

Dorset Road Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101607
Local Authority	Bromley
Inspection number	355037
Inspection dates	30–31 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Margaret Coussins

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	58
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Samantha Hoyer
Headteacher	Jean Hiller
Date of previous school inspection	13 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed seven lessons and four teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, other staff with leadership responsibilities, the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including, the school improvement plan, the school's self-evaluation documents, pupils' progress records and the safeguarding procedures. Questionnaires from 40 parents and carers were received and analysed.

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

- It looked at the impact of the curriculum on teaching and learning and the achievement and progress for all groups particularly boys.
- It looked at how well the school is improving pupils' achievement and progress in writing.
- It looked at the impact of the work of all leaders and managers, including the governing body, on school improvement.
- It looked at how effectively procedures ensure a smooth transition into school, across the year groups and into pupils' next schools.

Information about the school

Dorset Road is smaller than the average-sized school. Most pupils come from White British heritages. The next largest groups are from other White heritages, Asian or Black Caribbean heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the proportion that speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Their needs relate mainly to moderate learning difficulties. The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in a Reception class. The school has gained the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards. A daily breakfast club is provided.

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

Dorset Road is a good school. It is a welcoming, friendly school. Good trusting relationships between pupils and adults reflect the outstanding care, guidance and support provided. As a consequence, pupils feel safe and develop good personal skills including spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. One parent wrote 'Dorset Road is about nurturing, encouraging confidence and values and offers the best opportunity for learning in its small, caring and motivating environment.' Not surprisingly, behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. The work the school has done to gain the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards is reflected in pupils' excellent awareness of how to keep fit and healthy. Pupils enjoy school. One pupil said 'The headteacher is nice, all the teachers are nice, they make us laugh and that makes learning fun.' The school works hard to promote the importance of regular attendance, which, although improving, remains satisfactory.

The school has sustained its good position reported at the last inspection and improved in raising attainment. Caution is required, however, in interpreting published data, due to the small and fluctuating numbers in the Year 2 cohorts. In 2010, more pupils than in the previous year reached average or above average attainment by the end of Year 2. Pupils' current work and progress data show that pupils may be on track to reach above-average attainment overall by the time they leave school.

Teaching is mostly good. Work is usually matched well to pupils' learning needs and assessment is informing the next steps in learning. As a result, pupils of all abilities, including those with moderate learning difficulties, achieve well. Whole-school topics, such as the rainforest work seen during the inspection, are helping to ensure that the good curriculum provides creative learning experiences for pupils and link subjects together in a meaningful way. On a few occasions, however, tasks are not sufficiently fine-tuned or well planned to meet the needs of all pupils as effectively as they could be, by providing memorable and exciting activities that enliven learning.

The school has worked hard to develop writing skills, particularly for boys, but has identified correctly that more needs to be done to accelerate progress. There are not always sufficient opportunities for pupils to write spontaneously or independently for a range of different purposes, for example in role-play areas. Sometimes, a few pupils are not given enough guidance through observing adults demonstrating successful writing. Although there is an agreed handwriting policy, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are given inconsistent messages sometimes about how to form their letters correctly, from the notices, labels and instructions written by adults, which are displayed around the room.

Effective self-evaluation procedures and robust monitoring have enabled senior leaders to focus on the most important aspects for development and take effective action. For example, the gap between attainment in reading and writing and mathematics has

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narrowed, which was an issue at the last inspection. As a result of more rigour in assessment and data tracking systems, appropriate intervention is provided for pupils of all abilities when gaps in their prior learning have been identified because previously they have made satisfactory rather than good progress. This demonstrates the good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress in writing by:
 - providing more opportunities across the school for independent writing for a range of purposes
 - ensuring pupils have more opportunities to see good models of writing by adults, especially consistent approaches to letter formation in the Early Years Foundation Stage in writing displayed around the room.
- Ensure that, in all lessons, activities are planned that provide consistent, creative curriculum opportunities to enliven learning.
- Build on the good relationship with parents and carers to improve pupils' attendance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children start at school with attainment below that expected for their age, particularly in reading and writing and personal, social and emotional development. Learning and progress are good and pupils achieve well. A strong feature in all lessons is the opportunity for pupils to share their ideas. This was seen to good effect when Year 2 pupils worked in pairs and then small groups to experiment with their own writing to mimic the style of Rudyard Kipling in the Just So stories. They collaborated well, taking turns at writing down shared ideas and their work showed good use of and understanding of how alliteration and rhyme could add effect to writing. Active and creative learning opportunities support pupils' good progress. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils developed a good knowledge of multiples of two, five and 10 by being actively and physically engaged in moving around the classroom and having to explain to each other why the number they had been allocated met the criteria for the multiple. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar good progress to others because their needs are identified early and skilled teaching assistants support them well on a one-to-one basis or in small groups.

Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they are given and take them seriously. They champion issues affecting society as a whole, for example through the work of the 'eco-monitors' in recycling and saving electricity. Their notices to turn off lights in every room are good reminders to pupils and adults alike. School council members feel valued and listened to and have an active role. All agreed with one member who said 'We help our headteacher run the school.' They make a good contribution to the local community, for example, in their work to support a local library under threat of closure. They take part in many fund-raising events for a range of charities and causes and this helps them develop an understanding of people who are less fortunate than they are. Pupils reflect on their feelings, have a good understanding of other cultures and are gaining an appreciation of

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the wider world through art and music. The good level of basic skills and good personal qualities prepare pupils well for their next 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	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ 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?

