

# Dartford Bridge Community Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135280
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	360712
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 October 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Paull

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	106
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alastair Jefford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Samantha Crinnion
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Community Campus Birdwood Avenue, Dartford DA1 5GB
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed six lessons that were taken by six different teachers. Pupils' work in books, folders and on display was scrutinised. Meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, and representatives of the staff, members of the governing body and pupils. Fifty questionnaires that were returned by parents and carers were analysed and an inspector spoke to a small number of parents and carers face to face. All views expressed, together with information in documents related to safeguarding, future plans and others that track pupils' progress at the school, were taken into account.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness with which the assessment of pupils' work is used to establish reasons for variations in performances in different subjects, and what is done to address such variation.
- How well procedures for safeguarding pupils have been set up from the opening of the new school and the consequent impact on pupils' feelings of safety and well-being.
- The school's strategies for promoting, especially, the national and global elements of community cohesion.

## Information about the school

Dartford Bridge Community Primary School opened just over one year ago, as a part of Dartford Bridge Community Learning Campus. At the moment, its roll is smaller than average, but numbers are increasing and are projected to grow beyond the average size. It has its own Reception class for four-year-olds in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national figure, although it is rising steadily. Only very few pupils are at early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Most of these pupils are identified with moderate learning and/or speech and language difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average.

The school manages its own breakfast club.

**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

The school has made a good start. It is already providing its pupils with an effective education. When it opened, the headteacher, staff and governing body used local data, national figures and demographic information to establish challenging but achievable targets and priorities on which to focus. As actual data about the school's performance and its pupils' achievement emerged, it was used to establish a curriculum that meets individual needs well. Based on accomplishments to date, this evaluative process is proving successful in ensuring a good capacity to improve. One parent, typical of those who were spoken to directly, and consistent with responses in questionnaires, commented, 'I was a bit concerned at first, because a new school has no reputation at all, so you just don't know either way. I needn't have worried. From the outset, my child has made progress and we have felt that they really want to know us.' Indeed, the whole staff operate within a thoroughgoing open-door policy that establishes an outstanding partnership. Pupils enter their classrooms before the official opening time and parents and carers are welcome, too. This provides opportunities for them to settle their children happily, and to swap important information with staff in an informal way.

Pupils' progress is good because good teaching ensures achievement is based on carefully planned strategies for learning that meet all needs. The school has not been open long enough for its thorough assessment procedures to have produced year-on-year data on pupils' performance. As a result, they have not had sufficient time to become fully usable as a tool to adapt teaching in the long term. Nevertheless, the available information is promising. Pupils' present rates of progress indicate that the school's first Year 6 class is on course to attain at least expected levels by the end of the year. This is despite often lower than normally expected starting points when they first came. However, variations in performance exist between subjects and age groups. Writing is not as good as reading. By the end Year 2, attainment in mathematics is above average whereas attainment is broadly average further up the school. High proportions of families moving in through the year contribute to these variations.

Pupils say that the staff make them feel really safe. For example, one of them added that the staff look after them brilliantly and others agreed. Other outcomes are good, including knowledge of how to live healthily, behaviour and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Safeguarding of pupils is rigorous. Senior staff and the governing body ensure good procedures for minimising risks. While schemes to raise awareness of national and global cohesion remain at an early stage, success is already evident in establishing the school as a community hub, which was a priority.

