



# Dudley Infant School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 114455  
**Local Authority** East Sussex  
**Inspection number** 289920  
**Inspection date** 21 February 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Carole Skinner

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Harold Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Hastings
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-7		TN35 5NJ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01424 422981
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	179	<b>Fax number</b>	01424 434803
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Yasmin Ornsby
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Joanne Charles
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 March 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Dudley Infant School is situated in an area of deprivation and is part of the local Excellence Cluster which works with the school to raise pupils' achievement and self-esteem and improve their behaviour. A higher than average number of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Many children start school with standards below those expected for their age, especially in language, communication, personal and social skills. The school's pupils are mainly from White British families, with around 10% from minority ethnic backgrounds. A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is similar to that seen in most schools.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Dudley Infant School is a good school. Parents' views of the school are overwhelmingly positive, and one summed up the views of many in these words: 'It is a really lovely school that cares, nurtures and educates the children in a small, friendly environment'. The school does indeed care for and nurture its pupils very well. It provides excellent support for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties through a number of initiatives, often in conjunction with outside agencies. The school's outstanding links with the Excellence Cluster, other local schools and support organisations greatly enrich the quality of care and education for all pupils.

Pupils achieve well and reach standards that are just above average by the time they leave. Standards are rising as new teaching strategies begin to take effect, but a few middle and higher ability pupils could do even better in reading, writing and mathematics. Children in the Reception classes make good progress from a fairly low starting point and reach standards close to those expected by the end of their first year. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities achieve well because they are given good additional support by the well-trained teaching assistants. The assistants work closely with teachers to ensure that pupils' needs are met.

The quality of teaching and learning is good because teachers plan activities that match individual pupils' needs and interests. Regular ongoing assessment of pupils' progress is used well to ensure that each day's learning builds effectively on the last. The school has recognised the need to track individual pupils' progress more closely in order to ensure all make the best possible progress. The good, well-planned curriculum captures pupils' imagination and interest and because of this pupils say that their lessons are fun. Consequently, they are well motivated and have positive attitudes to learning. Their personal development and well-being are good. This is because of the school's firm commitment to building pupils' confidence and self-esteem in order to enable them to become effective learners. Good academic support and guidance, together with excellent pastoral care, go a long way towards achieving the school's aims.

As a result of good leadership and management, the school has an accurate and realistic view of its strengths and shortcomings. This and the strong teamwork between all staff places the school in a favourable position to continue to improve. Nevertheless, much of the responsibility for driving up standards currently rests too heavily with the leadership team. Whilst this has ensured achievements are good, the school recognises the need to develop the responsibilities of subject leaders, many of whom are new to their role, so that they can take a more active part in the management of the school.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the procedures for tracking individual pupils' progress to ensure that standards are raised in reading, writing and mathematics for the small number of middle and higher ability pupils who are not achieving as well as they should.

- Develop the roles of teachers with curriculum responsibilities to ensure that they play a more active role in the management of the school.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children in Reception make good progress from below average starting points. By the end of their first year, many achieve broadly average standards for their age. Some of the youngest children, who have only been at school full-time for a term, take a little longer to reach the goals expected of five-year-olds. Over the last three years the school has been successful in raising standards for Year 2 pupils from below average to just above average. As a result, pupils are making good progress in their learning. New initiatives to improve standards in writing, especially amongst boys, are beginning to bear fruit, as pupils are learning to use more adventurous language and sentence structures. Careful teaching and reinforcement of mathematical concepts are enabling pupils to use their knowledge to tackle problems. A wide range of resources, daily opportunities for reading aloud and the involvement of parents have all contributed to pupils' improved reading standards. The school is aware that a small number of middle and higher ability pupils could be doing better than they are in English and mathematics. New tracking systems have been introduced to keep a closer check on individual pupils' progress from term to term in order to identify early signs of underachievement.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because it is at the heart of the school's ethos. The vast majority of pupils behave well and show care and consideration for others. If a child has no one to play with and is sitting on the 'Friendship Bench' in the playground, it is not long before 'friends' appear to take them under their wing. Pupils learn mutual respect from adults, who set a fine example and show them they are valued. Pupils respond positively to the extensive programme of rewards and praise. They enjoy taking responsibility for jobs around the school, such as collecting apple cores for composting. They try hard to eat healthy snacks and lunches and drink plenty of water. They learn how to keep safe through the 'Footsteps' training programme as well as behaving sensibly in the playground.

