

# Dormers Wells Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	101938
<b>Local authority</b>	Ealing
<b>Inspection number</b>	376646
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Roy Blatchford

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	374
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	George Lafford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Angela Briggs
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	May 2009
<b>School address</b>	Dormers Wells Lane Southall UB1 3HX
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Roy Blatchford

Additional inspector

Carole Beedham

Additional inspector

Shelley Davies

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 24 lessons and 13 teachers over two days, from Nursery to Year 2. Inspectors also observed a number of support groups with teaching assistants. Meetings were held with parents, groups of pupils, staff and governors. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents provided, including data on pupils' reading, writing and mathematical progress and attainment. The inspection team received 79 parental questionnaires.

## Information about the school

Dormers Wells is much larger than the typical infant school. Almost all pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Most pupils speak English as an additional language, often at a very early stage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. Mobility is significantly higher than average. The proportion of those who have special educational needs is above average. The majority of these have moderate learning difficulties. The school has Early Years Foundation Stage provision in its Nursery and Reception classes. There is an independently managed club on the school site which provides breakfast, after-school and holiday care, as well as a Children's Centre.

When the school was last inspected, a high turnover of staff was recorded. This has been significantly reduced. As a result of expanding numbers of pupils in the local area, the school has recently added a fourth Reception class, and the school is set to expand over the coming years.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Standards of attainment are improving, as shown by a series of Key Stage 1 results since the previous inspection. Key changes which have helped raise standards include teachers' raised expectations of what pupils are capable of and more effective tracking of how pupils make progress term by term.
- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly in line with the national average. Given pupils' low starting points on entry to Nursery, many are now making good progress by the time they reach the end of Year 2. The school has been singularly successful in raising standards in reading.
- Teaching is satisfactory, with many good elements. There is still not the consistency of good teaching which the school is striving for, particularly in Reception classes. The use of pupils' progress data to shape how teachers plan their lessons remains an identified priority for further improvement.
- High quality support for those who have special educational needs is a feature of everyday practice, leading to those groups making progress in line with that of similar groups of pupils nationally. The school works effectively with pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.
- Behaviour in the school is good, both in classrooms and around the school at break times. Rare incidents of bullying and fractured relationships are promptly dealt with by vigilant staff. Parents are rightly confident that the pupils are safe and secure. The school is a harmonious, diverse community which successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The headteacher and staff have worked with considerable energy and focus to address previous weaknesses, and are now in a position to strengthen further the ways in which middle managers share best classroom practice. The leadership team have ably demonstrated their good capacity to drive the school

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forward to secure strong outcomes for the pupils they serve.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Focus this academic year on improving outcomes at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Priority should be given to:
  - improving the outdoor environment in Reception
  - removing inconsistencies of practice between the four Reception classes
  - raising pupils' attainment in reading, writing and number work prior to entering Year 1.
- Build on current good practice to make sure that all teachers use progress data to plan lessons which meet the needs of all pupils, including the higher-attaining pupils. Teachers' planning should ensure that lesson outcomes define the new skills and knowledge which they want pupils to acquire, week by week.
- Strengthen the role of the middle leaders, giving them opportunities to share best practice in teaching across the school. This best practice includes:
  - inspiring curiosity in the pupils
  - developing pupils' independent learning habits
  - creating opportunities for pupils to take risks in their thinking and doing.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Overall, pupils acquire knowledge and key skills across the curriculum appropriate to their ages, rooted in learning through purposeful play and regular practice of basic skills. The pace of work in lessons and assignments in exercise books, for example in Year 1 where pupils explained the properties of 3D shapes, indicates a sustaining pattern of improvement.

Pupils enter the Nursery with very limited social and language skills but in the course of a year make satisfactory progress in acquiring an early understanding of oral and written English and basic numbers. That learning is consolidated through Reception so that at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, most pupils have made satisfactory progress given their starting points. Strongest progress in classrooms is made in personal development and knowledge and understanding of the world around them, for example the way in which teachers in Nursery give children hands-on experience with natural materials, and usefully link that to basic counting. Through Key Stage 1, pupils are now progressing as well as all pupils nationally. Pupils make particularly strong progress in reading, rooted in well-focused letters and

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sounds activities and high-quality interventions.

There are no significant differences between groups of pupils over time, although boys outperformed girls in 2011. Those with English as an additional language and those who join the school mid-year perform in line with their peers, as do those who have special educational needs, who are achieving well in focused support groups.

Parents consider their children are making good progress in developing spoken and written English, and current practice across the school indicates this to be the case, although there is slower progress through the Reception year than through Years 1 and 2. Following a number of years in which progress in language, writing and mathematical development has been slow, the school is now demonstrating that, with high expectations from the teachers, pupils' standards are rising rapidly. Writing standards lag behind reading standards, although, for example, higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 are writing assuredly and to a good level about their African topic.

### **Quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching is securely satisfactory. Where pupils make rapid progress, teachers have high expectations, deepen pupils' knowledge and make timely interventions to correct misconceptions. Pupils benefit when teachers offer articulate instructions and take every opportunity to model spoken language. Overall, assessment, tracking and marking procedures are robust and effective.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there are many good opportunities for outdoor learning in Nursery, with effective labelling of objects and activities. Painting and collage work enable children to make links between their number bonds, dots on a dice, and how many legs and feelers different animals and insects have. In comparison, some of the Reception areas are lack-lustre and teaching quality is uneven. In Key Stage 1, the classrooms provide exciting environments, with attractive book corners and displays of artefacts which promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Classroom walls and large-scale maps stimulate understanding of a global, multi-faith society.