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

- Ensuring that as assessment information emerges year- on -year, it is used increasingly to adapt planning of what is taught, to which pupils and when, so:
  - ? building on the higher attainment in mathematics in younger age groups, as these pupils move through the school
  - ? raising pupils' performances in writing to match their achievements in reading.
- Explore and introduce ways of promoting the national and global elements of community cohesion.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Present Year 6 pupils are on course to achieve at least broadly average attainment in English, mathematics and science. In a mathematics lesson, for example, they drew shapes successfully from given criteria and demonstrated good knowledge of the properties of shapes. Pupils' writing contains examples of rich vocabulary, good use of punctuation and reasonable spelling. They read particularly well, as seen in sessions set aside for all pupils to practise this skill. The school's own data confirm progress at a very fast rate. Although not quite this rapid, progress is good in writing. In Years 3 and 4, for example, pupils demonstrated awareness of how to construct adventure stories and acquired secure knowledge of the genre as well as sharing ideas. The teacher ensured good progress of pupils who might otherwise struggle, by reminding them to concentrate on 'two adjective sentences' and to use ideas that excite them, because these are likely to excite other people. Externally checked Year 2 assessments in mathematics indicated above-average attainment at the end of last term. Again, the school's own progress data indicate progress is at an accelerated rate amongst a high proportion of pupils. Pupils' individual needs are met well owing to the staff's speed of response to anything that prevents learning. The special educational needs coordinator, together with the headteacher, is very conscientious in responding to concerns, whether these come from staff, parents and carers, or pupils themselves. She seeks reasons and finds ways of addressing them, so good progress is restored quickly.

When asked, pupils state that they are happy at school and enjoying their experiences. They feel that this is because the headteacher and staff emphasise that everyone should help each other as one big family. Behaviour is good in lessons, on the playground and around the building. Pupils take part enthusiastically in physical education lessons and attend after-school clubs in good numbers, and understand the importance of activities that 'keep you fit'. They know right from wrong and demonstrate this in cheerfully helpful actions around the building. For example, they contribute well to recycling. The school council is an enthusiastic group that is clear about its function and believes that the senior staff and other pupils accept and value their ideas. New house captains are successfully galvanising their teams into choosing charities for fund-raising efforts. Pupils listen attentively in assemblies and adopt reverent and serious attitudes whenever appropriate. The acquisition of skills that support future well-being is good and reflects pupils' good progress in sociability, literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology. Attendance is above average.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers manage pupils well, which contributes to a good learning ethos and means that classroom time is used effectively, so good achievement results. In classes throughout the school, teaching is characterised by tasks that consolidate learning through practical activities. This enthuses pupils and keeps them learning busily. Opportunities for discussions, drama, role play and talking with a partner are frequent. This addresses an identified need of many pupils to improve their vocabulary, speaking and listening skills that result in improved ideas for writing. Short sessions at the end of lessons are used well to assess what pupils have learnt, to fill gaps in learning and to consolidate progress. However, owing to the newness of the school, formal assessments have not produced enough information to ascertain the changes that might be required in long-term planning. As the pupil roll rises, new teachers join the staff, which necessitates constant re-embedding of procedures. That said, the curriculum contains all statutory-required elements, and intelligent use of local authority and demographic information has resulted in the provision of work that is well suited to pupils' needs. Enhancements are then made with visits and visitors who enrich what is taught. Work with visiting artists, for example, has already produced much art work of high quality, thereby raising expectations and contributing to pupils' self-esteem.

Much is done to ensure that the needs of individuals and groups are focused effectively. The school's position as part of a wider learning campus helps to access other services as

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they open on the site. The special educational needs coordinator has shown a meticulously careful approach to keeping records of pupils' requirements and responses, based on common procedures shared across different services. This has led to effectiveness of partnerships with outside agencies, so enabling experts to confirm the validity of the school's referrals quickly and to provide helpful advice about what to do next. This extends across the full range of educational, social, emotional and behavioural needs. Another strong feature is how these procedures are applied to providing programmes for high achievers, so their gifts and talents are not wasted. All the staff are involved in mapping out where and which resources will be most effective and deploying teaching assistants to where interventions are needed most. Teaching assistants work cooperatively with the teaching staff to support pupils socially and academically to good effect. Arrangements for their professional development and training are good, although not fully embedded in practice. All aspects of health and safety policy, child protection and risk assessment are in place and meet national and local requirements.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and governing body use information well to address all aspects of provision to ensure effectiveness. They are alert to national and local initiatives and use them to meet pupils' needs effectively. They show considerable determination and endeavour in introducing schemes to improve teaching and to help pupils learn and progress. The headteacher works hard and is effective in ensuring that provision secures good experiences for pupils. She has successfully built on this throughout the school's successful first year and leads staff and governors as a strong team. The governing body is supportive and questioning. It adopts monitoring procedures, such as attending senior leadership meetings, preferring to gather its information this way, rather than imposing another tier of governing body meetings on the committed and hard-working staff. Management of safeguarding, including staff vetting, first-aid training and all other aspects, is thorough. Such procedures apply fully to the breakfast club, which provides a healthy and calm start to the day.

