



Dogsthorpe Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110719
Local Authority CITY OF PETERBOROUGH
Inspection number 288753
Inspection dates 16–17 January 2007
Reporting inspector Linda Killman HMI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Central Avenue
School category	Community		Dogsthorpe, Dogsthorpe
Age range of pupils	4–7		Peterborough PE1 4LH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01733 566849
Number on roll (school)	264	Fax number	01733 349208
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr G Bradley
		Headteacher	Mrs G A Mantom
Date of previous school inspection	3 February 2003		

Age group 4–7	Inspection dates 16–17 January 2007	Inspection number 288753
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves an area of higher than average unemployment and social disadvantage. When pupils start school in Reception, their attainment is below average. Most of the pupils are White British; 23 per cent are from a mix of other minority ethnic groups, which is higher than average. Higher proportions of pupils than average speak English as an additional language, are eligible for free school meals or have learning difficulties and disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

The overall effectiveness of the school is inadequate. In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement. The school provides inadequate value for money.

The pupils' attainment on entry to the Reception class is below average especially in literacy and numeracy. Good teaching in Reception ensures that pupils make good progress in their first year because the pupils are regularly and accurately assessed and this information is used effectively to plan for their next steps in learning. From their low starting points half the pupils reach the level expected for five-year-olds in numeracy and a quarter in literacy. This rigour of knowing exactly where pupils are in their learning and what they need to learn next is not mirrored in Years 1 and 2. Teaching is inadequate because teachers do not assess pupils' progress accurately. These flaws in the accuracy of teacher assessment affect the daily lesson planning so that activities are not always tailored well enough to match the needs and abilities of all learners. Consequently by the end of Key Stage 1, many pupils have made inadequate progress and their standards of attainment are exceptionally low. The level of skills reached by seven-year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics does not prepare them well enough for the next stage of their education.

The school has not responded swiftly enough to the rapid decline in standards since its previous inspection in 2003 and the inadequate progress made by pupils in mathematics and writing. The leadership and management are insufficiently focused on halting this decline as a matter of urgency. The school has been slow to take action to tackle the pupils' very poor performance in writing and mathematics. The school is over generous in its self-evaluation of its performance and managers at all levels do not have a realistic view of its weaknesses. The leadership and management do not check pupils' progress over time and do not identify underachievement swiftly enough. Expectations and targets are not challenging enough. Teaching is not monitored rigorously to ensure that all pupils make sufficient progress and to give teachers points for improvement. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress because they receive adequate support and guidance to help them to improve. However, the majority of pupils make inadequate progress. Most pupils are unsure about what they need to learn next or how to improve their work.

The school runs smoothly on a daily basis. The pupils' personal development is satisfactory and sufficiently promoted through the school's satisfactory curriculum. Outings to places of interest, visitors and a very wide variety of clubs all add enrichment and enjoyment to pupils' learning. The school's focus on personal development ensures that pupils have a good understanding of how to keep fit, stay healthy and be safe. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. They behave well and most say that they enjoy school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics as a matter of urgency by improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- Improve the quality and accuracy of teachers' assessment and its use in planning the next steps in learning.
- Use assessment data effectively to check pupils' progress over time and to identify underachievement quickly so that action can be taken to halt further decline.
- Improve the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation to identify strengths and weaknesses in the school's performance and prioritise the steps that need to be taken to secure improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Achievement is inadequate because in Key Stage 1 a significant number of pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. Inspectors do not support the school's view that achievement and standards are good. Pupils' attainment is below average when they start school and exceptionally low when they leave. This is because teachers do not use assessment information about pupils' prior learning well enough to plan for the next steps. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that standards are very low. As pupils move to the next class, the process of assessing the level they have reached begins afresh with no reference to the point they reached previously. As a result, their daily work is often too easy. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, as well as those pupils with English as an additional language, are supported satisfactorily to ensure that they make satisfactory progress; the majority do not. The school is slow to identify underachievement because progress is not tracked closely enough over time nor is action taken quickly enough when intervention is needed. The level of skills reached by the time pupils are ready to leave the school does not prepare them well enough for the next stage of their education.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils develop positive relationships with adults in the school. They are keen to learn and talk enthusiastically about their school. Behaviour both in lessons and at play is good and pupils know right from wrong. Pupils mix well and respect each others' views. The youngest pupils work together happily and with consideration for one another. However, further up the school opportunities for pupils to work together are limited. In the playground pupils join in enthusiastically with the adult-led games. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. They know how to stay safe and who to go to if they need help. Their understanding of how to make healthy lifestyle choices is good. Attendance is below average but the school does all that it can to address this. Pupils are beginning to make a contribution to the running of the school through the recently established school council.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Teaching and learning are inadequate overall. In Years 1 and 2 most teachers are not secure in their judgements of pupils' attainment. As a result, the activities that they plan are not matched closely enough to the pupils' abilities. The teachers' planning often does not take account of whether some pupils might need specially tailored work to help them to make more rapid progress. In the Foundation Stage good teaching ensures that assessment of pupils' learning is accurate. The pupils engage in activities that capture their interest and enable them to learn effectively through play. In Years 1 and 2 most of the lessons are not practical enough and often pupils do not have enough access to a range of resources to help them to learn. All teachers manage pupils' behaviour well so that pupils are occupied during lessons. Lessons are adequately structured and learning intentions are usually shared, so that most know what they are expected to learn. Too often, teachers' marking does not support learning well enough by showing pupils how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Pupils in Reception classes enjoy the good and purposeful adult-led activities, which help them to make good progress. They have suitable opportunities to make independent choices and to learn through practical play. The new outside area is not yet stimulating enough to promote interest and excitement in their learning. In Years 1 and 2 planning for reading, writing and mathematics is not adapted successfully to match and extend the skills of all pupils, so that they do not progress as well as they could. In some classes, the work is not practical enough to maintain pupils' interest. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is satisfactory and they make satisfactory progress towards their own individual targets. Bilingual teaching assistants and interpreters help pupils who do not speak English at home to access the curriculum satisfactorily. A valuable feature of the school's work is in the enrichment of the curriculum by visits, visitors, clubs and involvement in special events such as the Drama Festival.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

