



# Doddinghurst Infant School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 114969  
**LEA** ESSEX LEA  
**Inspection number** 279485  
**Inspection dates** 16 March 2006 to 17 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Dr. Anna Coyle LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Church Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community		CM15 0NJ
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 7		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01277822721
<b>Number on roll</b>	132	<b>Fax number</b>	01277 821430
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Ms.Penny Patterson
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 October 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs. Sheila Lewin

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 7	<b>Inspection dates</b> 16 March 2006 - 17 March 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 279485
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is a moderately sized infant school. Most children are of White British background and all speak English fluently. The number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities is lower than that of other schools. They have a range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties, autistic needs, speech and communication difficulties, hearing impairment and social, emotional and behavioural needs.

## **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 some outstanding features in teaching, leadership and governance. It has improved well since the last inspection and successfully dealt with the issues that were identified in 1999. The inspection findings agree with the school's own assessment of itself. It provides good value for money and is well placed to continue its development. The school is a welcoming, friendly place in which everyone feels cared for and fully involved. Children's personal development and well-being are outstanding. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Children achieve well by the time they reach the end of the Reception year. They also do well at Key Stage 1 and achieve high standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the time they leave at the end of Year 2. Children make good progress in learning because the teaching is good overall and some of it is excellent. However, the quality of teaching is inconsistent because it ranges from satisfactory to outstanding and the procedures for tracking children's progress are not fully established, having only just been re-introduced. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together as a strong team and organise plenty of interesting activities to help the children enjoy lessons and learn new skills. Leadership and management are good overall, with outstanding features in the excellent pastoral support given by the headteacher and the high level of commitment and expertise provided by the governors. The procedures for self-evaluation are effective. Staff, children and parents are consulted regularly and their views are considered and acted upon. The school has excellent links with parents, external agencies and local schools, which it uses conscientiously to benefit children's learning.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve teaching by spreading the best practice across the school and make sure that every lesson is of good quality. - Continue to develop the arrangements for tracking children's progress.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good. Children do well from the time they enter the school until they leave when they are seven years old. They begin with better skills than most children of their age and make good progress in the Reception year because they are very keen to learn and absorb the information rapidly. They attain good standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the time they reach the end of Year 2. All children do well generally, but particularly at the higher levels. This is borne out by the results of the national tests, which have been consistently good for many years and were exceptionally high last year in reading and writing. Children work hard, and many achieve the challenging targets the teachers set for them. The most capable, gifted and talented children do especially well because the provision is so good for them. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities also achieve well because they are

closely supported by teaching assistants during lessons and in small groups. For example, the school's strong focus on promoting literacy skills has a significant effect on children's successes during early morning reading sessions and in the 'den'.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. Children have exceedingly positive attitudes and really enjoy coming to school because lessons capture their interest so effectively. Their behaviour in lessons, and around the school is excellent. Children are very polite and courteous. Attendance rates are above the national average. Relationships between staff and children are very good. Children feel safe because they know that the adults will help them if they have any problems. They say that they are treated fairly and all adults listen to their points of view. As a result of excellent opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, children respect the views, values and beliefs of others. For example, they all love to join in with 'signing' language for the hearing impaired during assemblies. Children eagerly learn to help others by contributing to local community activities and by raising funds for charities. They make very good progress in acquiring the numeracy and literacy skills that will help them in later life. Since the last inspection, the significant improvements to information and communication technology (ICT) mean that children's growing dexterity with computers is helping to prepare them well for the future. The school is part of a scheme to promote healthy lifestyles and children speak sensibly about how to keep themselves healthy and safe. They have very good opportunities for exercise and sport.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good overall, though variable from satisfactory to outstanding. Teachers have positive relationships with the children in their classes and they use a good range of methods to inspire them. Most teachers have very high expectations and provide good opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening skills through very effective question-and-answer sessions at the beginnings and ends of lessons. As a consequence, the children are eager to learn and do their best. Literacy and numeracy skills are used well in all subjects. However, teaching is only satisfactory when the management of children is insecure and the content of lessons fails to challenge them or hold their interest. When this happens, they lose concentration and do not make enough progress. The teaching staff make good use of interactive whiteboards to stimulate learning and they deploy the very competent teaching assistants to help children to learn effectively and make good progress. Teachers regularly inform the children of how well they are doing during lessons and tell them what they need to do to improve. As a result, children usually know what they are expected to learn and rise to the challenges set for them. For example, in an outstanding mathematics lesson in Year 1 on 'Telling the Time', work

