



Deansfield Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 132837
Local Authority Greenwich
Inspection number 294042
Inspection dates 25–26 January 2007
Reporting inspector Ann Sydney

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

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|---|--------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Dairsie Road |
| School category | Community | | Eltham |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 | | London SE9 1XP |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 020 8850 1218 |
| Number on roll (school) | 464 | Fax number | 020 8294 2030 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair | Mr M Tindall |
| | | Headteacher | Mrs R Smith |
| Date of previous school inspection | 10 February 2003 | | |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Deansfield is a large primary school with a nursery that admits mainly part-time children. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A small number of pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school at different times is higher than in most schools. Most pupils live nearby where there is little social deprivation, although a few travel from areas that are more disadvantaged. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education for the pupils. It is a happy and caring school that welcomes parents, and in return they speak highly of it. The headteacher and staff give pupils' care and personal development a high priority. Pupils develop into sensible, considerate people upholding the school's motto of 'Work together, learn together, grow together'. While personal development and well-being have remained consistently good, academic performance dipped in 2005. The school is now on track again and results of national tests improved in 2006. Better systems of assessment and pupil tracking have been introduced. There are now some lively, fun lessons taking place where assessment is used frequently to check on learning and this good practice is ripe for sharing.

Standards are now broadly average and pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Children make a good start in Foundation Stage where assessment, teaching and learning are good. However, progress is slower in Years 1 and 2 because there are still some inconsistencies in the teaching. The pupils make up ground in Years 3 to 6 as there is some good teaching that accelerates the progress they make. In the past, inconsistencies in the way pupils' progress was tracked led to an uneven pace of learning across the school. The leadership team has introduced a new tracking system which allows teachers to see easily which pupils are underachieving, and plan their lessons to give a better match to individual pupils' needs. Writing has been identified as a weakness throughout the school but particularly in Years 1 and 2 and a new scheme introduced. The careful monitoring of this development shows it is having an increasing impact on pupils' achievements. Similarly, marking and assessment are a priority for improvement, but in this case new approaches are not yet being consistently implemented.

Staff apply the school's behaviour policy consistently, pupils know the boundaries, and behave well in and out of class. They are learning to live safely and healthily in an environment where safeguarding children has a high profile. Most pupils enjoy school and talk animatedly about the exciting trips they make as part of their curriculum. The curriculum is good with strengths in music and sport, A good range of clubs cater well for pupils' interests. The school is in the vanguard of teaching modern foreign languages, using its link with a secondary school.

The staff team is now well focused on improving achievement. This delayed response is the result of weak school self evaluation and improvement planning. Nevertheless, there is now satisfactory capacity to improve because there is clear evidence that the strategies being put in place are working and are improving achievement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of assessment and planning so that all teachers provide tasks that better match the abilities of all pupils.

- Improve the way the leadership team and governors monitor pupils' progress to provide a more accurate assessment of the school's effectiveness, and make this central to their planning.
- Improve marking so that all pupils know how well they are doing in relation to their targets and how they can improve to the next level.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well because of the good teaching and assessment. Many exceed the goals set for children their age by the time they start Year 1. In Years 1 and 2 progress is slower. Writing is a particularly weak area but the recent enthusiastic introduction of a new scheme is already producing an improvement. In Years 3 to 6 pupils' achievement is better. The results of national tests in 2006 show an improvement on 2005. Overall, pupils in Years 3 to 6 make satisfactory progress but this is uneven. Pupils make better progress in English than in science and mathematics reflecting inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and teachers' use of assessment.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Most pupils enjoy coming to school; they are eager to learn and relationships in the school are friendly and respectful. Pupils say they like 'all the activities you can do, including trips to far-off places'. Pupils show very good attitudes to learning and school. Bullying is very rare and staff deal with it effectively. Pupils thrive on the responsibilities they are given and have helped to agree the school's 'Golden Rules' which govern their behaviour. The school has put in place effective systems to monitor and improve pupil attendance and as a result it is now close to the national average. Many absences are due to holidays taken in term-time. Pupils feel safe and are aware of the importance of living healthily and in particular taking physical exercise. Pupils are aware of the role they can play in helping others and have raised money for a number of charities. However the school recognises the need to improve further pupils' awareness of different cultures within society. Pupils are keen to contribute to the life of the school and Year 6 pupils act as play leaders during break-times. Through the School Council pupils are able to play an important role in the life of the school. Posts of responsibility are valued, as demonstrated by a boy who stood for election three times before being successful!

