

Downe Manor Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101880
Local Authority	Ealing
Inspection number	376638
Inspection dates	9–10 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Liz Kounnou

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	434
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Councillor Brian Reeves
Headteacher	Mrs Elizabeth McAllister
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 March 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 24 lessons taught by 16 teachers. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, work on display, school policies, planning and assessment information. The inspectors read 115 questionnaires from parents and carers together with others from staff and pupils, all of which were used to inform the inspection process.

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

- The rate of progress made by pupils who join the school during Key Stage 2, in particular those who join from overseas, to determine the impact of the school on their outcomes relative to other pupils.
- The involvement and impact of leaders at all levels, including governors, in securing improvement since the last inspection, in particular in humanities and boys' writing.
- The strategies used to secure the good outcomes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who speak English as an additional language and those who are known to be eligible for free school meals.

Information about the school

The school is larger than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. A large majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. A few new pupils arrive from overseas each year and more pupils join the school during each school year than is typical; the majority of this group of pupils come from other schools in England. More than a third of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The majority of this group have been assessed with speech, language and communication needs or moderate learning difficulties. The school has a unit for pupils with speech and language difficulties integrated into the Nursery which operates in the mornings. A privately-run after-school club cares for some pupils at the end of each school day.

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

Pupils' achievement has improved since the last inspection and the school's capacity to improve further is good because school leaders are taking action to raise levels of attainment. For example, by appointing an additional teacher in Year 6 and enabling more focused teaching in small groups, the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in mathematics tests in Year 6 has increased significantly and is now above average. The majority of pupils have made exceptional progress in English and mathematics by the time they leave school, but this progress is not sustained from year group to year group. In Key Stage 2, pupils make the progress expected of them in Years 3 to 5, and then sharply accelerate in Year 6. School leaders do not undertake a detailed analysis of the wealth of school data to explore this discrepancy. Governors find it difficult to understand the school's information about pupils' progress and this hampers their ability to be fully involved in strategic planning. Senior leaders regularly check the success of school strategies to bring about improvement but do not record their findings succinctly. Despite this, levels of attainment are above average and rising throughout the school.

Good systems for accurately checking the quality of teaching and learning have resulted in some effective strategies to help pupils do well. For example, pupils always know what they are going to learn in lessons and review their success at the end. Pupils' confidence to ask questions is a significant feature of good teaching. In these lessons, pupils know that teachers value their questions and provide clear explanations that help to clear up misunderstandings. Pupils are regularly asked to contribute in lessons, although in some they spend too long listening to teachers and the pace at which questions are asked and answered is too slow so that there is limited time for pupils to consolidate their learning.

Enthusiastic and hard-working team leaders check carefully to ensure that pupils in their teams reach the levels expected for their age. However, a lack of information about the progress made by each group since beginning the key stage hampers their efforts and limits the range of strategies the school is able to employ to tackle uneven progress. Teachers review samples of pupils' work in their teams to ensure that there is a consensus about what it means to reach each level and this is invaluable in securing accurate assessment. However, this high-quality information is not used consistently to ensure that lesson plans recognise the needs of different groups of pupils.

