

# Darlinghurst Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114790
<b>Local Authority</b>	SOUTHEND-ON-SEA
<b>Inspection number</b>	290030
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Heather Weston HMI

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	376
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Tony Le Masurier
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Robert Knight
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 May 2002
<b>School address</b>	Pavilion Drive Leigh-on-sea Essex SS9 3JS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01702 478379
<b>Fax number</b>	01702 509207

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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

Darlinghurst Primary and Nursery School is a larger than average sized school serving the area of Leigh-on-Sea in Essex.

Attainment on entry to the nursery is below average. The number of pupils taking free school meals is above average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD) is broadly average, but the number with statements of special educational need is above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average and the proportion with English as an additional language is low.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

In the words of one parent Darlinghurst Primary and Nursery is a 'really good school'.

Overall standards have been broadly in line with the national average over a period of five years. They dropped significantly in 2005 in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, but improved equally significantly in 2006. This improvement appears to have been maintained into 2007 as pupils are making good progress against their targets. Standards at the end of the Foundation Stage are just below expectations and at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly average. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with national averages. In 2006 boys did significantly less well than girls, but the school has recognised this and has taken active steps to improve outcomes for boys.

All groups of pupils now make good progress throughout the school because teaching is good and assessments of pupils' work are used very well to match activities to pupils' needs. Pupils know how to improve their work and make progress. Data is carefully analysed to identify pupils at risk of underachieving. Those with LDD are given high quality support and guidance to help them engage with their learning and make improved progress. This means that the school is truly inclusive and provides excellent equality of opportunity for all pupils. The quality of care is also high, with thorough safeguarding and risk assessment procedures. As another parent said about staff at the school, 'They provide a happy and secure environment'.

Pupils' personal development is good and their positive attitude is demonstrated by the high quality of their work. Teachers plan interesting activities and most ensure pupils are engaged in their learning. However, in some lessons teachers miss opportunities to fully involve pupils in learning through the use of paired talk or by discussing the outcomes expected from pupils of different abilities.

A parent's comment that 'I strongly believe children enjoy and achieve through the imaginative timetabling of themed weeks, visits and partnerships' sums up the impact of the good curriculum and wide range of enrichment activities. Pupils develop basic skills of literacy and numeracy in different subject areas, but there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in information, communication technology (ICT) due to a lack of resources.

Leadership from the headteacher and senior leaders has developed well over the last two years. They now form a highly effective team, who together with effective middle managers, strong staff, and supportive and challenging governors, ably drive school improvement. Although the issue of attendance raised at the last inspection has not been fully resolved, the school is doing what it can to improve attendance, which is now satisfactory. The school provides good value for money and has a very good capacity to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve provision for ICT.
- Ensure pupils are fully engaged in learning by exploiting all opportunities for sharing ideas and discussing the expected outcomes of their learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good. Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage to enter Key Stage 1 with standards that are just below expectations. Standards reached by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 dropped significantly in 2005. However, standards rose equally significantly in 2006 to become in line with the national average. The proportion of more able pupils in both key stages gaining higher levels was lower than for similar pupils nationally, particularly in reading and mathematics at Key Stage 1 and mathematics at Key Stage 2. Boys did significantly less well than girls, particularly in English. The school recognised these differences in standards and has taken active steps to improve performance.

Progress between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 improved significantly in 2006, with progress in English and mathematics significantly higher than average and progress in science in line with the average.

All groups of current pupils, including those with LDD and pupils from ethnic minorities now make good and steady progress in each year group.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is successfully supported. Pupils demonstrate great strength of feeling against racism and other forms of prejudice. They also reflect maturely on the beliefs and feelings of others.

Pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe. They behave well and show a good awareness of safe practices, for instance in the playground. The work the school is doing to develop their understanding of healthy lifestyles is reflected in the following comment by a Year 6 child, 'You get into good habits in this school so that when you're at home and feel hungry you naturally turn to fruit or something healthy'.

Pupils are well involved in the school community through the school council and through other opportunities to take responsibility, for instance as 'peer mediators'. They are developing a good grasp of the basic skills necessary for their future life and the school provides an impressive range of opportunities for pupils to learn about the world of work.

