

Fleetdown Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135994
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	360786
Inspection dates	30–31 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Julie Sackett

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	460
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Webb
Headteacher	Angela Konarzewski
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Lunedale Road Kent Kent DA2 6JX
Telephone number	01322 226891
Fax number	01322 278092
Email address	headteacher@fleetdown.kent.sch.uk

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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. During the inspection, 25 lessons and 13 teachers were observed. Discussions were held with staff, members of the governing body, and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school's improvement plan, policies, the tracking of pupils' progress and the provision made for those pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. In addition, questionnaires from 176 parents and carers, 97 pupils and 37 staff were analysed.

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

- The current attainment of pupils and the rates of progress of all groups of pupils, including boys and the more able, particularly in writing.
- How well teaching is consistently meeting pupils' needs to support their progress.
- The impact of leaders at all levels on improving the quality of teaching, pupils' attainment and their progress.
- The impact of the school's provision for care, guidance and support on pupils' personal development, attendance and their behaviour.

Information about the school

Fleetdown is a larger-than-average primary school. The school was created following the merger of Fleetdown Infant School and Fleetdown Junior School in January 2010. The school includes a specially resourced provision for special educational needs, known as The Pirate Ship, for pupils with hearing impairment. Currently, 12 pupils attend this provision. The school offers extended services including a breakfast club and an after-school club, both of which are managed by the governing body. There is also a privately run nursery on site. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises two classes. Pupils come predominantly from a White British background. The remainder come from a range of ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than the national picture. This includes a higher-than-average proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school holds a number of awards including Activemark and Healthy Schools status.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Fleetdown Primary is an outstanding school. This success is due in particular to highly effective management and the outstanding quality of pastoral care. Since the amalgamation of the infant and junior school, the headteacher has been influential in rapidly securing a strong shared vision in the school, underpinned by the new school motto: 'TEAM ♦ Together Everyone Achieves More'. The headteacher, senior leaders and governing body know the school's strengths and what needs to be refined further very well. Their rigorous monitoring and clear self-evaluation, combined with initiatives to ensure that teaching is carefully and accurately matched to individual pupils' needs and potential, have resulted in rapidly improving outcomes for the pupils. As a result, they make excellent progress. These factors illustrate the school's excellent capacity for continuing its improvement. Reflecting the very positive views expressed by parents and carers, one parent wrote, 'Fleetdown is an absolutely fantastic school. We are really pleased with our child's progress and how she is taught.'

Outstanding care, guidance and support are major factors contributing to the school's inclusive atmosphere. One pupil's comment reflects this success, 'We work as a team and it's like one big family.' The high quality of the provision for pupils with hearing impairment in The Pirate Ship is a notable example. Here, leaders have been highly successful in raising the profile of the pupils with hearing impairment and this, combined with increased expectations of the pupils, ensures that they achieve as well as their peers. Pupils' personal outcomes are always good and often excellent. The relationships between staff and pupils are warm and trusting. Pupils feel completely safe when they are at school. Their adoption of healthy lifestyles is outstanding and reflected in the pupils' enthusiastic uptake of extra-curricular sport and in the school gaining Healthy Schools and Activemark awards. Pupils' thorough knowledge of how well they are doing in their learning and what they need to do to improve their work, along with their outstanding behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning, mean that they are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.

A secure and welcoming environment in Early Years Foundation Stage means children settle well, enjoy a range of activities and make good progress. However, some activities do not fully engage the children's learning and, at times, there is not always a sharp focus by adults on children's next steps in learning, so that children's progress is not maximised. A strong emphasis on basic skills across the school means that progress accelerates through Years 1 to 6 so pupils' achievement is outstanding overall. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are exceptionally well supported so that they make similar progress. Although there are minor variations, the quality of teaching is outstanding.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate children's progress and raise attainment at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - increasing the degree to which assessment information is used to ensure that adult interaction with children is consistently focused on meeting their individual needs
 - increasing the degree to which assessment information is used to modify the range and quality of activities so that children's engagement and interest are increased even further.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