At its best, skilfully planned teaching leads to pupils making very good progress, for example in Year 2 when designing clothes for a Kente warrior, or using well-chosen scientific language when discussing what plants need for growth. In these contexts, the impact of a well-planned curriculum is evident: teachers promote curiosity and set productive independent learning tasks. Where teaching is less effective, teachers' knowledge of pupils' prior learning is variable, leading to activities that do not extend the full range of abilities in the class, particularly the more able pupils. Lesson outcomes lack clarity and there is an absence of risk taking.

The school's teaching of reading has been a priority in recent years, and has proved successful in raising all pupils' attainment in reading. Guided reading groups are thoughtfully planned, with teachers and support staff ensuring that systematic practice of letters and sounds is a daily routine. Slower readers are given a variety of

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useful booster sessions while more fluent readers are steered carefully to challenging fiction and non-fiction materials. In the words of one Year 1 girl, 'I love my true books. But I like my stories even more.' Parents commented that the school's focus on reading has really paid dividends, and that 'our children love bringing books home to share with us'. They also value the reading and mathematics workshops the school provides.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around the school is good. This marks a critical step forward for the school and comes as a result of concerted leadership. There has been a marked improvement over time for individuals with particular social needs. Teachers, parents and visitors alike rightly comment on the calm sense of purpose that prevails each day.

Pupils are considerate to one another, handle their own belongings and the school's resources carefully, and show respect consistently to the adults around them. Disruptive incidents and incidents of bullying are rare, but when, for example, two pupils behave unkindly towards one another, senior staff intervene promptly and sensitively, recognising the vulnerable backgrounds of a number of families. The pupils themselves understand the different types of bullying, how to prevent them, and how to keep themselves safe. They are learning what constitute unsafe situations through, for example, the School Council's current investigations into playground equipment.

Suitable play equipment is made available to pupils at break times. A few parents commented that they would like to see extra staff supervising in the playgrounds, but inspectors found good levels of vigilance by staff and sports coaches, including immediate support for pupils who had fallen over while playing.

Throughout lessons, pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning, their teachers and support staff. In Nursery and Reception, children work collaboratively in pairs and small groups, indoors and outdoors, and they respond promptly to instructions. Similarly, in Years 1 and 2, positive levels of engagement allow lessons to flow smoothly, for example in physical education sessions where movement between different equipment is unfussy. Routines for entering and leaving classes and moving around the corridors are well embedded, and procedures for parents collecting their children at the end of the day are safe. Pupils' attendance, including those in vulnerable circumstances, has improved measurably over recent years and stands in line with national averages.

### **Leadership and management**

The school has been demonstrably successful in improving pupils' achievement this past year. There is greater staffing stability after a period of high turnover of teachers. The headteacher and her deputy have created a strong team ethos which has focused on a number of priorities. They have significantly improved pupils'

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behaviour to the point where it is now good and enables a positive learning culture to prevail across the school. Well-targeted professional development has been organised, especially in the effective teaching of phonics, writing and assessment for learning techniques.

Middle leaders, particularly in literacy and numeracy, have had a decisive impact on the quality of tracking of pupils' progress and have ensured, through the compilation of portfolios of pupils' work, that all staff understand how to moderate work accurately. Other aspects of their role are less well developed, such as sharing effective teaching and learning practices with all teachers in order to promote pupils' independent learning skills.

The curriculum is satisfactory, with good individual elements, and is generally matched to pupils' needs and interests, particularly in Key Stage 1. However, delivery of the curriculum in the Reception year remains uneven. The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is integral to the school's everyday practice, in assemblies and classrooms, for example celebrating the Chinese New Year and major religious festivals through eye-catching displays. Pupils are adequately prepared for the next phase of their education, a fast-improving picture given recent successes in reading attainment.

All staff, together with the governors, promote equality and are effective in tackling discrimination if it occurs. The governing body has a keen understanding of parental aspirations, and is an integral part of the school's improvements. Senior leaders take safeguarding very seriously and have ensured that all appropriate training and procedures are in place.

The headteacher and her staff have demonstrated over the past two years that they have had a crucial impact on improving pupils' behaviour and raising standards of attainment at the end of Year 2. This is rooted in careful self-evaluation, robust analysis of pupils' individual learning needs, and an ambition to secure greater consistency in all classroom practice. The school has strong capacity to improve outcomes for all its pupils. In the words of parents who wrote to inspectors, 'We have an improved standing in the community' and 'I can see the real growth and development of my child at this school.'



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons, and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**

25 January 2012

Dear Children



**Inspection of Dormers Wells Infant School, Southall UB1 3HX**

You may remember that a team of inspectors visited your school recently. We watched many lessons, listened to you read, and watched you enjoying playtimes and moving calmly around the school. Thank you for the way you welcomed us and shared your work. It was most helpful to hear the School Council's ideas on safety.

The school is giving you a satisfactory education. What you achieve in reading, writing and mathematics is improving all the time. You have made particularly good progress in your reading. Some children who find learning a little difficult are helped well by the staff.

We were happy to see how well you behaved in classrooms and around the building. All of you we spoke to said you felt safe and secure and always looked after by the adults. When a problem happens in the playground, you know who to go to for help. You all have different family backgrounds and speak many different languages – you enjoy each other's company and get on well together.

We have asked the headteacher and staff to build on what they have done over the past two years. We have asked them to make sure that children in the Reception classes learn more quickly, and to improve the spaces outside the Reception classrooms. We have asked the teachers – and you can help here – to give you chances to work on your own and set up activities which make you think hard, whatever your interests and abilities.

The headteacher is determined to keep on improving what happens in classrooms. More children are joining the school than ever before, so you can welcome them and together make sure that your families are proud of what you are learning every day.

Yours sincerely

Roy Blatchford  
Additional inspector

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