

Dalmain Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100677
Local Authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	276367
Inspection dates	20–21 June 2006
Reporting inspector	Derek Watts

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 on roll	
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Mary Lindsay Mrs Elizabeth Booth
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Grove Close Brockley Rise London SE23 1AS
Telephone number	020 8699 2675
Fax number	020 8291 4546

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Dalmain is a larger than average primary school. Pupils come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds with White British, Caribbean and Black African being the largest groups. Over a third of the pupils have English as an additional language. About half of the pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities and this is well above average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is also well above average. The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school other than at the normal stating time is high. Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is well below average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade:

What the school should do to improve further

- Although the school has no major issues, the inspectors agree with the school that improving the outside facilities for Foundation Stage children should take priority in improving the school's provision.

Achievement and standards

Grade:

Personal development and well-being

Grade:

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:

Overall, teaching and learning are outstanding. A group of pupils summed up their teachers, 'They are excellent and they make learning fun'. In the lessons observed, teaching was at least good with examples of outstanding practice particularly in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' work indicated that teaching is of a high quality. Teachers work very well together and this results in consistent approaches both within year groups and across the school.

Learning in the Nursery and Reception classes is good. Strong emphasis is placed on developing children's communication and social skills, as these are often low, and this helps children make a positive start to their education. Teaching is enthusiastic and interesting with short well-focused activities which capture children's interest.

Pupils throughout the school respond very well to teachers' high expectations of behaviour and learning. Tasks are well matched to pupils' ability so all are suitably challenged and make exceptional gains in knowledge and skills. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who are learning English as an additional language are identified accurately and they are supported very well. Teaching assistants are very well-trained and are effective in supporting learning in lessons. Assessment procedures are outstanding. Pupils' progress is monitored rigorously and appropriate action taken to remedy any under achievement. Marking is of a consistently good quality giving a clear indication of how pupils can improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

The school provides a stimulating curriculum which promotes enjoyment, high achievement and outstanding personal development. It is reviewed regularly and is tailored to meet pupils' needs very well. There is a clear focus on developing basic skills, with speaking and listening developed exceptionally well in all subjects. Pupils' ICT skills are taught systematically and they use these to support their learning in other subjects. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their creative and musical talents and to perform to others. There are meaningful links between subjects and pupils apply and develop writing skills in many areas. The range and quality of resources for outside play in the Nursery and Reception classes is just

satisfactory but there are clear plans to address this. A high quality personal, social and health education programme is provided. Healthy lifestyles and personal safety are promoted very well. The school offers a good range of clubs. These are well attended and include sports activities, drama, French, music and art. A residential visit provides good opportunities for older pupils to build on their self-confidence and team work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:

Outstanding care, guidance and support contribute significantly to pupils' exceptional academic and personal development. The welcoming and very positive atmosphere enables pupils to thrive. Parents praise the school and feel their children are safe and well cared for. A parent commented: 'The school has an excellent ethos and a supportive and communicative staff'. Staff have a genuine concern for every pupil and pupils know they can turn to adults for help. Induction arrangements are very effective and so children settle well into the Nursery and other new arrivals get off to a good start. Health and safety procedures are very effective so pupils are safe and secure. Child protection procedures are robust and widely understood. The work of the learning mentor is excellent. Pupils with attendance, behaviour or family difficulties make great progress under her careful supervision and guidance. Assessment of pupils' attainment is meticulous and highly effective. Pupils know how well they are doing and have clear targets to aim for.

Leadership and management

Grade:

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Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Pupils

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school and showing us your work. We enjoyed our visit and would like to tell you what we found out. Dalmain is an outstanding school and one you can be very proud of.

These things were particularly pleasing: * You clearly enjoy school and the interesting activities offered. * Teaching is outstanding which is why you learn so much. * You are all making good progress. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are making exceptional progress especially in English and mathematics. * Your behaviour is very good and you are friendly and polite. * You get on really well with other pupils and adults. * Your headteacher is an excellent leader. You described her as, 'the best' and we agree. She receives very good support from senior teachers and other staff. * There are very good opportunities for music and your choir and brass performances were fantastic. * You receive excellent care and support from all staff. * Your parents are really pleased with the school and give it very good support. * There is a good range of clubs and visits, which you clearly enjoy.

There is one thing that we think could be improved and your teachers are working on this: * The outdoor play equipment in Nursery and Reception could be better. Finally, thank you once again for all your help. We wish you all the best for the future.

With kind regards

Derek Watts, Sarah McDermott and Sandra Morgan

The inspection team