Attendance remains below average, although the school is making efforts to improve this and pupils are becoming increasingly involved in finding ways to lower absence rates.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Interesting activities are planned to stimulate pupils' interest. Effective assessment procedures are used well to plan differentiated, challenging activities which meet the needs of all pupils. Teachers use probing questions to make pupils think and, in many classes, pupils work with partners to discuss and evaluate their learning. However, in some lessons pupils do not always actively engage in this 'shared talk' to connect fully with their learning. Also, although pupils understand a lesson's main objectives, they are less aware of what a successful piece of work should look like for them as individuals. Marking and the

use of individual pupil targets give clear guidance to pupils as to how to improve their work and reach the next level.

Resources are well used and well organised, with good use made of interactive whiteboards. Classroom management is generally effective. As a result, relationships are positive, and pupils try hard. Learning support assistants give significant support to pupils, with parent helpers also making a valuable contribution.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced, and time is used efficiently. Exciting opportunities are made for linking different subjects and for developing literacy and numeracy skills in a range of contexts. However, there are not enough opportunities for developing pupils' ICT skills. Personal development is promoted well through personal, social and health education. Pupils' future economic well-being is successfully developed by working in pairs and groups and by sharing the skills with a variety of visitors on themed days. Up to 200 mums, dads and grandparents visit on specially organised occasions to enhance pupils' understanding of the world of work. Further enrichment is provided by other visitors and by visits out, for example to a synagogue and on residential trips. Theme weeks such as 'Chinese Week' and book weeks, together with activities such as French and Mandarin, widen pupils' learning and promote enjoyment. There is good take-up from pupils for the range of extra-curricular activities from chess to gardening and sports. Breakfast and homework clubs positively support pupils' learning.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. Staff know pupils extremely well, and there is very good support for those who are vulnerable. Provision for those with LDD is excellent, enabling these pupils to make similar progress to others. There are also successful links with outside agencies, specialist teachers and a particularly extensive and outstanding range of intervention techniques to guide and support all pupils. Pupils feel safe and are happy to turn to adults if they need help. Procedures for safeguarding them meet current requirements and the training of all staff on this and other matters, such as first aid, is up to date. The school is conscientious in its response to concerns raised by parents. There are thorough risk assessments on the premises and on staff and pupil activities. Monitoring by senior staff ensures that safe practice is the norm.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The members of the senior leadership team give clear direction and challenge to the teams they manage. As a result, middle managers are highly motivated and accountable for improvement. Although this structure is relatively new, it gives the school very good capacity to improve. Staff relationships are very strong and staff work together efficiently to improve outcomes for pupils.

Self-evaluation processes are rigorous with a clear cycle of monitoring, evaluation, action and review. All stakeholders are involved, although the school does not formally seek the opinions of parents regarding all aspects of its work. Improvement planning focuses sharply on the

outcomes of self-evaluation and drives school improvement. Key issues identified from the monitoring of data, for example the difference between standards reached by boys compared with girls, have been addressed. Resources are used well to ensure outcomes for all pupils are good. However, the school has not addressed the identified issue regarding the lack of provision for ICT.

The range and quality of partnerships with other organisations, for example local schools and services, are outstanding and pupils benefit as a result. The governing body is highly committed and provides a good level of both challenge and support for the school.

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## Annex A

## 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	3
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	2
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>	1

<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.

## Annex A

**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	1
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**

23 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Darlinghurst Primary and Nursery School, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 3JS

Mrs Pangbourne, Mr Phillips and I very much enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for being so welcoming and for talking to us and showing us your work. We thought that you were all very friendly and well behaved. We think your school is good, with some things which are particularly good.

Your teachers teach you well and plan interesting and, sometimes, exciting activities. They know if you are not making the progress you should and, together with the learning support assistants, plan extremely good support for you. Everyone at school makes sure that you are very well looked after.

There are some things we feel Mr Knight and the staff can do to make your school even better. You need to have more computers and equipment to help you use your ICT skills. You need to be able to discuss ideas more in lessons and you need to know what a successful piece of work looks like in all lessons.

We also feel that people in Leigh-on-Sea need to know that your school is a good school. I know you can help with this!

I hope you enjoy the rest of the term,

With best wishes

Heather Weston

Her Majesty's Inspector of Education, Learning and Skills