Opportunities for pupils to have a say in how the school is run are fairly limited, although the newly formed school council has been introduced to give pupils a voice. Good progress in developing literacy, numeracy and social skills helps to prepare pupils well for their future role in society.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers successfully create an environment in which pupils are ready to learn, keen to listen and enthusiastic about joining in with activities. They do this by constantly seeking ways to make learning more relevant and enjoyable for all pupils. High expectations of every pupil, whatever their background or previous attainment, ensure that all are given sufficiently challenging work. Regular ongoing assessment gives teachers a clear picture of how well each pupil is progressing. This enables them to plan work that builds effectively on pupils' existing knowledge and understanding as well as filling any gaps or providing additional reinforcement. Although pupils have individual targets, they are not yet involved consistently well in assessing their own progress towards them. A good number of well-trained teaching assistants, supplemented well by voluntary helpers, ensure good support for all pupils in lessons.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is planned effectively around whole-school themes which include all subjects, with science as the hub. As part of its commitment to continuous improvement the school is currently exploring ways to modify the curriculum to give it a clearer focus on developing pupils' skills across a range of subjects. This is particularly evident in the recently introduced strategies for teaching writing. Very close collaboration with the nearby junior school, which almost all of the pupils move on to, is helping to assure progression in learning for the pupils. The school makes very effective use of the local community and the area's rich history to enhance pupils' learning. Members of the local artists' community are invited to share their work with the pupils and a specialist music teacher takes lessons throughout the school. The use of information and communication technology as a tool for learning is a developing area which the school is currently working to improve.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

'Children come first at Dudley'. This key principle in the school's mission statement is reflected throughout the school in the way pupils are treated as individuals with widely differing needs. There are support and nurture groups for the small number of pupils who find it hard to behave well, for those who have suffered loss or bereavement and for those who struggle to cope in whole-class lessons. 'The Strikers' literacy and mathematics sessions enable pupils with learning or behavioural difficulties to make good progress in a small-group setting. A visiting play therapist works in conjunction with teachers and parents to help children adjust to difficult situations or manage their feelings. The Rainbow Club helps children to develop good social and communication skills. Pupils' academic progress is checked carefully through regular

assessments that give teachers a clear idea of how well pupils have understood new ideas and concepts. The systems for tracking individual pupils' progress towards termly targets are fairly new and are still being refined. They are not yet fully effective in ensuring that every pupil makes the best possible progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher, who has been in post since September 2006, provides clear direction for the school and is already well respected and appreciated by parents, staff and pupils. She has been particularly successful in establishing the firmly held belief amongst the whole staff that the pupils will learn well if they feel happy, confident and secure. As a result pupils make good progress in their learning and in their personal development. The school has developed a very strong partnership with parents over the past five years and takes good account of their views, as well as those of staff, governors and pupils. The headteacher and deputy form a strong team and are committed to developing leadership skills amongst the rest of the staff. They make very good use of the resources and personnel in the Excellence Cluster to support staff in their professional development. Curriculum co-ordinators, many of whom are new to the role, are not yet involved in evaluating the quality of provision in their subjects or the standards achieved by the pupils. The school has highlighted this as a priority for improvement in order to raise standards further. Governors fulfil their responsibilities well and contribute effectively to strategic planning and review.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I very much enjoyed my visit to your school. Thank you for making me feel welcome and for talking to me and showing me your work. A lot of your mums and dads wrote to tell me that Dudley is a good school – and they are right. These are some of the things that make it a good school:

- You make good progress because your teachers expect you to do well and give you work that helps you to learn new things every day.
- You enjoy coming to school because lessons are good fun and you get to do lots of interesting activities.
- You behave well, work hard and help your teachers.
- You are kind and look after each other, especially in the playground.
- All of the adults take care of you very well and give you extra help if you need it.
- The people who run the school do a good job and are always looking for ways to make it even better.

Although you are making good progress, a few of you could do even better in reading, writing and maths so I have asked your teachers to help you do this. Just as some of you have special jobs to do, so do your teachers. They are responsible for subjects like English, mathematics and science. I have asked the school to help them to do those jobs even better, for example by watching other teachers' lessons and checking your work. In this way they will be able to help you make even better progress.

I am sure you will continue to help your teachers by working hard and behaving well.