



# Delce Junior School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 118432  
**LEA** Medway  
**Inspection number** 280314  
**Inspection dates** 15 March 2006 to 16 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Ian Hartland HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	The Tideway
<b>School category</b>	Community		Rochester
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11		Kent ME1 2NJ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01634 845242
<b>Number on roll</b>	417	<b>Fax number</b>	01634 845242
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Richard King
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	28 March 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Pat Fisher

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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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

The school is much bigger than most primary schools. Standards on entry are slightly below average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is above average. Most pupils are White British with very small numbers from other ethnic groups. Few have a first language other than English.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 4**

This is a school that is improving in some respects, but where the overall quality of education is inadequate. The school believes its effectiveness to be satisfactory, but this view is based on an unduly optimistic assessment of pupils' progress by senior staff. There was significant underachievement in the 2005 national tests. The school has begun to reverse this decline in performance, and progress in the lessons seen during the inspection was often satisfactory and sometimes good. However, pupils' longer-term progress is less than satisfactory and the school does not currently provide satisfactory value for money.

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. The leadership and management have been successful in establishing an environment where pupils feel safe, behave well and want to learn. Staff take good care of pupils. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some strengths. Teachers question pupils well and have positive relationships with them, but sometimes behaviour issues get in the way of learning. Assessment is not yet as good as it could be. The curriculum is satisfactory with improvements noted in science and information and communication technology (ICT). After school clubs, visits and visitors to the school enhance pupils' learning well.

The leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership team has taken action to bring about improvements but this has not yet enabled all pupils to make at least satisfactory progress. Monitoring is now in place and has begun to raise the quality of teaching. However, it is not yet sufficiently rigorous to ensure teaching is of a high enough standard to enable pupils to make up lost ground. Parents hold the school in high regard and are very happy with what it offers. The school has addressed successfully the areas for improvement in the last inspection report, and has the capacity to improve further.

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the standards and achievement of the pupils in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Improvements are also needed in aspects of teaching, assessment and monitoring.

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

Raise standards in English, mathematics and science throughout the school, but particularly in Year 6, ensuring that all groups and individuals make at least satisfactory progress. Develop greater rigour in monitoring lessons to make clear to teachers what needs to improve to raise standards. Improve assessment procedures, including the marking of pupils' work and checking on their progress. Develop the leadership roles of senior staff so that they have a more accurate knowledge of the school and how it can be improved.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

Achievement is unsatisfactory. The school judges it to be satisfactory, but has not yet done enough to ensure that all pupils can make at least satisfactory progress. Children's attainment on entry to the school is average according to their national test results at the end of Year 2, although the school judges it to be below average. Overall results in last year's national tests at the end of Year 6 were significantly below average. The results in English were slightly above the targets that the school set itself, but fell short in mathematics and science.

Most Year 6 pupils, including many pupils with learning difficulties, made less than satisfactory progress last year. This was because of a lack of challenge and consistently high expectations in the teaching and the lack of a system for the regular checking of pupils' progress against national expectations. There have clearly been improvements since then. In the lessons observed, pupils were making satisfactory and sometimes good progress, but the evidence from their work indicated that progress over time is more limited. The leadership of the school recognises that boys and girls of almost all abilities have been making insufficient progress and that standards and achievement need to be raised across the school. As a consequence, the school does not expect the results in the forthcoming national tests to be a significant improvement on the previous year.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. Their social and moral development is good, and their spiritual and cultural development satisfactory. Their attendance is good. Pupils arrive punctually and settle quickly to work. They enjoy lessons and a variety of extra-curricular activities. Behaviour is good. Most pupils are polite and helpful and have good relationships with each other and with adults. However, a few pupils are occasionally aggressive or provocative, without adequate reprimand or intervention from their teachers. At lunchtimes, many pupils choose to meet in the Oasis room, where they enjoy games and conversation supervised by a senior learning support assistant. Year 6 pupils, appointed as buddies, monitor the playground well and ensure that no child is left out of activities. This makes a valuable contribution in promoting the inclusion of all pupils and develops useful management skills for later life.

Pupils understand that a healthy lifestyle includes a balanced diet, participation in regular exercise and sport, and an awareness of personal safety. The school's healthy eating policy encourages pupils to consider the contents of their packed lunches, or to select healthy options in the canteen. The pupils are very generous of spirit, contributing each year to a variety of local and national charities. However, they receive too little encouragement to develop an interest in the local environment.

