

Dogsthorpe Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110718
Local Authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	337554
Inspection dates	21–22 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Marion Wallace

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	340
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Noble
Headteacher	Mary Foreman
Date of previous school inspection	22 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 15 teachers and 33 lessons and held meetings with parents, groups of pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at its improvement plan and those of individual departments, minutes of governors' meetings, assessment information and curriculum planning. In addition, pupils' work was scrutinised and 120 parent questionnaires were received and analysed.

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

- the effectiveness of strategies to maintain standards, progress and achievement throughout the school for all groups of pupils
- the achievement of more able and gifted and talented pupils in English and mathematics to determine whether teaching is sufficiently challenging
- the progress made by groups of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who speak English as an additional language and who receive free school meals.

Information about the school

Dogsthorpe Junior is a large school. All pupils come from Peterborough and the local area. The majority of pupils are White British but there is an increasingly high proportion of pupils from Eastern European and other ethnic minority groups and many of these are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language.

There are 21 different languages spoken by pupils. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average, and is particularly high in some classes. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. More pupils than is usual join or leave the school at other than the usual time. There is extended school provision comprising a breakfast club, after-school club and holiday clubs, which are shared with the infant school. The school has gained the International Award, Healthy Schools and Activemark.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Dogsthorpe Junior is a good and improving school. Parents and pupils appreciate the excellent quality of care and enjoyable learning opportunities because there are many areas of strength. One parent summed up the views of the vast majority saying, 'I am proud of the school and very happy with my child's progress. The teachers have done a great job and my child looks forward to being in school.' Parents of children who need extra help commented, 'Teachers go out of their way to help children who need the extra help. There is excellent support for children with learning difficulties.' One pupil expressed the views of the overwhelming majority saying, 'I like this school because it is fun, the teachers are friendly and they try their best to help and care for us. I learn lots of new things. If I don't know something they help me understand it.'

These are the key strengths of the school:

- the school ethos is warm and welcoming, relationships are good and pupils make good gains in their personal development
- progress and achievement are good
- care, guidance and support are outstanding so pupils behave well and are sensible and enthusiastic learners
- the quality of teaching is good and pupils develop a positive attitude to their learning
- the headteacher and senior management team lead the school extremely well and have a clear vision for its future improvement
- the extended school provision is very good and supports pupils and parents well because it is very well organised, providing an exciting range of activities that interest the pupils and cater for their needs.

These are the key weaknesses which remain:

- not as many pupils reach the higher levels in English and mathematics as they do in science
- opportunities for pupils to extend their language skills are sometimes missed.

The strong commitment from all staff to provide each pupil with the best possible education reflects the very strong leadership. The school's good organisation, strong shared vision and track record of improving the learning environment and standards demonstrate its good capacity to continue moving forward. The systems for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the school are effective and contribute to pupils' good achievement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Ensure more able pupils reach the higher levels in English and mathematics by 2011 by:
 - increasing the challenge and expectation for more able pupils
 - ensuring more able pupils learn as fast as they can.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to develop their language skills across all subject areas by 2011 by:
 - ensuring every opportunity is seized for pupils to use their writing skills
 - use writing skills more frequently to enhance other subject areas such as science, history and geography
 - increase opportunities for pupils to read a broader range of stories and books.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils enjoy learning because lessons are well organised and good relationships contribute to a positive climate for learning. In a Year 6 literacy lesson pupils made excellent progress comparing the style and effectiveness of two poems. Pupils enjoyed discussing their responses with a partner and later with the whole class. They were highly inspired by the content of the 'Footsteps,' poem and applied the message of the poem to their own lives. Technology and music were also used very skilfully to guide pupils through the content of the two poems and to help them articulate their own feelings.

Pupils start in Year 3 with standards well below the expected levels. By the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is broadly average in English, mathematics and science. More able pupils achieve well at the higher level in science but not as many reach the higher level in English and mathematics. Achievement is good overall, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Teachers use assessment information well to ensure good learning but there are sometimes missed opportunities to fully extend the more able pupils in mathematics and English. Pupils who enter the school with little or no English make rapid gains because the quality of support is extremely well organised and effective. The school's tracking indicates good progress this year with most pupils on course to reach their challenging targets. Examination of pupils' work shows that it contributes well to their future economic well-being although opportunities to utilise writing skills fully are sometimes missed in subjects such as science, history and geography.

Other key features of pupils' outcomes are given below.

Pupils behave well because they thoroughly enjoy coming to school.

Pupils say they feel very safe because relationships are extremely good and they can discuss any problems they have with adults.

Pupils know what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, enjoying their fruit breaks and frequently attending the good range of activity clubs. This has been recognised through

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the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards.

Pupils have well-developed skills when working in collaboration with others.

Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness contributes effectively to the strong sense of community within the school. Singing in assembly is joyful and enjoyed by all. Pupils are developing good awareness of other countries, cultures, ethnicity and religions because the school continually celebrates the diversity of the many languages within the school. In an assembly to celebrate St George's Day pupils also learnt about patron saints from countries such as Lithuania, Ghana, Poland and France. They learn to make a strong contribution to their school, local, national and global communities and this has been recognised in the school's gaining the International Award.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

The large majority of lessons observed during the inspection were good and a few were outstanding. In most subjects, teachers consistently use assessment information well to plan work that effectively matches the needs of all groups within the class. Occasionally, however, this is less effective for more able pupils, who do not always find the work in

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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English and mathematics as challenging as it could be. This means that they do not always work at their full pace. Teachers use questions well to check pupils' knowledge and understanding. They give good oral feedback to pupils on how to improve their work and marking clearly informs the pupils how to do better. Pupils have a very good understanding of their individual targets and work hard to achieve them. Pupils with additional needs are very well supported by teaching assistants in class and in small groups so they make good progress.

