

Dukesgate Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105920
Local Authority	Salford
Inspection number	336583
Inspection dates	10–11 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Julie Price Grimshaw

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	193
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Payne
Headteacher	Mr Eugene Connolly
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons and held meetings with staff, groups of pupils, a member of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' work, improvement planning, a range of policy documents, national published assessment data and the school's own data. Inspectors also analysed 31 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- typical features of teaching across the school, particularly in relation to how effectively work is matched to pupils' individual needs
- the achievement of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in Key Stages 1 and 2
- the school's capacity for sustained improvement, given its current context in relation to leadership and management.

Information about the school

Dukesgate is a smaller than average primary school serving a locality that includes areas of significant social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is almost four times the national average. The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. There is provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery and Reception classes.

Over the past year there has been significant instability at senior management level as well as disruption to staffing throughout the school. There have been three different headteachers, including two temporary appointments, since January 2009. The current acting headteacher (who is a consultant headteacher appointed by the local authority) has been in post since September 2009. A new substantive headteacher has now been appointed and is due to take up post in January 2010.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

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.

Children enter the Nursery with skills that are well below typical age-related expectations. As a result of good quality provision they make good progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage. This rate of progress is not maintained in Years 1 to 6 and a high proportion of pupils do not achieve as well as they are able. Attainment, judged to be low at the time of the last inspection, has fallen further and standards are well below average, particularly in English. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is inadequate because, although they are provided with high quality pastoral care, the lack of coordinated provision means that they do not always receive the precisely tailored interventions and support that they need.

The majority of the teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory; nevertheless, there is a significant proportion of inadequate teaching. Overall the quality of teaching is not high enough to overcome the legacy of low achievement and is therefore inadequate. The use of assessment is sometimes weak and tasks are often not matched closely enough to pupils' abilities. The curriculum fulfils statutory requirements but is not sufficiently practical or motivating to meet the needs of all pupils, and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their basic skills.

Most pupils are polite, courteous and behave well, although a small minority occasionally disrupt learning. Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay safe and healthy. Their spiritual, moral social and cultural development is satisfactory, but their low attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy, means that development of workplace skills is inadequate.

The quality of pastoral care for pupils is very high and the school carries out some excellent work with families in the local area. Support and guidance for pupils in their academic work is not consistently effective, however, which means that for many progress is not rapid enough. Consequently, the overall quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory rather than good.

During the autumn term the acting headteacher has put good systems into place to provide a secure foundation for school improvement in the future. The school's self-evaluation is very accurate and governors and staff are fully aware of what now needs to be done. However, there has been insufficient time for recent strategies to

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have a discernable impact. This, together with the fact that the school has not yet re-established stability at senior management level, means that capacity for sustained improvement is inadequate.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - accelerating the pace of learning during lessons
 - ensuring that pupils are more actively involved in their learning
 - matching work more precisely to individual needs
 - using assessment effectively so that pupils know what level they are working at and what they need to do to improve.
- Improve the quality of the curriculum by:
 - making it more relevant, practical and motivating so that pupils are more engaged with their learning
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills across a range of subjects.
- Accelerate the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities by putting effective intervention strategies in place so that they are consistently well supported.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Most pupils have good attitudes towards school and show respect and kindness for one another. They have a particularly good knowledge of safe practices, including safe use of the internet, and know a good deal about the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse. They also have a good knowledge of healthy eating; for example, several Key Stage 1 pupils were keen to point out that, 'Not all sugar is bad – fruits contain their own type of sugar!' Attendance is average as a result of the relentless and very effective work carried out by the school.

Although most pupils behave well during lessons, they have weak independent learning skills and many find it difficult to stay on task. This is mainly because they are not always sufficiently involved in their learning and are not always motivated enough by the content of their lessons. As a result, all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, underachieve. Work is not always challenging enough for the most able pupils, and so they do not fulfil their potential. Attainment in English, mathematics and science has been significantly below average for the past five years, with a declining trend over the last three years.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The quality of provision for the youngest pupils in the school is consistently good. Bright and welcoming learning environments support pupils' learning and assessment is used skilfully to move pupils on. Nevertheless, much of the teaching elsewhere in the school is inadequate. Lessons are often too teacher-led, meaning that pupils are passive and lose interest, and the pace of learning is too slow. Assessment does not consistently provide pupils with the feedback they need to move on in their learning and many pupils are unaware of the level at which they are working. Work is not matched closely enough to pupils' needs and abilities. Support staff work very well with individuals and groups, and when pupils are supported in this way their progress is much more rapid. However, too many find it difficult to work purposefully without this level of supervision. Similarly, support staff make a good contribution to the learning of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, staffing difficulties in this area have meant that insufficient attention has been given to organising specialist provision, such as intervention strategies, for these pupils, and this has slowed their progress.