The most recent test results, observations of lessons and the scrutiny of pupils' work confirm that pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is above average. Children enter school with skills and understanding that vary, but are generally below those expected for their age. Recent initiatives to accelerate pupils' progress, particularly for boys, have been highly successful, most notably in writing. As a result, all groups of pupils make outstanding progress overall in English and mathematics, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, pupils made excellent progress in their writing during an outstanding Year 6 lesson when they made very perceptive responses about the value of information gathered during the national census, both now and in Victorian times. Higher-attaining pupils achieve well due to good levels of planning and teaching to cater for their needs. The school is now targeting developments in mathematics to raise attainment to match the levels in writing.

Pupils enjoy school and are keen to do well, as shown by their improving attendance and active involvement in learning. Pupils speak confidently about how to practise healthy living, including the importance of exercise and the need for a balanced diet. Pupils who attend the well-organised breakfast club benefit from healthy eating options and a positive start to the school day. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This helps them to respond with insight and perception to opportunities to consider different cultures and backgrounds and demonstrate great sensitivity to the needs and well-being of others. For example, a group of pupils in The Pirate Ship showed great respect and care for a life-like 'baby' that was passed from pupil to pupil during a life skills lesson. Pupils have responded extremely positively to increased expectations and clearly want to do their very best. They are rightly very proud of their positions of responsibility such as prefects and members of the school council, although their contribution beyond the school and local community is more limited. Their outstanding achievement, combined with pupils' keen interest in learning, prepares them exceptionally well for their transition to the next stage of their education and for their future lives as adults.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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?

High-quality teaching, including the teaching in The Pirate Ship is characterised by a rapid pace of learning and tasks which challenge all pupils, to their exceptional progress. Lessons are thoroughly planned, with clear learning objectives and criteria for successful learning that are consistently shared with pupils. Higher-attaining pupils are catered for particularly well. A notable strength in the best lessons is the way that pupils are actively involved in understanding how well they are doing in their learning and in how they can improve their work further. As a result, pupils demonstrate a strong sense of ownership and responsibility for the personal role they play in their own learning. For example, in an outstanding Year 6 lesson, many pupils were very actively involved in considering what successful learning would look like, including one boy's suggestion to produce high-quality descriptive writing by 'using words that jump out of the page like fireworks'. Teachers' marking and individual pupils' assessments help teachers plan lessons that all pupils enjoy. Teaching assistants are very well deployed and make a strong contribution to pupils' outstanding progress because they understand pupils' individual needs very well in addition to their role in supporting learning.

The curriculum is broad and balanced. There are some cross-curricular links which make learning relevant and interesting. However, these links are not fully developed to make learning consistently memorable and meaningful. The introduction of a literacy programme, the establishment of small group support and a whole-school approach to

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teaching basic literacy skills have made a significant impact on rapidly increasing progress in writing across the school, particularly for the boys and potentially higher-attaining pupils. Enrichment activities are varied and include a wide variety of visits, visitors to the school and extra-curricular clubs to broaden pupils' experiences and activity levels.

The school's arrangements to care for, guide and support pupils, including those whose circumstances make them more vulnerable, are exceptionally thorough and successful. There are many significant examples of where the school has worked extremely well with pupils, their families and outside agencies to help remove barriers to learning. Staff do all they can to ensure pupils come to school regularly and their efforts have resulted in above average levels of attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
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?

The headteacher, senior team and governing body have provided an outstanding sense of purpose and direction since the creation of the new school and teamwork is very strong. As one member of staff wrote, 'Since the schools have amalgamated we have gone from strength-to-strength, with great leadership and the children's learning at the centre of it all.' Very effective monitoring and self-evaluation have led to improvements in teaching, and the school continues to tackle the remaining occasional inconsistencies in quality. The governing body is fully involved and effective in checking the school's performance.