Equality of opportunity is strongly evident in the way that anything presenting difficulties for pupils' learning or preventing good progress is tackled with determination. Coffee mornings for parents and carers, distribution of weekly information sheets and newsletters are in place, as well as invitations to school events to those living in the locality. These features have helped to make the school a cohesive element in the life of the growing community around it. An audit and action plan indicates that ideas are in place to forge



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links further afield, particularly with a school in France. A successful opening year means good value for money is evident.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Successful routines that settle children quickly when they first arrive are evident. This is built on good initial contact with families, including home visits. These visits provide opportunities to swap information, so individual needs are known and children make progress quickly as soon as they begin school. Assessments soon after children enter indicate that attainment at this point is often below age-related expectations in some important areas, such as language development and communication. Records are kept meticulously. The staff observe children's activities and use their notes and assessments to plan activities accordingly. Indications are that learning and development are good. At the end of the Reception's first year, a higher proportion of children reached outcomes that are usually expected than had been the case when they first attended.

Independence and self-reliance are successfully encouraged and children thrive socially and across the areas of learning. Good leadership ensures that provision is of good quality and in some respects outstanding. For example, resources are tailored very effectively to meet individual requirements. This was seen when a group of boys were excitedly adding their names to a list of astronauts, so they could go on a 'journey to the solar system'. All the adults are good practitioners. They use good open-questioning techniques to engage children's interest and to encourage high-quality speaking and listening. Good developments in the outside area have ensured that all areas of learning are available to children who prefer this learning environment. Nevertheless, further development here is correctly seen as the next priority for improvement. For example, the exterior asphalt

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surfacing is unmarked. This means that number lines and grids for counting have to be taken in and out daily. That said, the space is well suited to further adaptation.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly pleased with what the school provides. This is evident in their responses to Ofsted's questionnaires and in what they told one of the inspectors. Just one negative response was made to different statements in the questionnaire, so no pattern was evident. No-one recorded strong disagreement with any statement, whereas strong agreement was the highest response in all cases.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dartford Bridge Community 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 106 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	82	9	18	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	42	84	8	16	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	38	76	9	18	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	72	10	20	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	37	74	10	20	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	68	14	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	76	11	22	1	2	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)	31	62	11	22	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	64	17	34	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	66	16	32	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	68	13	26	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	42	84	7	14	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	39	78	11	22	0	0	0	0

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

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



13 October 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Dartford Bridge Community Primary School, Dartford,**

Thank you for being so helpful and willing to talk to my colleague and me when we came to your school. You helped a huge amount to make the two days go well. I enjoyed speaking to you and visiting your lessons. It is great that so many of you say that you like your new school a lot. All of the children to whom we spoke thought that Dartford Bridge is a good school and I agree with them.

You will see some of the important things that we found out in this list.

- Your teachers teach you well, so you succeed in your lessons and make good progress.
- All the adults in school care for you well, and the staff and your parents and carers work together very closely indeed to make sure that everything works well for you.
- Your behaviour is good.
- Every single one of you whom I asked said that they feel very safe at school.
- You show strong willingness to do jobs that help your teachers to run the school.
- The staff and governing body have good ideas to make your school even better.

Here are two things to help improve your school further.

- We would like the staff to build up their records about your progress, so they can plan your work even better and help you do equally well in all the subjects.
- We would like you to have more opportunities to know people up and down the country and overseas, and to learn even more about their lives.

All of you can help, too, by continuing to work hard. I hope that you will always enjoy school as much as you do now.

Yours sincerely

John W. Paull

Lead inspector

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