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but good in the Foundation Stage. Throughout the school, pupils are almost always keen and responsive and say that 'teachers help you if you don't understand'. Many of them relish challenge for example Year 4 pupils choosing the 'hard' option in a lively numeracy lesson. Pupils develop their speech and language by sharing ideas with their learning partner and, in the best lessons, they assess their own work. Many pupils know their targets and how to improve their work to reach the next level but marking rarely refers to these targets. While there is some good practice in the school, it is not consistent. Progress is slower, particularly in Years 1 and 2, where teachers do not use assessment information to match work sufficiently to all pupils' abilities.

All the classrooms are bright and stimulating. Teachers and support staff plan and work well together. Teaching for pupils with English as an additional language or with additional difficulties and disabilities is satisfactory. After a period without a special needs co-ordinator, the quality of individual planning and assessment is improving.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

All aspects of the National Curriculum and religious education are well covered. In response to falling standards in writing there has been a recent focus on this through the school. This is bearing fruit as standards in writing are improving. Personal social and health education are good and ensure that pupils are taught how to be healthy and keep safe. There is a strong focus on music and the school choir has performed in the Royal Albert Hall. Good links with local secondary schools enable many pupils to learn modern foreign languages. A strength of the curriculum is its rich and varied range of extension and enrichment opportunities. Parents and pupils appreciate what is on offer. School visits are linked closely to topic work. Residential trips for older pupils make a positive contribution to their team spirit and leadership skills. There is a good range of extra activities which include a breakfast club, homework and sporting clubs, chess and dance.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's care and support for pupils is good. They are happy and feel secure because their well-being is given a high priority. Clear expectations of behaviour ensure pupils feel safe. Procedures for child protection are well organised. Pupils coming into the school and those moving to secondary education receive good guidance and sensitive arrangements are in place to support them. Links with outside agencies are extensive and used very well to augment the care provided in school.

Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported. The school has identified assessment and tracking as fundamental to raising pupils' achievement, but practice is still inconsistent. Targets are set for literacy and numeracy and many pupils know what they need to do to improve their work. Where new assessment and monitoring systems are well used, as for example in the Foundation Stage, assessment is helping to improve children's achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leaders are aware that pupils made insufficient progress in the past and they have now focused all of their effort on raising achievement. Pupils have individual targets and the school are developing a more effective system for monitoring their progress. Additional support is targeted at those who are underperforming. External consultants support subject co-ordinators who feel more confident in their ability to lead the necessary changes. There is now an understanding of what is needed to ensure improvement and a willingness to work together to make this happen. Already clear improvements can be seen in the Foundation Stage. Consequently, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

The school has an effective system for managing the performance of teachers, however there is no system for regularly updating its own evaluation. Some of the school's judgements are too generous and based on an insufficient awareness of the criteria used to judge success. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of all that goes on within the school and the school listens to them. The budget is managed effectively and resources are well used. Governors are supportive of the school, have effective systems in place to carry out their duties but are not fully holding the school to account for its performance and standards.

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Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| 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 | 4 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 3 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes |

Achievement and standards

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|--|---|
| 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

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|---|---|
| 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

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| 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 | 3 |
| 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

You probably saw the inspectors around the school and we may have visited one of your lessons last week. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. The inspection team were impressed by how friendly you are and the way you care for each other. Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Some of you made an important contribution to the inspection by telling us what you thought and we have passed this on to your headteacher. Many of your parents and carers filled in questionnaires which we took into account when we made our decisions. Your parents said some very nice things about Deansfield School.

The youngest children make good progress. Most of you were are making satisfactory progress but we think you can do even better. You all enjoy school and there is a good range of subjects and some wonderful trips. You learn to be sensible and thoughtful people and to stay safe and healthy. Your teaching assistants do a good job and we saw mainly good and satisfactory lessons. We especially enjoyed the French lesson!

Things are already improving. To improve further we have asked your teachers to:

- provide tasks in lessons that stretch every one of you
- work with the governors to always think about the progress each one of you is making, and base their school improvement planning on this.
- improve marking so that all of you know how well you are doing in relation to your targets and how you can improve to the next level.

We would also like your parents and carers not to take you on holiday in term-time so that you do not miss any lessons. Keep on working hard so that Deansfield becomes a good and even an outstanding school!

Ann SydneyLead inspector