There is a good variety of activities, such as residential trips and out-of-school visits, which effectively enrich the curriculum. However, day-to-day curricular provision does not meet the needs of all pupils. The school recognises the need to make learning more relevant to pupils by strengthening links between subjects and by including more of the practical activities that pupils enjoy so much. Opportunities for pupils to practise their

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills are currently too limited.

Staff, including the highly effective learning mentors, are exceptionally caring towards their pupils and provide very good quality pastoral support. They carry out valuable work in partnership with external agencies and families.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	4
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The considerable instability in staffing at senior level has clearly had an impact on the school as shown in the weaknesses in provision and outcomes. However, the current headteacher has carried out some very effective work, for example, in establishing regular monitoring and in introducing rigorous tracking of pupils' progress. He has also worked with staff, governors and the local authority to set challenging targets for pupils, although all involved recognise that improvements are needed in the quality of provision in order for such targets to be met or exceeded. The school has a wholly accurate view of its current effectiveness and is now in a position to build on the good work started this term. However, the leadership and management of teaching and learning are currently inadequate as the school is only in the very early stages of tackling the main shortcomings.

There is early evidence that the governing body is growing in effectiveness and governance is currently satisfactory. Governors are becoming increasingly involved with the school on a day-to-day basis. They have a good understanding of school data and are fully aware of their role in tackling the school's weaknesses. They carry out all statutory responsibilities; this includes overseeing the procedures for safeguarding, which are effective in all respects. The school has drawn up an action plan for the promotion of community cohesion. Some good work is already being carried out within the local area, although it is less effective in relation to the wider national and global communities. The promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Pupils from all backgrounds work happily alongside each other and the school has now started to gather relevant information on precise groups of pupils.

Overall, the school's work with parents and carers is satisfactory, although there are good examples of such partnerships in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school works well with a number of external agencies, including local community services, and the impact of this work can be seen in pupils' good knowledge of issues related to

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staying safe and keeping healthy.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

From their very low starting points children make good progress and leave the Reception class with skills that are broadly average. Good use of assessment systems mean that staff are fully aware of which areas they need to focus on the most, for example, communication, language and literacy skills and children's personal, social and emotional development. They are aware of the levels each child is working at and the next steps that need to be taken to move learning on. The indoor and outdoor learning areas provide children with a bright and stimulating learning environment. Staff work very effectively as a team to support children's learning and the role of the key worker is well developed. Strong emphasis is placed on the development of independent learning skills in the Nursery and Reception and children also learn to share and cooperate.

Partnerships with parents and carers begin during the very effective home visits carried out by Early Years Foundation Stage staff. A meaningful dialogue is maintained, partly through good use of learning journals that show children's progress, with parents and carers being invited to regularly add their comments. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed, ensuring that all staff share the drive and enthusiasm of the leaders.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A relatively low proportion of parents returned the questionnaires sent out prior to the inspection. Almost all of these reflected parents' satisfaction with the school. Very few included comments and no concerns were expressed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dukessgate Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 31 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 193 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	61	10	32	2	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	12	39	19	61	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	15	48	16	52	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	48	12	39	3	10	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	20	65	9	29	2	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	65	11	35	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	45	17	55	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	15	48	16	52	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	48	15	48	0	0	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	32	20	65	0	0	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	39	18	58	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	14	45	17	55	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	52	15	48	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



14 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dukesgate Primary School, Salford M38 9HF

As you know, I visited your school recently together with two other inspectors so that we could find out how well you are doing. I would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome and for sharing your views with us. I would also like to share our main findings with you.

We were impressed that you were so polite to us, and most of you behave well during lessons. You told us that the staff at the school take good care of you and we agree. You knew quite a lot about how to stay safe and how important it is to adopt a healthy lifestyle, so well done! The children in the Nursery and Reception get off to a really good start and make good progress there.

You told us that you like lots of practical, interesting activities in your lessons. We have asked the school to look at this so that you can be helped to make faster progress. We also think that you could have more opportunities to practise your reading, writing, number and computer skills in lots of different subjects. Some of you start your work really well but then you slow down and sometimes get a little distracted, so we have asked the staff to make sure you all keep working hard! We have suggested that they look closely at the work you are given, to make sure that it is not too easy and not too hard for you, but at just the right level. You also need to know what level you are working at and what you need to do next.

We have judged that your school requires special measures. This means that it will be visited regularly by inspectors who will help the staff and check that things are improving. You all have an important part to play in improving your school. One way that you can help is by telling your teachers if you think that the work is too easy or too hard for you, so that they can make sure you have everything you need to make really fast progress, especially in English.

Yours sincerely

Ms Julie Price Grimshaw

Lead inspector

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