



# Desmond Anderson Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 125966  
**Local Authority** West Sussex  
**Inspection number** 293416  
**Inspection date** 22 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Patricia Davies

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Canterbury Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Tilgate
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11		Crawley RH10 5EZ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01293 525596
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	287	<b>Fax number</b>	01293 538094
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Vacant Position
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Terry Quinton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 November 2001		

<b>Age group</b> 4-11	<b>Inspection date</b> 22 November 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 293416
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Desmond Anderson school is a little larger than average. Most pupils are from White British families and others come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. No pupil is learning to speak English as an additional language.

Since its last inspection the school has undergone some important changes. It moved in to new accommodation on the same site in September 2005. A Special Support Centre for Social and Communication Disorders opened within the school at the same time. This centre has provision for up to 18 primary-aged pupils with autism and Asperger syndrome, and there are currently 15 pupils in the centre. The school also changed from a first and middle school to a primary school.

The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities in the main school is above average, and the proportion is much higher in some year groups. Attainment on entry to the Reception classes varies from year to year, but is largely well below expected levels, particularly in relation to language and literacy skills. A significant proportion of pupils join the school in other year groups, and many of these have below-average attainment. The school has experienced difficulties recruiting governors and there are several vacancies on the governing body.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Desmond Anderson is a good school. First and foremost, pupils' views and interests are always central to the school's work. From planning new outdoor learning areas to sharing thoughts in lessons, pupils know their ideas are valued and are used to make a difference. Extensive monitoring of the school's work leads to much fine tuning of provision. As one pupil said, 'Staff want our education to go further'. The good curriculum gives pupils a broad and interesting range of experiences and with the flexibility to make creative links between subjects. These powerful qualities ensure pupils' strong enjoyment of school life, as do the school's good care, guidance and support. Pupils are quick to praise the kindness and friendliness of staff. The impact of the school's care and commitment is seen in pupils' considerable maturity, the integration of those from the special centre into the main school, pupils' exemplary behaviour and their overall outstanding personal development and well-being.

Teaching is good and pupils achieve well. The impact of initial weaknesses in language and literacy skills when children first start the Reception group means that children take a little time to get going, and progress then gathers momentum as pupils make their way through the school. Indeed, in Years 3 to 6, sharply focused and challenging teaching leads to high rates of progress. Standards in the current Year 6 are broadly average. Nevertheless, teaching in the Reception year and across Years 1 and 2 does not have the sharp rigour of lessons higher up the school and this has inhibited achievement in writing. The recent introduction of more imaginative writing activities is already proving successful, but good progress in writing is not yet fully established in these year groups. The personal and social skills of children in the Reception group are particularly well catered for, and provision and progress in other aspects are satisfactory. But because of their low starting points on entering Reception, the standards reached by the start of Year 1 remain below average.

The school's good leadership and management has vision, enthusiasm and commitment. The responsibility for its effectiveness is shared across all levels of management. Thorough evaluation of the school's performance gives members of staff a clear and accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. These qualities demonstrate good capacity for bringing about further development, although improvements to pupils' writing in Reception and Years 1 and 2 have not been as rapid as they should have been. Governors are monitoring the school's work, but without a full complement of members to share the load, the capacity for checking the school's performance is currently constrained.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the pace of pupils' achievement in writing in the Reception year and in Years 1 and 2.
- Ensure there is a full complement of governors so that the governing body can be fully effective in holding the school to account for its overall effectiveness.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

National test results vary from year to year but, despite these differences, pupils achieve well as they move through the school. Pupils in the special centre and those with learning difficulties and disabilities in the main school make good progress.

The weaknesses in language and literacy skills when children join the Reception classes make for a fairly slow start. Progress is satisfactory across this first year and attainment is generally below, rather than well below, expectations when they enter Year 1. By Year 2, pupils are beginning to make some good rates of progress. Standards in the current Year 2 are broadly average. Nevertheless, standards in writing tend to be lower than those in reading and mathematics. Consequently, writing across the Reception group and Years 1 and 2 is a major school priority. Improvement is now evident in lessons as a result of more exciting activities that make writing interesting and enjoyable, but good progress is not yet fully established.

Consistently rigorous and challenging teaching in Years 3 to 6 moves pupils on swiftly. Comparisons with national data show that, despite the yearly variations in test results, pupils make high rates of progress in Key Stage 2. Results from last term's national tests at Year 6 indicate standards were well above average, particularly in science. This year's Year 6 is a lower-attaining group and standards are broadly average.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The outstanding quality of pupils' personal development is conspicuously illustrated in the significant contribution pupils make to the school community. Pupils were unanimous in their praise for the work of the school council and how all could share their views, feeling confident that these would be influential in making improvements. The ownership and responsibility they share for the school's development ensure pupils become highly mature and reflective individuals. These qualities play an important part in their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare them well for later life. Responsibility towards the wider community is shown in pupils' sensitivity towards environmental issues and a close link with a school in Sierra Leone.

