

Dovelands Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130927
Local Authority	Leicester City
Inspection number	341062
Inspection dates	2–3 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Krishan Sharma

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	531
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wendy Martin
Headteacher	Catherine Moss
Date of previous school inspection	2 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Inspectors saw 20 teachers during 25 classroom visits typically lasting between 20 to 30 minutes. Just over 11 hours were spent in observing teaching and learning. Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and a group of pupils. Inspectors looked at some of the school's policies and procedures, pupils' written work and tracking data used by the school to monitor pupils' progress. One hundred and twenty completed parents' questionnaires were analysed as well as those completed by staff and Key Stage 2 pupils. Many aspects of the school's work were reviewed. The following areas were looked at in detail:

attainment and progress in writing

- achievement at the higher levels of performance in English and mathematics
- individual and group targets and their use by pupils
- the effectiveness of leaders other than the headteacher.

Information about the school

This is a very large primary school. Nearly two-thirds of pupils are of White British heritage. The rest come from a range of minority ethnic groups; of those, pupils with Indian background make up the largest group. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is above average. The proportion of those entitled to a free school meal is below average as is the proportion of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage comprises two part-time, morning and afternoon, Nursery classes and three Reception classes.

The school holds an Artmark award in recognition of its commitment to the arts and first stage of the International School Awareness award for global awareness and citizenship.

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

Dovelands is a good school. At the time of the last inspection, the school was judged to be a satisfactory but improving school. Since then, the school has continued to improve and is confident in its strengths and always ready to do better. The secret of this success has been the passionate leadership provided by the headteacher and her commitment to improving academic standards but not at the cost of pupils' personal development. The middle leadership plays an increasingly active role in developing teaching and learning, although some of the good practice that already exists is not yet shared widely enough. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and is rooted in robust evidence gathered from a full range of sources. The recent positive record of improvement, strong self-evaluation and the distributed leadership in the school, all point to the school's good capacity to sustain improvement in the future. Most parents who responded to the questionnaire are happy with what the school does for their children. One satisfied parent wrote for many, 'I am more than happy with the care and education my children receive at Dovelands'.

By the time pupils leave the school in Year 6, their attainment is above average and most of them have made good progress. Standards in reading are stronger than those in writing. At times, the reasons for which pupils are required to write are insufficiently appealing and the opportunities for developing their writing skills in different subjects, and on computers, are not maximised. Most teaching is good and some of it is outstanding. Teachers hold high expectations and use their good subject knowledge to challenge pupils to do well in lessons. Even so, the senior leaders recognise that at the end of both key stages pupils' performance at the higher levels is not yet as good as they would like to see it. This is because, at times, some of the more-able pupils receive insufficient challenge and they make slower progress as a result. Targets are set for individual pupils, which pupils find valuable. Currently they are not explicitly linked to the National Curriculum levels to give pupils clear idea how well they are progressing towards them and what their next steps should be. The school's basic curriculum is enhanced well with an excellent range of activities, which pupils find enjoyable.

Pupils' behaviour is good and they get on well with each other. The school's inclusive ethos successfully promotes harmonious relationships between different faith and cultural groups. The school has nurtured many partnerships, which it uses well to improve its pupils' basic skills and personal qualities.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' writing skills across the school by:

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- identifying and disseminating the good teaching of writing that already exists
 - ensuring that purposes for writing are meaningful
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills in a range of contexts across the curriculum
 - extending the use of information and communication technology for the planning and drafting of writing.
- Raise attainment at the higher levels of performance in English and mathematics across the school by:
- linking the use of targets set for individual pupils to the National Curriculum levels that they should aspire to
 - explaining clearly what pupils have to do to move on to the next stage of their learning
 - checking more frequently whether the more-able pupils are sufficiently challenged by the work they are doing in lessons and by adjusting plans accordingly.

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

Most pupils achieved well in the lessons observed. They are keen to learn and apply themselves to the tasks given. As a result, most pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language. The end of Key Stage 2 national results for the last two years and the standards of work seen during the inspection clearly indicate that pupils' attainment is above average and it represents good progress from their starting points on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage. Standards in reading are generally better than those in writing. The actions taken by the school to improve writing are already showing early gains, particularly those that focus on preparing pupils orally prior to writing. Pupils, who learn English as an additional language, and the hesitant writers, particularly benefit from this initiative. Occasionally, the work given to some of the more-able pupils is insufficiently challenging and leads to their slower progress.

Pupils say that they feel safe at school and their parents agree with this view. A small number of pupils registered some concern with behaviour in the school through their completed questionnaires. During discussions with inspectors, pupils confirmed that behaviour is mostly good. When, occasionally, unacceptable behaviour occurs, staff manage it well. Pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do to stay healthy. They have a strong desire to help others in the community and willingly raise funds for good causes. They are confident enough to give their views about the school through questionnaires and discussions at the school council meetings. Attendance is above average as a result of the school's concerted efforts.

Confident social skills and a good foundation in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy prepare them well for their future and the next stage of their education. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. They are very willing to reflect on their own and

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others' actions. Their understanding and appreciation of cultures other than their own is good as a result of the many exciting opportunities they are offered at school.

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	2
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

In most lessons, teaching is engaging and contributes to pupils' enjoyment in learning. Pupils know that teachers and other adults expect them to produce the best work they can and most of them rise to the occasion. In the most effective lessons, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, ask precise and probing questions to challenge pupils' thinking and give pupils a sense of urgency in their learning by setting short-term deadlines. Occasionally, teachers' introductions and explanations are far too long and leave pupils insufficient time to apply their skills. Accurate assessments ensure that teachers have a good knowledge of the progress their pupils are making. Teaching assistants are productively deployed and contribute to the good progress being made by pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Most of the oral comments teachers make in lessons and their written comments inform pupils clearly about how well they have done and what they need to

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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do next to improve their work. This is not consistent across the school. Consequently, when marking is less informative, it leaves pupils unsure about their performance.