Pupils enjoy the curriculum and this contributes to their growing enthusiasm for learning. The booster groups for Year 6 are extremely well organised and make a significant contribution to pupils' improving attainment. In lessons however opportunities are sometimes missed to use writing skills to extend learning in other subjects, for example, recording in science. The personal and social education programme is a strength, which assists pupils' good personal development. Curriculum enrichment is good and there is a wide range of visits, clubs and activities, which are well attended. The after-school club, breakfast and holiday clubs are very popular, well attended and enrich the provision.

The extremely caring ethos results in very happy pupils who thoroughly enjoy school life. Pupils' needs are central to the work of the school and all adults effectively help children and parents to get the best from learning. Support for pupils who need additional help is extremely well planned. The school works very well with external agencies to support all pupils. Excellent help is given to those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. High quality support ensures pupils who speak English as an additional language and pupils who enter the school speaking no English all settle into school life extremely well and make the same good progress as their peers. All pupils receive very clear guidance on their behaviour and this is reflected in their good conduct. The family support worker makes a significant contribution to supporting parents and encouraging regular attendance. Induction and transition arrangements for children entering the school at other than the usual points during the school year, and when moving on to other schools are excellent and contribute to their good progress.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's skilful management and superb leadership have permeated the school. Leaders communicate ambition extremely effectively and they have a very

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thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The leadership and management of teaching are excellent and this has ensured that the vast majority of teaching is at least good or better. The headteacher inspires others, consequently pupils and all staff are encouraged to strive for the very best they can achieve. There is a strong sense of purpose and desire to overcome any difficulties. All staff are keen to go the 'extra mile', making sure pupils achieve well and aim for high quality in their work. The headteacher and the senior management team lead the school with competence and compassion, valuing the work of others and encouraging them to take responsibility.

The governing body ably support staff in work to improve the school and are increasing the degree of challenge offered to ensure school improvement initiatives are successful. They monitor and evaluate the work of the school effectively. Tracking of progress over time is thorough and senior leaders quickly identify any dips and swiftly put sensible strategies and interventions in place to promote improvement. Appropriate developmental areas to improve further the effectiveness of the school are clearly identified in the school improvement plan.

Cultural diversity of the school is valued and celebrated and consequently, the promotion of community cohesion is effective because pupils develop a good understanding of the school, local, national and global community. The school has yet to fully monitor the impact of its actions to promote community cohesion. The school promotes equalities well, as reflected in the profile of good achievement across groups. It also tackles any form of discrimination decisively. All safeguarding procedures and checks on adults are extremely rigorous and represent examples of high quality practice. The school is proactive in developing excellent partnership links with over 30 local schools and schools in Denmark, Poland and the Czech Republic. This has had a very positive impact on the way the school meets the needs of pupils new to this country. Excellent links with support agencies contribute to the school's good provision. The school deploys its resources well, particularly to improve provision for pupils who need the extra support and intervention.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2

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The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

There were 120 parental responses; this is a good response for a school of this size. Most parents are satisfied with the school. Parents regard the school as very supportive, happy, welcoming and friendly. The very large majority say that their children enjoy attending and that they make enough progress. Parents see the school as extremely caring and supportive and say the staff work very hard and are always approachable. They identify a number of strengths including the range of activities, the relationships with staff, the excellent help for those who need the additional support, the school ethos and the pupils' enjoyment. There were no major parental criticisms; any criticisms were offered constructively and were mainly concerned with lack of information about the progress their children are making. Inspectors agree with the positive views of parents and judge that the school shares sufficient information with parents about their children's progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dogsthorpe Junior 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 120 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 340 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	60	50	53	45	5	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	65	55	51	43	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	59	50	58	49	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	59	50	51	43	7	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	56	47	58	49	2	2	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	56	47	57	48	5	4	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	34	71	60	5	4	1	1
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)	34	29	75	63	5	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	38	63	53	8	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	40	34	70	59	5	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	31	70	59	7	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	44	37	67	56	3	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	63	53	48	40	3	3	2	2

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



23 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dogsthorpe Junior School, Peterborough, PE1 4LH

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed talking with you and your teachers and will remember how polite you all were. Your singing in assembly was lively and tuneful. You and your parents told us that Dogsthorpe is a good school, and we agree.

These are the things we found that your school does well.

You make good progress through the school. As a result, you reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6 because teaching is good.

Your behaviour is good and you know how to keep safe.

You really enjoy and benefit from the many fun activities, clubs, visits, visitors and well organised booster sessions.

Your school cares for you extremely well and teaches you a lot about how to be healthy and to care for others.

Your school council is well organised and is working very well with your teachers to make sure that your school continues to improve.

Your headteacher, senior teachers and governors lead the school very well and all the staff work effectively together as a team to make sure that Dogsthorpe is a safe and secure, fun place to learn.

Your breakfast, after-school and holiday clubs are very well organised and provide you with lots of fun activities and opportunities to learn.

These are the things we have identified for staff and governors to improve.

Make sure that more of you reach high standards in English and mathematics.

Give you plenty of opportunity to use your writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum and encourage you to read a wide range of stories.

Thank you for a very enjoyable and memorable visit to your school and best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Marion Wallace

Lead inspector

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