

# Downsview Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	134515
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	385334
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Kevin Hodge

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	143
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Hopelin Appleton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Duncan Edwards
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24–25 November 2010
<b>School address</b>	Beech Avenue Swanley Kent BR8 8AU
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<b>Fax number</b>	01322 667468
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	7–8 March 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	385334



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Kevin Hodge

Additional inspector

Joanna Jones

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed fourteen lessons taught by seven different teachers which totalled approximately seven hours. These included joint observations of lessons conducted with the headteacher. Inspectors held discussions with groups of learners, staff, and members of the governing body. The 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 development planning, the school's website, tracking information showing pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans and pupils' work. There were no parent, carer, staff or pupil questionnaires because of the nature of this inspection. Parents' and carers' views collected by the school since the last inspection were taken into consideration and the lead inspector met with a small group of parents and carers.

## Information about the school

Downsview is smaller than the average-sized primary school. When the school was last inspected it was judged to require special measures. The headteacher, who was temporarily leading the school, was appointed permanently in December 2011. A new deputy headteacher has joined the school since the last inspection.

Most pupils are White British, but a small proportion is of minority ethnic heritage. A very small proportion speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The number of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is higher than found nationally. The Early Years Foundation Stage children are taught in one Reception class. The school runs a daily breakfast and after-school club.

The school meets the government's current floor standard.

## Inspection judgements

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

### Key findings

- This is a good school. In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.
- The school has improved significantly but is not outstanding as teaching, while typically good, is not yet of the highest quality in all classes and there are still weaknesses in aspects of pupils’ English abilities.
- Pupils achieve well throughout the school. Children’s early reading, speaking, writing and number skills develop systematically in the Reception class. In Years 1 to 6, pupils’ reading, mathematics and more recently their writing skills have improved well. Because of improved progress, pupils now reach broadly average levels of attainment when they leave in Year 6.
- Typically, good levels of teaching promote pupils’ better learning. Regular, ‘hands on’ activities aid pupils’ enjoyment of lessons. There are some small variations in quality between classes and some opportunities are missed to extend pupils’ writing abilities. Better assessment routines effectively help pupils improve their work. They typically say lessons are ‘more fun’.
- The school’s successful efforts to raise pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding mean they typically behave well. Playtimes are usually incident free and lessons are rarely disrupted. Pupils’ appreciation of others, both within and beyond school, and their increased confidence to learn prepare them well for their next schools.
- The work of senior leaders, including the governing body, has successfully remedied weaknesses in safeguarding, pupils’ achievement and their behaviour. Clear expectations, set through good management systems, have improved teamwork and teaching performance to good effect. The curriculum is more interesting. Parents and carers indicate that improvements have been marked, a view that is confirmed by inspection evidence.

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

- Improve pupils' attainment and progress in English by December 2012 through:
  - ensuring that pupils have a wider written and spoken vocabulary
  - providing pupils with more compelling reasons to write frequently and at length
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to write and speak so that their confidence to express themselves is more secure.
  
- Improve teaching and the consistency of pupils' learning through the school to become outstanding overall by December 2012 through:
  - increasing the use of ICT within day-to-day activities
  - giving pupils more choice in how they can learn, record or investigate within activities, such as mathematics or science
  - ensuring that teachers' explanations or discussions are briefer so that pupils have more time to develop their speaking skills and tackle learning activities.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils achieve well given their below-average starting points and reach broadly average levels of attainment by the end of Year 6. After a good start in the Reception classes, where children gain a good range of early reading, writing and number skills, they enter Year 1 with levels of attainment close to the levels expected for their age. In Years 1 to 6, pupils continue to make good progress, although it sometimes varies between classes, as there are minor variations in teaching quality.

Pupils' writing skills have improved since the last inspection, but there are still some weaknesses that prevent pupils reaching above-average levels of attainment. The lessons and work seen indicate that simple reports, descriptions or stories are interesting, although not all pupils use a wide enough range of vocabulary in their written work or when speaking to others to make their writing as interesting as it could be. Teachers work hard to promote pupils' speaking skills, but this remains an important area for continued work as some pupils find it hard to speak at length. In one lesson, for example, the teacher had to probe and guide pupils in how to use interesting words such as 'intriguing' to make their writing about a highwayman more sinister.

Pupils commented that they like learning now as activities are more practical and relevant. For example, in a Reception class, children enjoy using their new climbing equipment and in pretending to be police officers. The secure start in writing and reading is fostered due to effective teaching of letters and sounds (phonics). As a result, pupils are confident readers. Standards in reading are broadly average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils recall favourite authors and are proud about keeping their reading records up to date.

Pupils' understanding and use of ICT skills are secure within dedicated lessons, such

as when they develop presentations on tourism, but there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop these skills by applying them across the curriculum. Writing skills are used within other subjects, although opportunities to practise these skills extensively to speed up their progress still further are too few. Pupils' past work in science, and to a lesser extent in mathematics investigations, indicates activities do not always start with an exciting or relevant problem to solve. Calculation skills and problem solving are now well taught so pupils are confident and accurate.

The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs make similarly good progress to their classmates as their needs are identified quickly and accurately. Activities within classes, small groups or through one-to-one tuition help them keep pace with others. Parents and carers indicated in the school's questionnaires that they are pleased with the improved progress and learning that their children make which is confirmed by inspection evidence.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teaching has steadily improved to typically good levels since the last inspection. It is more focused on accelerating pupils' learning. Better relationships between adults and pupils mean most lessons are free from disruptive behaviour. Pupils are clear about the purpose of the lesson. Assessment, in the form of target setting, is now well established. The teaching of reading is good through the school so pupils' love of books is not hindered by a lack of confidence to read unfamiliar texts. Planning across year groups usually ensures good coverage of skills in a range of subjects. A focus on improving pupils' writing skills through the school has raised their abilities. Very occasionally teaching is outstanding, but there is not enough of this in the school as a whole. For example, in one very well taught lessons, pupils' writing skills, as they recounted ingredients for Anglo-Saxon bread, promoted fun, challenge and highly effective use of descriptive vocabulary. In the school as a whole, pupils do not write regularly enough or at length.