The curriculum is rich and varied, and is designed well to meet the needs of all pupils. Basic skills of literacy and numeracy are well catered for. The provision for information and communication technology is extensive, but its use in augmenting pupils' learning was limited during the inspection. Links between subjects are getting stronger. The range of enrichment opportunities is outstanding. It includes numerous educational visits, art and musical events, and sports activities. Residential visits for all Key Stage 2 pupils are popular and this provision is appreciated by parents. Not only do the enrichment activities add enjoyment to pupils' learning, they also have a positive impact on their personal development.

The school takes good care of its pupils. Pupils feel secure in the safe knowledge that if they have any concerns, they would be listened to and helped. The comprehensive tracking of pupils' progress ensures that those who find learning difficult or those who need to catch up with their work are accurately identified and targeted for additional support and guidance. Links with external agencies are used well to help improve pupils' basic skills and personal qualities. The induction and transition arrangements are clear and effective.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has given an outstanding lead in moving the school forward. Their focus on improving academic standards and equally on improving pupils' personal development has paid off and the school is now strong on both fronts. The school's commitment to equal opportunities is outstanding and it underpins all its work. The diverse groups present in the school are treated fairly and with respect. Staff ensure that opportunities to learn and to succeed are open to all. Occasionally, when a group could perform better, for example, the more-able, the school's systems are strong enough to alert it to take appropriate action. The school is served well by the quality of its self-evaluation, which is robust and accurate, and it informs priorities for improvement. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is excellent because a full range of evidence is collected to firm up judgements. The collection and analysis of data is a strong feature of the school and its use is highly effective in tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school and for setting

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challenging targets. Other leaders make an effective contribution to the development of the areas for which they are responsible.

Safeguarding procedures in place are good and meet legal requirements. They are regularly reviewed and robustly applied across all areas of the school's work. Governance has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Governors are very supportive and know the school well. They are confident enough to hold it to account. The school enjoys positive relationships with its parents and carers, most of whom are well satisfied with the way they are kept informed about their children's progress. Partnerships with a wide range of providers help the school to improve pupils' learning, including those with English as an additional language and the gifted and talented. The inclusive ethos of the school makes an outstanding contribution to harmonious relationships within the school and cohesion within its community. It reaches out to the wider community by extending pupils' knowledge and access to areas which are dissimilar to its own.

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter Nursery with skills that represent a wide range but are generally lower than those expected for their age. Most children make good progress across all areas of learning. By time they enter Year 1, they reach standards that are broadly average. Induction is planned effectively and staff get to know children quickly and well. Consequently, their particular needs are clearly identified and support is targeted. Despite the limited outdoor provision children have many opportunities to be physically

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active. Planning includes a judicious balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities and provides adequate time for children to work independently. Adults encourage pupils to talk and express themselves. Occasionally, opportunities to extend the conversation beyond the initial response are missed. Children are closely observed and assessed and the information is used well to inform planning for the next steps in each child's learning. However, the staff recognise the need to make better use of resulting data to gain an overall picture of children's progress more efficiently. Care for children is outstanding because adults give very high priority to their safety and well-being. Relationships are good and children are happy to approach adults. Links with parents are valued and regularly used to exchange mutually useful information. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. All adults remain focused on raising children's achievement and promoting their welfare.

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

Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are very positive about the school. They feel that their children enjoy being at school and are kept safe. They also acknowledge that the school helps them to support their children's learning. They regard the quality of teaching in the school and its leadership and management highly. There were isolated concerns across almost all questions asked of all parents. A small number of parents expressed their concern about the extent to which the school takes into account their suggestions and concerns. The views represented by a tiny minority were heavily counterbalanced by the positive responses from a very large majority. In the main, parents' views reflect the inspection findings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Doveland's 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 120 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 531 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	81	68	37	31	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	82	68	36	30	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	42	35	69	58	3	3	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	60	50	49	41	6	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	71	59	46	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	61	51	56	47	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	62	52	53	44	5	4	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)	48	40	57	48	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	58	48	51	43	6	5	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	56	47	54	45	6	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	52	43	52	43	10	8	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	70	58	45	38	4	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	76	63	42	35	2	2	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.



4 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dovelands Primary School, Leicestershire, LE3 0TJ

Thank you very much for all the help you gave the inspection team when we came to inspect your school. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing you at work and at play. We think you attend a good school.

Here are some of the positive things that we found out about your school:

By the time you leave your school at the end of Year 6, most of you reach good standards in English, particularly in reading, and mathematics. This is because you receive good teaching.

You get on well with each other because your school is excellent in helping all of you to learn to respect each other.

You say you feel safe and enjoy being at school.

You care about others in your community and willing to do things to help.

You are keen to learn about other cultures and religions.

Your school is extremely good at ensuring that all of you get a fair deal.

Your headteacher, staff and governors are determined to make the school an even better place that it is now.

To improve your school further, we have asked the people in charge to work on two important things:

- make sure that your teachers give you more, and interesting, opportunities so that you are able to practise and improve your writing skills
- make sure that those of you who would benefit from getting more challenging work to achieve the higher grades do so.

We send you and your friends our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Krishan Sharma

Lead inspector

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