The school is highly committed and successful in its efforts to promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination. Everyone is valued and supported to achieve their best, irrespective of their social, faith or ethnic group. A wide range of partnerships provides excellent support for initiatives to develop the curriculum and to promote the well-being of pupils. Their safety and well-being are paramount at all times. Safety routines and risk assessments are carried out thoroughly and regularly. All members of staff are well trained in child-protection routines. The contribution the school makes to promoting community cohesion is good. Links with the local community are strong, although its contribution beyond the school and local community is more limited. The school recognises this and plans are in place to increase pupils' understanding of national and global perspectives.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make a good start to their schooling in the Reception classes and achieve well. They settle happily into school because adults successfully establish a welcoming and safe environment in which children feel secure. Parents and carers are engaged with well so that they know how well their children are learning and how they can support them further. This positive relationship is reflected in one parent's comment, 'My child has really made good progress and is always happy to go to school.' Children behave well because they enjoy the activities and relationships are good. For example, children enjoyed talking about the need to be quiet while the 'babies' were asleep and this helped them to make good progress in the development of their speaking and social skills. Children make good progress overall, particularly in the development of early reading and writing skills and in their social and emotional development, so that attainment when they enter Year 1 is above the national average.

This aspect of the school is managed well and clear priorities are set for improvement. Recent initiatives to increase learning opportunities in the outdoor area mean that activities are purposeful and children's engagement is consistently good. There is a balance between those activities which are led by adults and those which are initiated by the children, and the use of free-flow indoor and outdoor activities successfully encourages the development of children's independence. Planning takes account of the different areas of learning and ongoing assessments of children's progress are completed regularly. However, there is some unevenness in the extent to which staff use this information to modify planning for a wider range or quality of activities so that children's engagement and enjoyment is increased even further. There are good arrangements to ensure children move into Year 1 smoothly.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Most of the parents and carers who completed a questionnaire were happy with the school. Most considered the school to be well led and managed and the overwhelming majority expressed confidence in the quality of teaching. They agree that the school has a warm, supportive and friendly atmosphere and most feel that their children make good progress. Inspection evidence indicates that the school is very well led and managed and shows that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make excellent progress. Most parents and carers felt that the school dealt well with disruptive behaviour and the vast majority felt that the school kept their children safe. Evidence from the inspection supports parents' and carers' positive views. The very small number of constructive parental concerns, for example about the quality of behaviour, were followed up during the inspection as part of the general gathering of evidence and inspectors found behaviour to be generally outstanding.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Fleetdown 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 176 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 460 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	103	59	68	39	2	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	108	61	65	37	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	76	43	92	52	3	2	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	94	53	74	42	4	2	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	105	60	68	39	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	82	47	84	48	6	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	77	44	95	54	3	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)	51	29	95	54	12	7	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	80	45	87	49	5	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	61	35	93	53	7	4	4	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	60	34	89	51	11	6	4	2
The school is led and managed effectively	77	44	72	41	12	7	5	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	94	53	75	43	4	2	0	0

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

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for 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 Fleetdown Primary School, Dartford DA2 6JS

We would like to thank all of you for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed seeing you in your classrooms and talking to you at playtimes and lunchtimes. We believe that your school is an outstanding school. This means that it does most things very well indeed.

- Your school is very warm and welcoming and all the adults take excellent care of you.
- Your understanding of healthy living is excellent and you rightly feel safe in school.
- You happily take on responsibilities such as being members of school council and prefects.
- You enjoy school, cooperate well in lessons and behave extremely well in lessons and around the school.
- The teaching in your school is outstanding and teachers make learning fun and interesting.
- Your achievement is excellent. This means that by the end of Year 6 your attainment is above average in English and mathematics.
- You take part very well in the excellent range of extra-curricular clubs.
- The headteacher, staff and members of the governing body are extremely good at their jobs and know how to improve your school.
- Nearly all your parents and carers are very pleased with your experience at the school. What your school needs to do now:
 - Make sure that activities and lessons in Early Years Foundation Stage are as interesting as possible and that adults use what they know about the children to help them to improve their learning.

All of you can help, too, by continuing to work hard and continuing to come to school regularly. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Julie Sackett

Lead inspector

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