

Dulwich Village CofE Infants' School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100823
Local Authority	Southwark
Inspection number	323354
Inspection date	16 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Grace Marriott

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	234
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Revd Canon Dianna Gwilliams
Headteacher	Miss Erica Phillips (Acting Head)
Date of previous school inspection	15 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Dulwich Village London SE21 7AL
Telephone number	020 7525 9233

Age group	4–7
Inspection date	16 September 2008
Inspection number	323354

Fax number

020 7525 9235

Age group 4-7

Inspection date 16 September 2008

Inspection number 323354

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school as a whole and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and investigated the following issues: pupils' personal development, their achievement, how well they are taught and how well they are cared for, guided and supported, gathering evidence from meetings with staff, governors and pupils. Inspectors observed parts of lessons, examined parents' questionnaires and scrutinised school information including assessment records and self-evaluation. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

Dulwich Village is a larger than average infant school. It is situated on two sites on opposite sides of the main road through the village. About a fifth of pupils come from minority ethnic groups mainly of Indian, African or Caribbean heritage or are mixed race. Very few pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals or with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are below average. Additional needs relate mainly to moderate learning difficulties and speech, language and communication. The school has achieved healthy school status and also won a London Environment Award. The school currently has an acting headteacher because the headteacher went on maternity leave at the start of the Autumn Term 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Dulwich Village Church of England Infant School provides its pupils with an outstanding education in a lively, friendly and caring environment. 'I could not wish for a better place for my children' was typical of comments from parents. Their confidence is justified.

The school aims to promote 'excellence and enjoyment for all' and is very successful in doing this. Pupils want to learn because teachers make the work interesting and enjoyable and have high expectations for what pupils can achieve. One pupil said school was good 'because we never stop learning'. Achievement is outstanding and by the end of Year 2, standards are high. The Reception classes give children an outstanding start and from then on pupils make excellent progress, particularly in reading, speaking and listening and mathematics. Standards in writing are well above average but progress, although good, is not as fast as in reading. Teachers are determined to see that standards and progress are equally good in all areas and are rightly focusing on ensuring that writing skills are taught as effectively as reading skills. They are increasing the opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes and in a variety of styles and are giving them as much encouragement as possible, especially the boys. This is proving very effective.

Pupils say that they very much enjoy school and this is shown in their enthusiastic participation in lessons and other activities, and their good attendance. Their behaviour is excellent. They show a very strong awareness of right and wrong, and understand the concept of fairness. Pupils take full advantage of the healthy options available at lunch, and the extensive opportunities for physical exercise, including active play. They feel safe in school, and are not worried about bullying. Their observance of the rules for movement between the school's two sites is exemplary. The school council has a real impact on the school community. Its members understand and fulfil their representative function very well and are rightly proud of its role in improving the outdoor play facilities. Good links enable pupils to learn more about the local community and contribute well to events. Pupils are very well prepared for their future because they acquire very strong literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, and learn to co-operate well and respect other peoples' ideas. They express themselves clearly and articulately, and listen well to one another and their teachers.

Excellent relationships and mutual respect contribute strongly to the good working atmosphere and the focus on learning. The close partnership between teachers and teaching assistants supports all pupils, but particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities so that they too make excellent progress. Teachers use assessment information well to plan the next steps in learning and give pupils good feedback on how to improve their work. They ensure that pupils know what they should be learning, and encourage them to assess their own and each others' work in a helpful way. The school works extremely well with parents. Termly learning conferences keep parents well informed about progress and the individual targets which their children help to set. The curriculum goes well beyond the requirements of the National Curriculum in its richness and breadth. The school takes every opportunity to expand pupils' experiences through special events, music, drama, and very wide range of visits and visitors. The use of ICT has improved greatly since the last inspection and now makes a strong contribution to learning. Staff show excellent commitment to promoting pupils' welfare as well as their enjoyment and achievement. Many parents comment on how caring and approachable the staff are, and on how well they have helped their children to settle in. Great care and attention are paid to ensuring that children are safe. The very good links with outside agencies

ensure that the school caters well for vulnerable pupils. Close links with other local schools enable pupils to make a smooth transition when they move on.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The acting headteacher and senior team are providing strong leadership, building on what has been achieved. Assessment information is used well to set challenging whole school targets. Though the governing body is in a period of transition, it provides a good balance of support and challenge and is very committed to ensuring that the school continues to improve. For instance, having introduced a successful breakfast club, the governors are consulting parents on the provision of after school care. Completing the policy on promoting community cohesion is a high priority but already the links with other schools and local community groups ensures the school's contribution to community cohesion is good. Planning is thorough at all levels and based on rigorous, systematic monitoring of pupils' progress, teaching and the quality of education. The strong commitment to professional development ensures good support for all staff but in particular, it helps less experienced teachers to develop good skills. The school has seen very positive results from implementing its development plan. For example, the recent focus on mathematics has resulted in much higher standards and excellent achievement. The capacity to improve further is outstanding.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The strengths in personal and academic development seen in the school as a whole are very evident in the Reception classes. Children are generally confident and articulate when they start school. The strong staff team build on this so that children can achieve at a high level. Very good procedures for starting school ensure that children settle happily, feel secure and enjoy the broad range of activities, many of which encourage them to be physically active. Thorough planning based on excellent assessment and recording of children's progress, ensures that individual needs are very well met. By the end of Reception, most children achieve at a level above expectations for their age. They are developing real intellectual curiosity about the world around them and display high levels of independence. Their reading, speaking and numeracy skills are particularly good. The staff have, however, recognised the need to encourage children to choose more writing activities. They are developing more interesting play activities to promote writing and as a result, children are starting to make faster progress. All areas of the EYFS curriculum are covered well and a good balance is maintained between direct teaching and opportunities for children to learn through their own choice of exciting and interesting play activities. The outdoor area is exceptionally well used to provide challenging and stimulating learning opportunities. The leadership and management of the EYFS are excellent and the staff are extremely well supported by the senior management team.

What the school should do to improve further

- The school has rightly identified the need to raise standards in writing to the level of reading and mathematics and is taking appropriate action to improve teaching and learning in this area.

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Annex A

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?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

26 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dulwich Village CofE Infants' School, London, SE21 7AL

We really enjoyed the day we spent with you. Thank you very much for being so friendly and helpful to us. You and your parents obviously think you go to an excellent school and we agree with you. We think it is outstanding and you are right to be proud of it.

These are some of the things that we liked most about your school:

- you get off to an excellent start in Reception and continue to make very good progress in Year 1 and Year 2
- you do particularly well in reading and mathematics
- your behaviour is very good and you play and work together well
- your teachers make lessons interesting and fun so that you really enjoy learning
- all the adults take very good care of you so you are happy and safe in school
- your headteacher, staff and governors work hard to make your school outstanding and are always looking for ways to make it even better.

We agree with the headteacher, staff and governors that they need to carry on working to help you improve your writing so that it is as good as your reading and mathematics.

We hope you continue to work hard and enjoy your time at school.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Grace Marriott

Lead Inspector