

# The Disraeli School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131852
<b>Local Authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	293867
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Keith Williams

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	430
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Ann Beaton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jatinder Virk
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 February 2001
<b>School address</b>	The Pastures High Wycombe HP13 5JS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01494 445177
<b>Fax number</b>	01494 528796

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This larger-than-average primary school serves an area containing considerable deprivation and more pupils than in most schools are eligible for free school meals. More pupils than usual join or leave the school at other than the usual times. Pupils are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, with the largest groups being those of White British and Pakistani heritage. An above average proportion of pupils are learning English as an additional language. The most common home languages are Urdu and Panjabi. The proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties, including those in receipt of a statement of special educational need, is above the national average. The school is a local authority designated resource base for pupils with autism and for those with language difficulties ('the units'). Attainment on entry to the school is well below average. The school has a number of national awards, including Healthy Schools, Activemark and Investors in People.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The Disraeli School is an improving school that now provides a good standard of education and has significant strengths, including outstanding care, guidance and support. The headteacher took up post two years ago and, under her excellent leadership, the school has made great strides since then. Much has been done to ensure that children who enter the school with significant language, learning and social difficulties achieve well. As a result, standards are rising steadily from a low baseline in 2004 and most pupils now make sufficiently good progress although standards are still below average overall because of lower performance in mathematics. Parents are very supportive of the school. Many report their appreciation of its improvement, one commenting that it is, 'moving forward at great speed'. Pupils' attainment when they first join the school covers a range but, overall, it is well below average. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well to reach below average standards by the end of Reception, because of good teaching and planning.

Recognising that the results of national assessments in English, mathematics and science in Years 2 and 6 have been too low in recent years, the headteacher and capable and committed staff are working determinedly, tirelessly and successfully to tackle this. Thorough monitoring means that the school leaders know what needs to be done and they have introduced many initiatives to raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress. Teaching, overall, is good and has improved because of the leaders' drive to raise the quality. Consequently, pupils are benefiting from increasing amounts of good teaching and the rate of progress they make in lessons is accelerating and is now good. Pupils' improving achievement is most marked in Year 6 because of the consistently good teaching they receive, and these pupils are on track to exceed the challenging targets they were set. Pupils are now making good progress in English and science but less consistently in mathematics. Across the school, the planning for literacy and numeracy has been modified to provide more time for pupils to consolidate their understanding before moving on to new learning. The leaders recognise the need to keep a close check on the impact of these arrangements to ensure that they are having the desired effect.

Pupils enjoy school very much and their excellent social development is best seen in their exemplary behaviour. The headteacher and staff have established a climate for learning in which all pupils are valued, whatever their background or ability, and the school makes a real difference to its pupils. Excellent links with outside agencies contribute to the high quality care provided for them and this means that extra help is provided where it is needed. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties, including those with significant special educational needs, is very good. These pupils make good progress towards the targets set out in their individual plans, which enables them to achieve as well as their classmates. The units that support those most in need are very well integrated and successfully prepare them for the next stage of their education.

The school leaders have an accurate view of how well the school is doing. They recognise that standards in English, mathematics and science need to be higher still, to build on recent improvements. Their track record of raising standards, particularly at Year 6, and their clear understanding of what needs to be done mean that they have excellent capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics and consolidate the gains in English and science.

- Evaluate fully the impact of changes to the planning of literacy and numeracy.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The school leaders recognised that standards were too low and, even taking account of their very low starting points, many pupils were underachieving. Having been exceptionally low until 2004, results in Year 6 have risen, although they remained significantly below average in 2006. The school's robust assessment and tracking systems and pupils' work show that, across the school, improving teaching means that pupils' progress is accelerating and is now good. In particular, current Year 6 pupils are on track to exceed their targets and move standards closer to the national picture in English and science. Mathematics results have proved more stubborn to move and, although there has been some improvement in recent years, results have been consistently exceptionally low. Mathematics standards amongst the current Year 6 are higher, although they remain below average. In Year 2, results have been significantly below average in recent years, but current work shows good improvement. There is no significant difference in the achievement of different groups of pupils across the school. Those with learning difficulties achieve as well as their classmates. Pupils learning English as an additional language are well supported, so that they soon gain confidence and make good progress.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' good personal development, including their spiritual, moral and cultural development, makes a significant contribution to the rising standards. Excellent social development ensures that pupils are polite, helpful and confident and their behaviour is exemplary. Adults and children work very well together and all share an understanding that the core purpose of the school is learning. Pupils have very high levels of enjoyment and participate well in lessons and activities out of lessons. Pupils feel safe in school and report their confidence to approach an adult if they have a problem. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Pupils report that bullying and racism are very rare and anti-social behaviour is not tolerated. Pupils are rightly proud of their school and appreciate how they are helped to make new friends. They take part in a wide range of activities to help those less fortunate than themselves. The school council is very active and pupils feel that their views are listened to and acted upon.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. A drive to raise the quality of teaching is successfully ensuring that pupils benefit from increasing amounts of good teaching. This is accelerating the progress they make in lessons. The school recognises that some inconsistencies remain and is working hard to reduce them. Lesson planning has improved because of work to ensure that lessons provide the right amount of challenge or support for pupils of different abilities. Teachers are clear about what pupils are expected to learn. They keep a close check on pupils' understanding through, for example, posing challenging questions and, in the best lessons, teachers use pupils' responses to deal with any misunderstandings. Occasionally, the success criteria are too broad for the teacher to know precisely how well the pupils are doing. Improvements in the marking