Good additional support is provided for those who need it, such as new English

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speakers who arrive from overseas. Parents and carers appreciate the good progress their children make and say they are happy at Downe Manor. However, a few feel that their views are not listened to. This is because the school does not have a formal system to ensure that the views of all parents and carers are taken into consideration.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all groups of pupils make consistently good or better progress by ensuring that teachers:
 - improve the pace at which they ask questions and seek responses from pupils
 - provide more opportunities for all pupils to make contributions and be actively involved in talking about their learning
 - use information from assessments to plan lessons that enable pupils of all abilities to build on their prior attainment and successfully reach the next stage in their learning.
- Improve some specific aspects of the school's procedures for self-evaluation by:
 - analysing the rates of progress of different groups of pupils from the end of each previous key stage so that action can be taken to accelerate the progress of any pupils that are falling behind
 - summarising this analysis in a format that governors can easily understand
 - making available annually to governors a brief summary of the school's self-evaluation, which shows why pupils achieve as they do in each key stage.
- Improve the level of engagement with parents and carers by formally seeking their views on an annual basis and acting upon these whenever possible.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils' presentation of their work is good throughout the school because boys and girls show a genuine pride in their work. In Year 5, boys and girls enthusiastically acted out a dialogue between King Arthur and Merlin and learnt effectively how to improve their punctuation to make the task of writing their scripts easier. Opportunities for pupils to be involved actively make a significant contribution to some lessons, such as when Year 3 pupils looked at the use of rhyme in Benjamin Zephaniah's poetry. The strong focus on developing vocabulary was particularly successful for those learning to speak English as an additional language. Throughout the school this group of pupils does very well, making more progress than their peers nationally. There is a strong focus on talk and explanations in all lessons which helps pupils who are not fluent English speakers. Nonetheless, boys' writing continues to be weaker than their achievement in other subjects. All the diverse groups within the school, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress due to the well-tailored support they receive in small group sessions. Pupils

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who join the school during the school year settle in quickly and build on their prior attainment at a good rate wherever they come from because speedy assessments of their needs are made and followed up with precisely targeted support.

The school has worked hard to improve pupils’ attendance so that it is now satisfactory. Pupils enjoy school, behave well and have good attitudes in lessons because they are interested in the work. Teachers use interactive whiteboards in almost every lesson, inviting pupils to make use of the technology so that they become confident and skilled. Regular opportunities to solve problems in small teams or pairs prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education. They are fully involved in the school community, particularly in Key Stage 2. Playground buddies take genuine care of younger pupils outside. School council members are elected by their classmates, but have few opportunities to make a significant contribution to school improvement. Pupils feel safe in school because they have trusting relationships with all adults. Pupils are fully engaged in the curriculum because it takes account of their diverse cultures. Opportunities to share and celebrate festivals and holidays across the multi-faith community ensure good cultural awareness.

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	2
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

How effective is the provision?

Good behaviour management consistently focuses on positive attributes and praises pupils regularly for their contributions, so that they want to please their teachers. Classes regularly work in ‘talk partners’ when all pupils can put forward their ideas and opinions; however, in some lessons teachers talk for too long at the start and

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

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some pupils begin to lose interest. Teachers plan activities to capture pupils’ interests and there are more opportunities for history and geography since the last inspection. The school journey to Devon, which provides a wealth of contrasts and some very challenging geographical work, and the Fire of London project are good examples of this.

The pastoral care of pupils is strong. Pupils from a wide range of different cultures and backgrounds work together in harmony. One teaching assistant has particular responsibility for those who arrive from overseas speaking little or no English. She gently eases these pupils into their new environment and acts quickly to help them gain confidence as soon as they can. Strong partnerships with outside agencies contribute well to the good progress made by those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Shared celebrations across different faiths underpin community cohesion and demonstrate school leaders’ strong response to the diverse cultural and social mix in this harmonious school community. Involvement in the international Peace Child initiative founded links with a Bangalore school, adding to those already forged with a school in rural Devon. Equality of opportunity is promoted well so that each of the diverse groups of pupils achieve well by the time they leave. School leaders ensure that staff supporting pupils who are at a very early stage of learning to speak English are very well trained. Consequently, pupils in these and other vulnerable groups receive precisely-tailored support to help them make good progress.

Safeguarding procedures and policies meet statutory requirements, but there is insufficient monitoring of safeguarding processes by governors and senior leaders so that minor issues are not always identified quickly enough. Engagement with parents and carers is satisfactory overall, although the school has not acted upon some valid anxieties expressed by parents and carers nor sought the views of pupils. Consequently, governors do not have access to the views of all stakeholders in the school. Governors take part in a range of other monitoring procedures and worked persistently to improve the quality of school meals. There is a strong sense of purpose among senior leaders who are committed to raising levels of attainment. Very high levels of staff morale and commitment to the school, have led to considerable success for most pupils. All staff take their shared responsibility for

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driving forward improvement seriously.