was precisely matched to the different learning needs of the children in order to stretch them fully. Similarly, in a practical science activity in Year 2, the teacher's exceedingly high expectations and excellent rapport with the class ensured the best possible learning. As a result, children made exceptional progress in predicting and testing how far toy cars would travel down a slope when conducting their investigations.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of the curriculum is good. Since the last inspection, policies and schemes have been revised and many more opportunities have been made for children to learn about other cultures. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The school provides well for children with learning difficulties and disability, for example, children with physical and co-ordination needs enjoy and benefit from early morning sensory activities. Children benefit from an excellent range of clubs and activities, and their interest and enjoyment in their work is enriched through a very wide range of visitors and visits. The school grounds have been developed very effectively to encourage physical and creative play. Highly attractive displays in classrooms and around the school illustrate children's work in the full range of subjects. The school successfully teaches children to develop safe and healthy lifestyles. Throughout the school, the strong emphasis on nurturing personal and social development means that the children become very confident learners.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The care, guidance and support of children are good. Child protection procedures are firmly in place. Children know that adults will listen to any concerns they might have. The level of care and consideration children show each other is very good and they appreciate having a 'super buddy' to whom they can talk, if they have a problem. Health and safety checks are made regularly. Parental views about the school are extremely positive. The school works very successfully with outside agencies to help children with learning needs and there are very productive links with other schools in the area. However, procedures for tracking children's progress are not fully established, having only just been re-introduced. The school recognises that more work needs to be done in this area, and the inspectors agree. The inspection findings are not quite as positive as the school's own evaluation of itself, but a particular strength is the outstanding way in which children are cared for in this very happy, friendly school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good, with some notably outstanding features in leadership and governance. The headteacher provides excellent pastoral support for the children, staff and parents. She works very closely with the deputy headteacher and senior managers to set clear direction for the school and promote a welcoming,

friendly ethos in which all children are highly valued as individuals. The governors watch over the school very effectively and manage the finances well. They meet regularly and have an excellent range of expertise between them, which they use conscientiously to benefit children's learning. They work closely with the headteacher and senior managers to achieve good value for money. The school has effective systems for checking how well it is doing and identifying what could be improved. It regularly consults the governors, staff, children and parents and their views are considered carefully and acted upon. All of the issues from the previous inspection have been dealt with successfully, including a much improved and sharper focus on strategic planning. The staff have also significantly improved the provision for ICT and outdoor play for the greater benefit of the children. Based upon its previous track record, the school's capacity to make further improvements is good.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	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	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	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	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

Following our visit to your school, we would like to thank you for making us so welcome and for talking to us. We really enjoyed listening to you and seeing you working with your teachers. Here are some of the things we found out: Your behaviour is excellent. We particularly like the way you help one another during lessons and at playtimes, especially when you are 'super buddies'. You all work very hard, which means that you do well and achieve high standards in the tests you take at the end of Year 2. You told us that you like coming to school and enjoy learning because the teachers and teaching assistants are so friendly and helpful, and we agree with you. Most of the teaching is good and some of it is outstanding. All of the adults in your school take extremely good care of you and encourage you to look after each other. The headteacher gives everyone excellent support. She works very hard to help everybody and make sure that everything runs smoothly. The deputy headteacher, staff and governors assist her very well. We think that your school is a good place to learn, but we would like all your teaching to be good or outstanding. We have asked your teachers to try to make sure that every lesson is as good as it can be and to go on improving the ways they check on how well you are doing. We hope that you will continue to work hard and enjoy your school as much as you do now.