Teaching is good because teachers have very good relationships with pupils and help to make learning fun by, in most cases, matching activities to pupils' interests and abilities. Adults help to extend pupils' learning well through challenging questioning, which helps pupils think and extend their language skills. The good curriculum is enriched well through extra activities including visits, visitors, clubs and special events weeks. One parent commented 'My child really does enjoy all aspects of school particularly when there are focus weeks such as healthy week, as well as school trips to support his learning.' The school is developing more creative curriculum opportunities while keeping an appropriate focus on literacy and numeracy skills. In addition to the work of senior leaders and managers, the work of the Family Worker makes a considerable contribution to the outstanding care, guidance and support provided for pupils and their families, particularly for those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Good links with other agencies and well-targeted support ensure that these pupils integrate very well and make good progress relative to their starting points. Pupils attending the breakfast club get a good, healthy start to the day and a good social time when children play well and happily together. Good arrangements to support children and their families ensure there is a

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smooth transition into school, across the classes and into their next schools. In partnership with the local authority, the school works hard to improve satisfactory attendance and promote its message of 'every school day counts', through visits by the mascot 'Spike' and certificates presented to pupils for regular attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Throughout the school, there is a dedication to removing any barriers to learning and celebrating the achievements of children at every stage. Staff are diligent in ensuring that all children enjoy equality of opportunity and no discrimination. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored through observations and regular checks on pupils' work and, where weaknesses are observed, effective action is taken. A strength of this small school community is that staff know each child's individual needs and the progress they make very well.

The headteacher and senior leaders, including members of the governing body, share the vision and good ambition for the school that drives its improvement. The governing body has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses and holds the school to account well. Along with staff, it ensures that safeguarding procedures, which are well established, are effective. The school engages well with parents and carers. Communication is both formal and informal and parents and carers are encouraged to be involved in the life of the school. A parent wrote 'There are good relationships with staff and opportunities to improve children's learning through workshops and helping with educational visits.' Leaders have developed the school as a cohesive and harmonious community in which pupils show tolerance and respect for others. The school forges good links with local community groups. One parent commented 'There is a wonderful sense of community within and outside the school which I feel is very important in our society today.' Pupils learn about the diversity of cultures and faiths in their own society and about other cultures and communities through the curriculum, for example during Africa Week. Good partnerships with local schools, organisations and external agencies are well established, enrich the curriculum and contribute effectively to pupils' well-being and learning opportunities.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

As a result of good leadership and teaching, children make good progress across the different areas of learning by the time they move into Year 1, although social development and knowledge and understanding of the world remain relatively weaker aspects. Clearly, they enjoy being at school and settle well in a happy, caring environment. One parent wrote 'The teaching staff are both proactive and responsive to my child's needs and any concerns I might have. She comes home bursting with excitement at all the things she has discovered and learnt or achieved and it is so much fun.' Children have a good understanding of the need to keep themselves safe and healthy. One child said 'We wash our hands to get rid of the germs so they don't spread disease.' Very close attention is paid to children's welfare and very positive relationships between children and adults ensure that behaviour is good and children feel safe and secure at all times. Staff know the children well and the needs of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are met well so that they make similar progress to others. There are good opportunities for children to take on responsibilities, such as registering their own name when they arrive, taking the register to the office and being monitors for various jobs in the classroom. A good balance of activities directed by adults and those where the children can make their own choices means that children develop independence quickly. Children enjoy many opportunities for physical activity in the outdoor area, which though small, provides a good resource for play and learning. The environment indoors and outside is stimulating. Opportunities are missed sometimes to provide a wider range of activities for developing early writing skills. Children are not provided with consistent models for forming letters because, around the room, adult examples of writing do not always reflect what is taught. The focus on developing the approach to teaching sounds and letters (phonics), however, has made a significant contribution to children's skills in this area. Assessment of progress is carried out regularly and thoroughly to inform the next steps in

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learning. Recent changes in provision and leadership and management have had a positive impact, as seen in the marked improvement in outcomes from the previous year.

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

An above-average proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Their very positive response to all of the statements reflects the school's good engagement with parents and carers. All agree that their children enjoy school and that they are happy with their children's experience at school. The inspection findings endorse their positive views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dorset Road Infant 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 40 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 58 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	80	8	20	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	27	68	13	33	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	21	53	18	45	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	60	15	38	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	73	11	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	65	14	35	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	70	12	30	0	0	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)	19	48	17	43	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	53	18	45	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	53	16	40	2	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	60	13	33	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	30	75	10	25	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	73	11	28	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



1 April 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dorset Road Infant School, London, SE9 4QX

You may remember that two inspectors visited your school recently. We thank you for being so friendly and polite and for talking to us about your school. We agree with you and your parents and carers that Dorset Road is a good school and a safe and happy place to be.

You work hard and make good progress so that you do well in your reading, writing and mathematics by the time you leave school. You are exceptionally good at knowing how to stay fit and healthy. You know what food is best to eat to be healthy and that you need to do lots of exercise. We saw that you particularly enjoy playing with the new equipment in the playground. Everyone in your school looks after you very well.

We have asked everyone in your school to do the following important things.

- Help you make even better progress in your writing by giving you lots more opportunities and reasons to write for different purposes.
- Make sure that you have lots of opportunities to see your teachers writing so you can learn by watching them.
- Make sure that, in the Reception class, children know how to write letters correctly so that you develop neat, tidy handwriting that everyone can read.
- Plan lessons so that they are always as exciting as the best ones.
- Work with your parents and carers to make sure that you come to school every day so that you do not miss out on important learning.

You can help the school to get even better by always working hard and doing the best you can.

Yours sincerely

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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