



Downe Manor Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101880
LEA Ealing LEA
Inspection number 276608
Inspection dates 10 November 2005 to 11 November 2005
Reporting inspector Nicholas (Nick) Butt AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Down Way
School category	Community		Northolt
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Middlesex UB5 6NW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02088451155
Number on roll	334	Fax number	02088422925
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Frank Impey
Date of previous inspection	22 January 2001	Headteacher	Mrs E McAllister

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large primary school with a nursery. Children enter the school with standards that are well below the national average. It serves an area characterised by poverty and overcrowding. Almost three fifths of pupils have free school meals, which is very high. Fifty-five % of pupils are of White British heritage. The remainder are from a diverse range of minority ethnic backgrounds, including Black African. One quarter speak a first language that is not English. A quarter of pupils have learning difficulties. Pupil mobility is high and the school has a falling roll. A new school was built on the old site in 2004. It is a Beacon school and has the Active Mark and Healthy Schools award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with parts that are outstanding. Its exciting new building is full of space and light and serves the school community very well. Pupils make exceptionally good progress as a result of outstanding teaching. They leave the school with standards that are above and often well above the national average. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The organisation in Year 1 makes it hard for some of the youngest pupils to settle. The headteacher has a drive and vision that enthuse and energise staff and pupils alike. She is well supported by the deputy head and a confident leadership team. Together they monitor the school's performance and maintain high standards with great skill and commitment. Pupils' personal development is good. They behave well and are keen and interested in learning. The persistent absence of a minority of pupils makes attendance well below the national average. Pupils are well cared for and new arrivals to the school, often from overseas, are integrated very well. The school has adapted the curriculum well to meet changes in the way classes are organised as a result of falling rolls. Delays in the installation of information communication and technology (ICT) equipment into the new school building are temporarily affecting the provision of the subject and standards. Parents are happy with their children's education. Governors are supportive and well-informed. Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. Money is well spent. The head and deputy's determination and flair mean that the school has a bright future.

What the school should do to improve further

* Improve provision and raise standards in ICT by making sure pupils have sufficient access to reliable equipment.* Adapt the programme for pupils at the beginning of Year 1 to help them all settle in well. * Improve attendance by dealing rigorously with those who repeatedly miss school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding because teachers have a shared understanding of how pupils learn and consistently have high expectations of what they can do. The excellent monitoring of all aspects of pupils' education means that no child is permitted to fall behind. There are no differences in how well groups of pupils achieve. Those who have learning difficulties are very well supported, and teachers play a full role in drawing up sharply focused individual education plans. The very experienced coordinator for ethnic minority achievement ensures that pupils at the early stages of learning English make rapid progress. Pupils enter the nursery with standards well below those normally found. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage, especially in personal development. They often enter Year 1 with standards below those of the early learning goals, particularly in language. For some children this transition is something of a culture shock because of the more formal curriculum they meet. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics in the Year 2 tests are rising, and the school compares well

