



Dormers Wells Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101938
LEA Ealing LEA
Inspection number 276620
Inspection dates 8 March 2006 to 9 March 2006
Reporting inspector Linda McGill

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Dormers Wells Infant School
School category	Foundation		Dormers Wells Lane
Age range of pupils	3 to 7		Southall UB1 3HX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02085746999
Number on roll	390	Fax number	02088430616
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms M Dogra
Date of previous inspection	10 January 2000	Headteacher	Miss M Blackburn

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Dormers Wells is much larger than most infant schools with 395 pupils on roll, including 90 who attend nursery. The pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and many are from asylum seeking and refugee families whose socio-economic circumstances are unfavourable. Over half of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is much higher than average. Very few pupils start school with a good command of English. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties is similar to that found nationally. The school offers a wide range of before- and after-school activities for pupils, their parents and the local community. Major building works are nearing completion and will provide the school with extensive facilities for early years and community use.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Dormers Wells Infant School is a welcoming and friendly place where everyone is treated with respect. This helps the pupils to be ready to learn, and their bright enthusiasm in lessons is testament to the school's success in creating a positive climate. The school judges that all aspects of its work are good, and, while the inspection team agrees that there are good elements, its overall effectiveness is satisfactory. This is because the teaching is not consistently good enough to make sure that the pupils make good progress. The pupils start school with standards that are well below what is expected of three-year-olds. The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory and by the time the pupils leave Year 2, standards are well below the national figures, showing that the pupils made satisfactory progress, but no better. The school cannot readily demonstrate how it helps the pupils to make up ground. Weaknesses in the pupils' attainment have been identified and steps taken to raise standards, but there are no means of checking success. The monitoring of teaching has been too infrequent to give the overview which is needed to identify the next steps to ensure improvement. This weakness has been recognised and the senior team is beginning to play a stronger part in leading the school forward. This, together with the successful tackling of all but one of the key issues identified at the last inspection, means that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. Value for money is satisfactory. The school has made strenuous efforts to improve attendance and punctuality and has taken a very firm stance against holidays during term time. Despite this, attendance levels are still too low.

What the school should do to improve further

* strive to increase the amount of good teaching in order to maximise the pupils' progress* implement clear systems for checking the impact of initiatives and the quality of teaching* further develop the role of senior staff * continue the strenuous efforts to improve attendance and punctuality

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

When the pupils start nursery, their standards are well below that of typical three-year-olds. They make satisfactory progress, particularly in speaking and listening and their social development, but not many reach the goals that are expected at the end of the reception year. Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 are well below national figures, but this means that the pupils have made satisfactory progress. Overall, achievement is satisfactory. Pupils who have learning difficulties and those learning English also make adequate progress. All pupils are set targets based on their prior attainment and most meet them. However, the targets for more able pupils are not challenging enough. Standards in writing are particularly weak and boys do less well than girls. Weaknesses in reading and writing are related to the pupils' lack of understanding of the text and subject specific vocabulary, rather than the mechanics

of reading and writing. In mathematics, although the pupils' skills in mental calculation are sound they have difficulty in using them to solve problems. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are beginning to improve as the pupils use computers more frequently and the teachers become more skilled at using the interactive whiteboards to enrich pupils' learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' personal development is good. The pupils are lively and friendly. Parents told inspectors that their children like coming to school. The pupils respond enthusiastically in lessons; for example, the Year 2 classes were quiet as mice when playing the part of Victorian schoolchildren. Pupils behave well, playing and working together happily. They chat sociably over lunch, care for each other and give help when it is needed. The pupils say they feel safe and know that they can talk to the teachers and other adults. Older pupils respond well to opportunities to take responsibility and the school's emphasis on learning to get along with everyone helps prepare them well for the next stage in their education. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies are good opportunities to meet together, celebrate achievements and reflect. The pupils are helped to make good relationships when they discuss issues such as friendship in personal, social and health education lessons. Their cultural development is enhanced through visits to places of worship and creative work. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy. They love eating fruit every day and understand the importance of taking exercise, enjoying vigorous activity at break times and in physical education lessons. The school has battled long and hard to improve attendance, with a little success but rates are well below average. Punctuality is improving, but too many pupils still arrive late in the morning. The school is doing all it can to make sure that parents understand the detrimental effect that irregular attendance can have on their child's progress.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some good and outstanding features. Relationships between pupils and staff are warm, and there is a good climate for learning. The most effective teaching is imaginative and practically based, which helps the pupils understand what they are learning. The teaching during the 'Victorian day' was outstanding and the pupils learned a great deal. Where teaching is good, there are high expectations of what the pupils should achieve and a sharp focus on what they need to learn next. Teaching is mostly sound, however, and promotes satisfactory progress. The teachers plan carefully and identify objectives for their teaching, but they are sometimes descriptions of what the pupils will do, rather than learn. The purpose of some of the activities is not clear. Different tasks are planned according to the pupils' prior knowledge, but sometimes consolidate what the pupils already