of pupils' work are helping pupils to understand how well they are doing and how they should improve, and pupils are increasingly involved in assessing their own work. Teachers' high expectations of pupils and what they can achieve are a significant factor in the improving picture.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The school has successfully dealt with weaknesses in planning that were identified in the last inspection, so that appropriate time is devoted to each subject. Work continues to improve the provision further. For example, in literacy and numeracy, school leaders identified that pupils needed to spend more time on consolidating their knowledge, skills and understanding before moving on to new learning. Accordingly, units of work are being blocked together to enable pupils to focus on topics for longer periods. A higher priority is being given to investigational work in science. Whilst these initiatives are contributing to the improving picture, it is too soon for their impact to be felt in full. The school leaders recognise the need to check closely on the impact of these changes, to ensure that they are having the desired impact on pupils' progress. A significant success is the wide range of activities outside of lessons that help to capture pupils' interest and enthusiasm. The school plans very well for pupils' personal and social development. Close links with local secondary schools help pupils to prepare confidently for the next stage of education.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Outstanding care, guidance and support make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development, their sense of well-being and their improving progress. There is a very strong emphasis on the inclusion of all pupils, regardless of background or ability and providing pupils, and their parents, with the support they need to learn effectively. The learning mentor and key worker help pupils establish strong learning habits, such as completing homework and having the right equipment to hand and they promote good attendance and punctuality. Rigorous tracking systems are used very well to identify where support is most needed and the capable teaching assistants play a significant role. Pupils with emotional difficulties and those potentially vulnerable are identified at an early stage and receive excellent support. Pupils new to the school are very well supported, so that they settle well and make progress. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties, including those with significant special education needs who attend the local authority designated units, is very good. Strong systems assist pupils in the early stages of learning to speak English and those newly arrived in the country. Pupils receive very good academic guidance, which ensures that they understand what they need to do to improve. They are increasingly involved in assessing their own learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The excellent headteacher is well supported at all levels by staff and governors. She is leading a strong drive for improvement that is already evident in the outstanding care they provide for pupils, their excellent behaviour and their accelerating progress. Standards are rising, as shown by the upward trend in Year 6 test results, but the leaders recognise that there is still more to do. They are well on their way to achieving the improvement they seek, and have excellent

capacity to do so, because they know what needs to be done and have a very good track record. A close check is kept on teaching and learning, and pupils' progress is tracked systematically. Key areas are identified in the good quality development plan, although it is not always clear which initiatives take priority, particularly in relation to raising standards and improving teaching. The headteacher promotes strong teamwork amongst staff so that, for example, subject leaders are taking the right steps to bring further improvement. Good leadership and management in the Foundation Stage ensure children make a strong start to school life. Governors offer good support and challenge and have plans to provide training to extend their contribution. The school has the confidence of parents, one reflecting the views of many in saying, 'I find that the school is very helpful and they are working hard to make good progress.'

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<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?	1
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	1
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>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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	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>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<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.

## Annex A

**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	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

18 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Disraeli School, High Wycombe, HP13 5JS

Thank you for the very friendly way you welcomed us during your recent inspection. We enjoyed watching you in lessons, around the school and in your delightful assembly. A special thank you goes to those of you who spoke to us to give us your views. You gave us lots of helpful information. I am writing to tell you what we found out.

Many of you told us how much you enjoy school and how much you feel your work is improving. We agree. Yours is a good school and we agree with you, your teachers and your parents that it is getting better all the time. It is improving because your excellent headteacher and the other staff are working really hard to try out new ideas to help you learn better. You do your bit too and we were pleased to see how carefully you listen to your teachers and how hard you try. Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent and this is one of the reasons why your school is improving. Your teachers make lessons interesting and make sure that your work is just the right difficulty for you. They know what they want you to learn and they check carefully to make sure that you do. We can see from your books and your lessons that this is working because your work is improving and you are now making good progress. Your teachers have been working hard to make sure that more of your lessons are good ones and they need to keep doing this. The staff take excellent care of you and many of you told us that you feel safe and have an adult to talk to if you are worried.

Your headteacher, teachers and governors have a very good idea of what needs to be done to make sure your school keeps getting better. We want them to help you to improve even more, especially in mathematics. This is happening already, but many of the things that are helping you to improve are quite new and have not yet had time to work fully. They have made some big changes to the way that literacy and numeracy are planned and we want them to keep a close check that they are working properly. We are sure that you will do everything you can to help them.

Once again, thank you for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed being in your school and we wish you good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Williams Lead inspector