Pupils are sometimes consulted informally about proposed developments to the school site and possible changes to the curriculum. Senior staff are aware of the social and

educational benefits of a school council, but have no immediate plans to establish one. Similarly, although the school has a house system, and pupils are awarded house points for good work, effort or helpfulness, they are given too few responsibilities as team leaders.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching is satisfactory with some strengths. Monitoring is improving the quality of teaching. At best, the lessons are interesting and have clear objectives. However, pupils' work books show that often pupils are not sufficiently challenged by work and make limited progress. Teachers have good questioning skills, based on sound subject knowledge, sometimes effectively extending pupils' knowledge and understanding. Relationships are generally positive between adults and pupils, although in some lessons, teachers' expectations for behaviour are not high enough. As a result, pupils' progress is sometimes inadequate. Overall, classroom assistants provide satisfactory support for the pupils with whom they work. The introduction of further effective adult support enables some pupils with learning difficulties to make at least satisfactory progress.

The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. At best, it helps pupils make progress; on other occasions it highlights weaknesses in the work, but offers little advice on how to make it better. The school's assessment procedures are effective when judging progress and standards at the end of each academic year. Teachers check progress against lesson objectives, but the school has not yet developed systems for checking progress against the levels of the National Curriculum on a more regular basis. Pupils have some opportunities to check their own progress, but this is not well developed and pupils often mistakenly think they are making progress, when they are not.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum provides a satisfactory range of activities, building appropriately on previous learning. Setting for English, mathematics and science is in place but, as yet, does not ensure that all pupils achieve appropriately. Provision in science has improved since the last inspection, especially where pupils conduct investigations. Whilst the requirements for ICT are now being met, there is not enough use of ICT to support other curriculum areas, although better use is made of it in geography.

A broad programme for pupils' personal development provides a firm foundation for pupils to develop self-confidence. A great many pupils take advantage of the good range of after school activities in sport and the arts. A good range of visits and visitors enhances pupils' experiences.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

Care and personal guidance are satisfactory. Teachers and other adults have a good knowledge of the pupils' personal development. Child protection arrangements are effective and pupils are secure in a clean and carefully maintained environment. However, the school lacks sufficient guidance for governors and staff on restraining physically aggressive pupils.

Transfer from infant schools is sensitively planned to give the pupils good knowledge of the junior school before they start in Year 3. Pupils in Year 6 confidently look forward to transferring to secondary education. The school has established good partnerships with parents and carers. External agencies provide extra support for pupils whenever necessary, including professional counselling. Systems for classroom support and withdrawal ensure that the achievement of pupils with special educational needs is similar to the achievement of other pupils.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are adequate. The school judges them to be good but the systems introduced to raise the standards and achievement of the previous Year 6 pupils were not successful as most pupils made too little progress. Recent actions taken have begun to improve the rate of progress of the current Year 6 pupils, including better communication with parents and carers. Data are analysed well and there is targeted support for pupils. However, there are too few sharp, focused strategies to raise progress rates sufficiently to make up lost ground. The school's main strategic plan has not been revised to include the necessary detail to act as a tool to bring about change and improvement. Monitoring is improving teaching but there is more to do. Teachers are given feedback on the strengths and weaknesses within their lessons, but not robust judgements about their overall quality. Self-evaluation takes into account the views of parents and pupils and acts well upon them, but is underdeveloped, lacking sufficient rigour in evaluating pupils' progress.

The school has been successful in creating a positive ethos and environment for learning. Parents are full of praise for the genuine care shown for pupils and express a high level of satisfaction with the school. Subject and year leaders are beginning to hold themselves more accountable for the provision in their area of responsibility. Governors play an active role in improving the work of the school and holding it to account. Inspectors believe that the school leaders have the capacity to refocus their efforts and to bring about the further improvements needed in order to raise standards.





## 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>	4	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	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	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>	4	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	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>	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	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	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

<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	No
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	No
<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**

I am writing on behalf of the team of inspectors who visited your school recently to let you know what we think about the school. Thank you for your help in talking to us about the work you do and telling us what you think about the school.

We know that your teachers take good care of you, help you when you have problems and want the best for you. They work hard to make the school better so that you can all do as well as possible. The school helps you to stay fit and healthy. We know that you like the clubs and activities that the school provides. Your parents told us, and we saw for ourselves, that you like coming to school. Your parents are very happy with the school and what it provides for you in and out of lessons. Your behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.

We do think that there are things that could be better. Your headteacher could help the teachers to expect more from you in lessons so that you all learn to behave well and give your very best. Teachers could make more checks on the progress you are making. We think the headteacher and senior teachers could provide more ways to help you to make faster progress in your learning, especially in English, mathematics and science.