense of urgency and determination to do even better demonstrate that the school has the capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science to be at least in line with those found nationally.
- Improve teaching to ensure it is consistently of the quality in the best lessons seen.
- Improve assessment by ensuring systems for checking pupils' progress, marking and pupil's involvement in their own assessment are consistently applied.
- Ensure curriculum leaders play a full role in monitoring, evaluation and school improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils start school with exceptionally low levels of knowledge and skills. In national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2006, standards were low in English and very low in mathematics and science. Pupils nevertheless made satisfactory progress.

Pupils' achievements in some year groups are improving. Year 6 pupils this year are making good progress and are on course to achieve their challenging targets. This is due to better teaching, the use of sharper systems for checking pupils' progress and setting accurate targets. There is not enough of this good practice across school for all pupils to progress well. Pupils' progress is not consistent throughout the school. Good support for pupils who find their learning more difficult, or for those who are in the early stages of learning English, ensure these pupils progress well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Most pupils enjoy coming to school, show enthusiasm for learning and attend well. Attendance is satisfactory, although a small minority of pupils do not attend as regularly as they should, despite the school's best efforts to improve this. Pupils' behaviour is good and they stay safe. They say that bullying is rare and dealt with effectively. Pupils exercise regularly and know how to keep healthy. There are good links with the local community, including activities such as singing in the cathedral. Pupils make a positive contribution to their school community through the school council, working as 'playground pals' and by interviewing new staff. They show good levels of initiative and responsibility. They help to host headteacher meetings and trained Year 6 pupils help Year 3 pupils with science.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching is good in Year 6 and team leaders are good models for other staff but there is not enough good teaching across the school to allow all pupils to progress well. Most teaching engages pupils and makes learning meaningful and enjoyable through first hand experiences. Opportunities for pupils to speak to one another about their work are improving their speaking and listening skills and increasing their independent learning. Some teachers are using these approaches effectively. Relationships are good and behaviour is mostly managed well. Teaching assistants are used well to support pupils' learning. Teachers plan conscientiously to meet the needs of pupils, though this does not always result in a good level of challenge for pupils of all abilities. The quality of marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. Good examples were seen in Year 6 and in science. Elsewhere marking does not always make clear to pupils what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is broad, vibrant and enriched through visits, visitors, theme days and after school clubs. Meaningful links are planned between subjects, such as in Year 6 where pupils make good use of ICT. These links and the focus on practical learning are becoming more consistent across the school and make learning enjoyable. Effective sporting links with local secondary schools support pupils' healthy lifestyles. The school makes good use of specialist teachers to enhance pupils' learning in science and music. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those in the early stages of learning English are included well. There are ample opportunities for pupils to contribute to the school and wider communities. Residential visits increase pupils' awareness of the world beyond their locality. The school's growing emphasis on independent learning ensures pupils work in pairs and groups to develop good personal skills that will be valuable in the future.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support of pupils are good. Pastoral guidance is a strength. Procedures for assessing risks and checking the suitability of all those who work with pupils, ensure that the interests and well being of pupils are properly safeguarded. Care is taken to ensure a smooth transfer between schools. Learning mentors have a positive impact on pupils' progress and personal development. For example, they follow up attendance issues quickly, working effectively with parents. Arrangements for supporting pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English are also good. Academic guidance for pupils is satisfactory. More robust systems have been introduced to check pupil's progress but they are not

applied consistently. Pupils are not always involved in reviewing their own progress or clear about what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. In a relatively short time the headteacher, who has a clear vision for the school, has made an outstanding contribution to school improvement. Strong relationships and partnerships have been forged within and beyond the school community to greatly enhance provision for children and their families. The building and resources to promote learning have been much improved. A sharper focus has been given to checking on the school's work, the way assessment information is used and how targets are set to secure higher academic standards and improved progress. However, these are not fully embedded and it is too early to see their full impact. The effective governing body checks carefully how well school improvement is going. Curriculum leaders are new and are not yet taking a full role in checking how well pupils are doing and helping to make the school better.

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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?	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
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	4
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	2

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?	2
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?	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 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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

26 February 2007

Dear Pupils

Dogsthorpe Junior School, Central Avenue, Dogsthorpe, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE1 4LH

We were pleased to meet you and all the staff and enjoyed the time we spent with you. Thank you for making us so welcome, talking to us and helping us to find out so much about you and your school.

You go to a school where all the adults work very hard to take care of you, make sure you are happy and your lessons are fun. It is in your personal development that your teachers help you to do well. It was lovely to see you behaving well, working hard and looking after yourselves and each other. Also, you know so much about keeping safe and healthy. Your super sport activities and hard work to become a Healthy School have really paid off! We especially enjoyed seeing you proudly carry out your special jobs around school and hearing about how you help others by entertaining them with your singing, by raising money and doing other helpful things. We loved hearing you sing so beautifully in assembly. You enjoy lots of visits out of school and have many interesting visitors come and work with you to make your learning more interesting.

Though the standards you reach in tests at the end of Year 6 have been below those of most pupils of a similar age over recent years, you make similar progress to most pupils and some of you do even better. Those of you who find learning more difficult, or those of you who are in the early stages of learning English as a second language, progress well. We think you could do even better. All the adults at school are keen to help you do as well as you can so we have asked them to do some things to help you. It is important that you do your bit to help by continuing to behave well and by coming to school every day.

Those who lead the school are going to make sure that the standards you reach in your tests at the end of Year 6 are at least as good as those reached by most pupils of the same age. Though teaching in school is satisfactory, they are going to make sure that it is always as good as the best teaching we saw. Everyone is going to make sure that they always know exactly how well you are doing and give you all the right work to help you improve. They are going to help you get better at deciding how well you are doing yourselves and to make sure that you are clear about what you need to do to improve. Leaders at all levels of the school are going to play their full part in checking on the work of the school and making it even better.

We would like to wish you the very best for the future.

Ms J Harvey

Lead Inspector