The friendly confidence of children in the Reception classes is just the beginning of pupils' highly developed social skills. Pupils work together with considerable cooperation in lessons. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils report few incidents of bullying. Indeed, pupils greatly value the considerable friendliness and care they show towards each other. They are very welcoming towards pupils who join them from the centre and are quick to support those who are lonely during play times. Pupils show much interest in all they do. Their enjoyment of school life is further exemplified in their above-average attendance, which has risen from a below-average level in just over a year.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Consistently good teaching, with outstanding features, accounts for the high levels of progress across Years 3 to 6. Searching questioning, for example, challenges and extends pupils' thinking and leads to them sometimes making significant gains in their understanding, even within an individual lesson.

Teaching lower down the school does not have the sharply focused rigour found in older year groups. Nevertheless, there are signs of good progress in literacy lessons in response to the introduction of more imaginative activities. Boys and girls write enthusiastically when, for example, they are motivated first by the chance to record their own versions on tape. Such is their interest and enjoyment that they are very clear about what they have to do and set about their tasks with a will. These new strategies for teaching writing are still settling in and, because of this, are not yet fully successful. For example, pupils working independently are sometimes left too long without a check. Sometimes when this happens, noise levels rise and attention strays so that progress is satisfactory, rather than good.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

A wide range of clubs, musical and multi-cultural activities illustrates the school's broad curriculum. A more flexible approach to the timetable in Years 3 to 6 allows for creative links to be made between many subjects, including information and communication technology. New approaches to the teaching of writing are increasing progress in Years 1 and 2, but there is still more scope for improving handwriting and providing more chances to write at length. Improvements to the Reception curriculum are successfully developing children's independent learning habits although, sometimes, activities are not as purposeful as they should be.

Conspicuous attention is given to personal, social and health education (PSHE). As a result, pupils have a first-rate understanding of how to eat healthily. They demonstrate this by selecting healthier options to eat at lunch time and in their enthusiastic response to the daily 'huff and puff' group. Provision in the centre is good. These pupils share similar topics with those in the main school, which is particularly valuable for those who spend time in the main school. The good integration between the centre and other classes also gives pupils' personal development a valuable dimension. As one teacher wrote, this is 'PSHE for real'.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

At the heart of the school's extremely sensitive and committed pastoral care is the trust it places in pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour, including the chance

for pupils to help develop the school's behaviour policies. Pupils do not disappoint them. They act with considerable care and respect towards others and feel safe from bullying, knowing that any incidents of this kind are dealt with swiftly. Pupils see no obstacle to turning to an adult for help when needed and appreciate the thorough measures taken to keep them safe. Close links with outside agencies provide families and pupils with specialist support. Sensitive care of pupils in the centre enables them to increasingly make the best of their educational opportunities.

Pupils are happy with the academic guidance they receive. Work is marked regularly, although comments give more guidance on how to improve in some classes than in others. Targets are carefully considered and challenging. Greater progress in Years 1 and 2 is being supported well by learning targets, which pupils know. These pupils are also increasingly checking their written work to make sure they have done all they should.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The strength of leadership lies in a shared accountability for moving the school forward. Staff members are clear that leadership is a joint effort and pursue improvement with commitment and enthusiasm. Thorough monitoring of teaching and learning and a careful analysis of data mean that the school knows itself well. In most respects, expectations are high. These high expectations lead to some outstanding levels of personal and academic achievement. Nevertheless, the school has not acted as quickly as it should have done after the last inspection to tackle weaknesses in pupils' writing skills lower down the school, although recent action is proving to be effective.

The governing body is well organised, keen and supportive but, with several vacancies unfilled, is not as well placed as it could be for checking the school's performance. Governors in key positions are new to their responsibilities. They have made a good start to looking at the school's work and are pursuing several avenues to recruit new members.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	2
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	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

Thank you very much for welcoming me to your school. I really enjoyed the chance to speak with so many of you. My thanks to those who shared their work with me during the lessons, and to those of you who took time to come and talk with me at lunch time. Your school is a good school and it was clear from everything you told me that you think so too.

Here are some other important things about you and your school:

- You play a very important part in making the school better and really appreciate the opportunities you have to share your thoughts and ideas and take responsibility, for example, in planning the new conservation area and organising clubs.
- Members of staff lead your school well and work hard to make activities exciting and interesting for you all.
- You all behave extremely well and are very caring towards others, including those children in the school's special support centre.
- Staff take good care of you too and keep a careful check on how well you are doing so they can help you to do better.
- You all make good progress as you move through the school, because teaching is good, and those of you in Years 3 to 6 do extremely well because the teaching there really challenges you to do your very best.

These are the things that will make the school even better than it is now:

- Help those of you in the Reception classes and in Years 1 and 2 to do even better in your writing.
- Make sure there are as many governors as there should be so that they can check carefully how well the school is doing.