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	3
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	3
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	3
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

Children do well in both the Nursery and Reception classes because there is a strong focus on basic skills and developing their confidence in spoken English. A few children are at the early stages of learning English but the majority speak at least two languages. Children have a good understanding of letters and sounds for their age and readily use these skills to write notes and spell out words in English. Specialist support for speech and language development is effective and many hand signs are used to add to children’s understanding at the early stages of language acquisition. Children enjoy activities such as painting with toothbrushes or playing the musical instruments. Their diverse cultures are highly valued. During the inspection there was tangible excitement as children prepared for the school’s Eid party by dressing in their best finery and showing a great sense of pride in the delicious smelling food contributions they brought to the feast. Since the last inspection, the outdoor environment has improved through the provision of good-quality, fixed equipment. However, some of the activities provided for children choosing to work outside lack challenge and inspiration so that they mainly choose to ride on the bikes or climb on the equipment. Access to the outdoor area can be restricted for Reception children, as there is no cover in the Reception outdoor area to protect resources on rainy days.

When children start school in the Nursery their attainment is below that expected for their age. By the time they leave the Reception class they have reached average levels of attainment, representing good progress across the stage. Staff pay good attention to the children’s welfare. Parents and carers are welcome at the beginning

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and end of the day and develop strong relationships with teachers and support staff. Good leadership ensures a consistent focus on developing the key language and mathematical skills they will need when they move to Year 1. The transition into Year 1 is well managed so that no learning time is lost.

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

Parents’ and carers’ views of the school are mainly positive. A few added positive written comments about a range of different aspects relating to their children’s experiences at the school. Nonetheless, a few parents and carers, including those with otherwise positive views, expressed some concerns about the school’s system for dismissing their children through the school gate at the end of the school day. These parents and carers felt that the school had not fully considered their concerns. The inspection team agreed that the current system is not ideal as a lot of pupils are leaving school through the gate at the same time. A very small minority of parents and carers raised different individual issues, but the team found that most individual concerns were not borne out by inspection evidence. For example, supervision at break times meets the minimum requirements; however, some Key Stage 1 pupils do on occasions feel vulnerable at break times because adults are not close by.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Downe Manor 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 115 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 434 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	72	63	37	32	3	3	3	3
The school keeps my child safe	70	61	42	37	2	2	1	1
The school informs me about my child’s progress	49	43	58	50	3	3	4	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	46	40	59	51	8	7	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	57	50	58	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	51	44	57	50	7	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	42	62	54	2	2	3	3
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)	37	32	55	48	5	4	4	3
The school meets my child’s particular needs	39	34	64	56	8	7	3	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	40	35	63	55	3	3	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	30	66	57	7	6	4	3
The school is led and managed effectively	47	41	58	50	3	3	3	3
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	56	49	53	46	3	3	3	3

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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.



11 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Downe Manor Primary, Northolt UB5 6NW

Thank you for being so polite and helpful when we came to your school. We enjoyed visiting your lessons and talking to you. You really helped us. Your school gives you a good education so that you reach above average levels by the time you leave.

The things we liked most about your school were that:

- you ask lots of questions in lessons and your teachers answer them well to help you understand
- you were very enthusiastic about your school journey to Devon and worked really hard in your learning journals
- your books are neat and tidy and show how well you are doing
- the teaching assistants really help anyone who needs extra support
- your behaviour in lessons is good and you often help one another
- you value each other's cultures and get along together very well.

To help the school become even better, we have asked the teachers to make sure that even more of you get to answer questions in lessons and that the work helps you to reach your targets. You could help by letting the teachers know when you are ready for your next step. We have also asked senior leaders to check your progress more carefully. Finally, we have asked the governors to find out what your parents and carers like about the school, and what they would like to change. You could help by telling the headteacher the things that you would like to improve.

Thank you again for talking to us about your school and making us so welcome. We hope that you will all continue to enjoy coming to school and try your hardest so that you are successful in the future.

Yours sincerely

Liz Kounnou
Lead inspector

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