with those in similar circumstances. In Years 3 to 6 pupils reap the benefit of their good early education and make rapid progress. By the end of Year 6 standards are well above average in mathematics and science and above average in English. Pupils do better than those in other schools in attaining the higher grades.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are keen and motivated throughout the school. They say work is 'interesting and challenging'. They are acquiring the good basic skills and work habits that will prepare them well for the future. Most come to school regularly, but attendance is well below the national average because a few families condone persistent absence. Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good. There are opportunities for reflection through art, religious education, assemblies and PSHCE. Pupils are respectful, considerate and confident. They care for others and take personal responsibility for their actions. The school promotes healthy lifestyles through its sporting activities, the provision of fruit and water, and improving lunches. Pupils understand how healthy food and exercise will help them to concentrate and improve their learning. There is a strong sense of a community. Pupils raise money for good causes, distribute Harvest gifts to local people and make donations for needy children around the world. They learn about democratic processes through the work of the school council and from visits and visitors. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, opened the new building. Cultural awareness is promoted through the arts and different festivals. Pupils get along with each other very well whatever their backgrounds.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. There is a common understanding of what makes effective teaching. In a very effective lesson, the teacher asked Year 3 and 4 pupils to plan play scripts using a nursery rhyme as a starting point. She had very high expectations and pupils enjoyed completing the task. They were able to suggest the criteria the teacher should use when marking their play scripts (such as 'have we included stage directions?'). Rigorous and systematic monitoring by all leaders helps to maintain high standards. Teachers have a thorough knowledge and understanding of their subject areas and promote high standards. All pupils are given challenging work and say 'we will do our best'. Even the youngest children are encouraged to work well independently. Pupils make very good progress whatever their abilities. Teaching assistants provide very effective support to groups and individuals. The quality of marking is excellent and really helps pupils improve their work. They are keen to read the comments in their books and excited about the targets that teachers set. Teachers are developing their skills in using assessment information to monitor closely how well pupils are doing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum that meets all statutory requirements. It is monitored regularly to check the effectiveness of new initiatives. Measures to improve boys' performance in writing have been successful. ICT is temporarily restricted because of delays in installing new equipment. Otherwise the curriculum meets pupils' needs well. In the nursery and reception classes children receive a rich programme of learning experiences. Particular emphasis is placed on literacy skills and physical development. New arrivals benefit from well planned arrangements to help them settle into school quickly. There is a wide range of clubs and activities for the older pupils to enjoy. Younger pupils have fewer opportunities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care for pupils, which contributes well to their enjoyment of school and the very good progress they make. However, some of the children beginning Year 1 find the change from Foundation Stage difficult because the programme planned does not support all their needs. All pupils are well aware of what makes a healthy lifestyle and where to seek help if they have a problem. Parents are appreciative of the high level of care given by all staff. Very effective support is provided for vulnerable pupils and their families. There are strong links with other agencies. Innovative projects in school include speech and language provision and relaxation sessions for angry pupils. All health and safety requirements are in place and there are good procedures for child protection and assessing risks. The new marking policy is having a considerable impact on pupils' understanding of how they can improve. Teachers are developing the use of assessment information to track individual pupil's progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Huge demands have been made on the leadership of the school by the massive building project. Problems persist with site management and cleaning: items taken from the school's control by the Public Finance Initiative. Despite this, standards have continued to improve and pupils are among the top achievers nationwide. The headteacher displays exceptional determination and drive, and is ably supported by the deputy head. Their individual strengths and skills complement one another and combine to provide outstanding leadership. Excellent systems promote the extremely effective teaching. New initiatives are monitored exactly, and all teachers held accountable for the performance of their pupils. For example, the revised marking policy is already making a huge difference to pupils' understanding of how they can improve. Leaders are creating a forward-thinking innovative school, which widens pupils' horizons. In a letter to the headteacher one girl wrote, 'Thank you for making me believe in myself.' Subject leaders take a greater role in analysing assessment information, but this could

be used more by class teachers to help them set targets for pupils. The governing body is supportive and discharges its statutory responsibilities. Governors are not sufficiently active in marketing the school to the local community, especially in view of falling rolls. The school brochure, for example, would benefit from colourful illustrations and a larger typeface. Self-evaluation is very thorough. The school improvement plan follows on well from this, with key priorities set out clearly. With its exciting modern building, the school has entered a new era, and is well set to continue to excel.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your lovely new school. We think the building is brilliant, with so much light and space for you to enjoy - so very different from the old one. We were very impressed with how keen you are to learn, and how much you enjoy your lessons. We think your teachers do a superb job and get the best out of you. It is clear that you are making very good progress, and the new marking system helps you to see this. You behave well in class and around the school, and look out for one another. We can see how much fun you have on visits and putting on productions from all the photographs and the DVD.

We hope that you will all come to school every day unless there is a really good reason to be away. We have told your headteacher to be sure to check why some people are missing a lot of school. We know that it is taking a long time to install the new computers and we want to see that done quickly, so that you can get the most out of them. Some of the reception children find it difficult to move up into Year 1 because the work there is very different. We have asked your teachers to make it easier for them, and we are sure you will help the Year 1 children to settle in quickly.

Many thanks for being so friendly. We think your school is an exciting place and would love our own children to be here if only we lived close enough!

Yours sincerely

Nick Butt, Lead Inspector