know, rather than taking them on. Targets for the class in English and mathematics are displayed, and teachers set targets for individual pupils, but the link between these targets and what the pupils need to do to achieve them is not clear. Pupils who have learning difficulties are withdrawn for specialist teaching, which is good and meets their needs well. Assistants work effectively with groups in the classroom. Pupils who are in the early stages of learning English are appropriately supported.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school offers its pupils a suitably broad and balanced curriculum. Steps have been taken to improve the use of ICT in different subjects and to include more creative activities. The pupils' experiences are broadened by, for example, visits to local places of worship and visitors to school. The 'Victorian day' was a source of much excitement and enthusiasm, and brought learning to life. Building works mean that the nursery has had to relocate in the school hall, which has hampered how the Foundation Stage curriculum is taught. Provision for physical education (PE) has been adversely affected. Although the teachers have ensured the pupils have regular physical activities, teaching PE in classrooms means that progression in learning is not assured. Before- and after-school clubs and activities enhance the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support for pupils are satisfactory overall. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust and regularly reviewed. Health and safety routines and risk assessments are fully in place. Child protection procedures are clear and widely understood. The staff have a genuine concern for the pupils' welfare. Support for the pupils' academic progress is not so robust. There are good systems for identifying and supporting pupils who need extra help to learn English or who have learning difficulties. The attainment of all pupils is tracked, but the information is not used systematically enough to identify those who may be falling behind or those who could make swifter progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has worked assiduously to see that the vision of Dormers Wells as the hub of activities for early years and community services becomes reality. In managing this and leading the school, her workload has been great. The quality of education has been maintained since the last inspection, but improvements in teaching and the pupils' standards have not been swift. Recent action to improve the work of the senior management team has been effective and demonstrates that there is a satisfactory capacity to improve. Subject co-ordinators have undertaken useful work to tackle weaknesses in the pupils' attainment, but do not yet have a coherent overview of teaching, learning and progress

in their areas of responsibility. Governors take a keen interest in the school's work and balance the support they give with questions and challenge. The school's plan for improvement shows that areas requiring development have been identified and many worthwhile activities have been undertaken over the past three years. However, the procedures for evaluating the success of initiatives are weak because ways of measuring success have not been included, and the school cannot be sure that it has achieved the desired results. Systems to inform the school's self-evaluation are not robust enough; for example, the views of parents and pupils have been sought and acted upon, but on an ad hoc basis rather than systematically.

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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?	3	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	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	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	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	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	3	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

Children

Mrs Arora, Mrs Canniff and I were very pleased to visit your school recently. We enjoyed meeting with you and watching you work and found that the friendly way that you spoke to us made us feel really welcome.

We found lots of things that were good about your school. We really enjoyed seeing the Year 2 classes and their teachers dressed as Victorians, which really made learning history fun. We were impressed with your good behaviour and the way you are enthusiastic and ready to learn in lessons. We know that you are well cared for and the adults look after you at all times. We have asked the school to try to do some things even better, so that you can learn more and make faster progress. This includes checking how well new ideas are working, and helping the teachers know exactly what you need to learn next. One way that you can help is by encouraging your parents to bring you to school every day and to arrive on time.

Once again, thank you very much for making us welcome in your school. We hope that you enjoy the new buildings when they are opened, and wish you all the best for your future at Dormers Wells.

Linda McGill

Linda McGill

HMI