Care, guidance and support are unsatisfactory because pupils do not have sufficient guidance to help them to improve their learning and government requirements for the safeguarding of pupils are not fully met. Assessment systems are not sufficiently developed so that they can be used effectively to guide pupils' in their learning. Teaching assistants and learning mentors provide adequate support for pupils. The school ensures that all the children are kept safe and that they are well cared for. The

majority of parents are pleased with the school. The school supports children and their parents by providing family learning and parenting courses.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Leadership and management are inadequate and do not provide the school with the necessary capacity to improve. This is because managers are ineffective in clearly directing improvement by creating a common sense of purpose in raising standards. Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory but they do not learn well enough to make sufficient progress and achieve all that they should because the quality of teaching is inadequate. Subject leaders and senior staff do not monitor the quality of teaching and learning regularly enough to accurately evaluate its quality. Assessment data is not analysed rigorously and regularly enough to give the school a clear picture of how well all its pupils are doing over time. The school's evaluation of its performance does not provide a realistic picture of strengths and weaknesses to enable it to prioritise, take swift action and set challenging deadlines for improvement. Insufficient progress has been made on issues raised in the school's last inspection report in 2003 and standards are in serious decline. Governors, though extremely supportive of the school, do not hold the school to account for its performance and challenge it sufficiently. Finances are managed satisfactorily. A policy on race equality is not yet in place and training has not been undertaken by the school's managers to bring them up to date on safer procedures for recruiting staff. The school works hard and effectively to forge strong links with groups in the community and to involve parents in school life and the responses received in the parents' questionnaire show that most are satisfied with what the school provides.

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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?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
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 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	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
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?	4

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?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
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	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	No
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

18 January 2007

Dear Pupils

Dogsthorpe Infant School, Central Avenue, Dogsthorpe, Peterborough, PE1 4LH

Thank you for making us feel welcome when we visited your school. You told us a lot about your school. This helped us to find out what the best things are about the school and what needs to be improved.

These are the best things about the school:

- You enjoy coming to school and the school checks to make sure that you come regularly.
- You know what to do if you feel unsafe and trust the adults to help you.
- You behave well in class and enjoy the games that you play in the playground.
- There are lots of fun clubs and activities to go to if you choose.
- The school takes part in many local events that you and your parents enjoy.

There are things that are not good enough at the moment. The inspectors decided that the school needs to work especially hard to make things better for you.

- Not all of you learn as much as you can as fast as you are able in literacy and numeracy.
- The school does not check well enough how well you are learning as you move from class to class so that you are given work that is not too easy or too hard.
- The school is not sure enough about what it does well. The steps it needs to take to improve are not put in order so that the most important things are tackled first.

Everyone will be trying to put these things right quickly in the months ahead. Inspectors will be coming back regularly to see how well things are going and to check that the school has improved. You can help too by making sure that you make the most of every day at school and work really hard to improve your reading, writing and numeracy. The inspectors are sure that you can do it! We wish you well.

Yours sincerely

Linda Killman

Her Majesty's Inspector