Work is matched closely to different abilities with additional support, activities or resources to aid learning. Practical activities form the basis of many lessons and foster pupils' enjoyment. Topics in mathematics have become more meaningful and novel ways of making calculation fun, such as pretending to crack a secret code, are highlights for pupils. Teachers make good provision to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through activities that focus on the school's values of promoting good behaviour. While teaching is mainly good and, in some instances outstanding, sometimes teachers' explanations can be overly long, reducing the time for pupils to get down to work. Pupils do not always have enough choices in influencing their style or method of learning.

Marking of pupils' work, using comments which are either 'pink to think' or 'green for good', are appreciated by them and give good guidance in how to improve their work. Additional adults make a significant contribution in lessons or small group sessions when they are clearly focused on addressing the needs of those very few pupils who speak English as an additional language, or who are disabled or have special educational needs. There is effective practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage, including the systematic teaching of early number, reading and writing within

a well-ordered, safe environment.

Parents and carers who responded to the school's questionnaire, and the few spoken with during the inspection, appreciated the improvements in teaching which inspection evidence confirms.

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

Pupils' behaviour improved quickly to good levels following the last inspection as the school made it a priority to set clear boundaries, provide more incentives for good behaviour and involve the pupils themselves in seeing the benefits of better relationships with fellow pupils. Pupils themselves now typically say the school is, 'fun', 'brilliant' and 'excellent'. Many also say that lessons are more interesting. Improved attendance levels are testimony to their increased motivation to learn. Pupils enjoy their new roles as play leaders, who befriend pupils who may be lonely or help to distribute play equipment at lunchtimes so that they become active, friendly occasions. Pupils are aware of different types of bullying, including physical, verbal, computer-based or that aimed at criticising differing backgrounds and beliefs. Pupils report that incidences of bullying are very rare. Pupils say that earning their 'golden bells' as rewards for good behaviour has helped reinforce their motivation to follow school rules. Lessons, on most occasions, take place in a friendly and cooperative atmosphere, which aids pupils' learning. They speak highly of the breakfast and after-school clubs which some attend. Parents and carers commented favourably and accurately on the improved ethos for learning and the good levels of behaviour which now exist. Evidence confirms that rare examples of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively.

### **Leadership and management**

Senior leaders, including governors, set about the task of improving the school following the last inspection, and quickly tackled the most urgent priorities such as securing good safeguarding routines and then focusing on improvements in pupils' attainment, behaviour and personal development. Good links, developed with a local outstanding school, have helped to increase the capacity to improve to the current good levels. Notably, there has been a detailed review of the provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Action to improve the monitoring and management of teaching has been sustained and effective. The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, has set clear expectations, of staff, through systematic monitoring and management of teaching, along with good levels of professional development. Staff have responded to these, resulting in better teaching, planning and assessment routines. Pupils' progress is now more rapid. A focus on improving writing has raised pupils' attainment from low levels, although the school recognises that there is still more to do on this.

Pupils benefit from a good imaginative curriculum that now provides well in teaching basic reading, spelling and mathematical skills and enriches pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education well. Pupils say lessons are more interesting, typified by activities such as discovering about Anglo-Saxon meals, Second World War air raid procedures, or going on a mathematical 'shape hunt' around the school.

The governing body has ensured that safeguarding routines, site security, checks on staff and policies to eliminate any potential discrimination are fully in place. There are few variations in attainment between boys and girls, with any variations narrowing quickly with pupils nationally. All pupils have equal opportunities to take part in a wide variety of activities, including attending those that take place before and after school. These initiatives have led to the good levels of pupils' behaviour, safety and personal development, noted by those parents and carers who responded to the school's questionnaire, and by those spoken with during the inspection.



## 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.**

9 March 2012

Dear Pupils



**Inspection of Downsview Community Primary School, Swanley, BR8 8AU**

Many thanks for your welcome when we visited your school. We think yours is now a good school, which everyone is keen to keep improving. Here are some particular things we found out.

- You make good progress in your learning most of the time so achieve well in your reading, listening skills, mathematical and topic-based work.
- Although your writing skills have improved considerably, we think some of you could still be more confident to write longer and even more imaginative stories.
- You behave well and you told us you enjoy lessons now that they are more fun.
- Your attendance levels are now average and improving – keep it up and well done!
- The school cares for you well, particularly those who find learning hard.
- The school makes good links with your parents and carers. I spoke to some who said they really like how the school has improved.
- You told us that you all feel safe now in school, helped by having play leaders, and that bullying is a rare thing.
- The headteacher, staff and governors now have a very clear idea of what makes a good school. They are continuing to look at ways that the school can be even better, so please make sure you help them in every way you can.

We have asked the school to improve two particular aspects to help it get even better.

- Help improve your English work even more so your extended stories, accounts and explanations, both written and told, are really clear and imaginative. This will mean that you will have more opportunities to talk about your ideas and use an increasingly wide range of new words.
- Make all teaching exciting and to the level of the very best in school.

All of you can help too, by trying to keep up your good behaviour and in giving your ideas about how the school can keep improving.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Hodge  
Lead inspector

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