

# Deneholm Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114858
<b>Local Authority</b>	THURROCK
<b>Inspection number</b>	290061
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Martin Beale

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	346
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Helen Horrobin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Linda Woolley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 May 2002
<b>School address</b>	Culford Road Little Thurrock Grays Essex RM16 2SS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01375 373405
<b>Fax number</b>	01375 394515

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an above average-sized school in which attainment on entry is slightly below what is normally expected of four-year-olds, particularly in literacy. Free school meal eligibility is below average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below the national average as is the number learning English as an additional language. Sixteen pupils are from Traveller communities. The school also has a small number of looked-after children. A high proportion of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities and five pupils have a statement of special educational need.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The inspection confirms the view of the school that its effectiveness is satisfactory and it provides satisfactory value for money. The school has the support of parents who are largely pleased with what the school is doing for their children. They are particularly happy with the good care, support and guidance provided for their children. The pupils' positive approach to their work makes a major contribution to their progress. Their personal development and well-being are good. Pupils work hard and respond well to their teachers. This helps to make it a happy school in which pupils report that they feel safe and secure.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but there are inconsistencies, which prevent faster than satisfactory progress. Teaching does not always fire pupils' interest and imagination or challenge sufficiently the thinking of the more able. Marking is not consistently helpful in all subjects and classes. This means that, although progress is good in some classes, it is not in all. Pupil achievement is satisfactory and standards are average in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave Year 6. The Reception classes provide a sound start for the youngest children. They make satisfactory progress in all areas of their learning and are set up well for work in the rest of the school. The satisfactory curriculum gives pupils added interest through the much valued clubs and other enrichment activities. However, writing, number and information and communication technology skills (ICT) are not coherently developed across the curriculum, which limits progress in these subjects.

Pupils' circumstances are well known to staff and used as the basis for classroom support. However, targets for pupils with learning difficulties are sometimes too general for teachers and support staff to plan activities that meet the specific needs of each individual. Consequently progress is no better than satisfactory in spite of the close support provided. Teachers are learning how to develop the language skills of the increasing number of pupils learning English as an additional language. Pupils from traveller communities are supported well and make satisfactory progress.

Much has been done since the last inspection to improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, which is now satisfactory. Issues raised then have been tackled with some success and standards have risen. As a result of the initiatives it has taken, the school can point to improvements in several areas. Systems to monitor the work of staff and the performance of pupils are more robust. However, school evaluation does not focus sufficiently on how actions taken affect the pupils' achievements. This means that staff and governors are not always clear about what works best, and what are the most important priorities for improvement. For this reason, the school's capacity to improve is no better than satisfactory.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Plan for the more coherent development of pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT across all subjects.
- Strengthen teaching by bringing more interest to lessons, challenging the thinking of more able pupils and improving the quality of marking.
- Focus school self-evaluation more sharply on the impact that the school's planning and actions have on pupils' achievements.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress in Reception and most reach expected goals by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils of all backgrounds, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities, also make satisfactory progress during their time in Years 1 to 6. The results of assessments for Year 2 pupils have improved. These were average in 2006 and have risen slightly, but not significantly, in reading and writing in 2007. Year 6 test results were also close to the national average in all subjects in 2006, representing satisfactory progress from the pupils' earlier Year 2 test results. Results improved in mathematics but fell in science, largely because relatively few pupils exceeded the nationally expected Level 4. It is a school priority to improve teaching in science, particularly for the more able, but it is too early to see whether this has led to rising standards. It is also a school priority to improve writing as it is the weakest of the basic skills, particularly for boys. Lessons, pupils' work and school assessment data show that the action taken is beginning to have a positive impact.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well-being, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Most pupils enjoy school, attend regularly and behave well. They say that bullying is rare and when it does occur, it is dealt with quickly. Pupils learn to respect the customs and cultures of others and reflect on their own actions and how they affect other people. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities, for example, as mentors in the playground and monitors during assembly. They are proud to serve on the school council and note the improvements they have made in providing equipment for the playground to make break times more enjoyable. They support charities and make a satisfactory contribution to the local community by performing concerts and participating in church festivals. Pupils have a good understanding the importance of maintaining a safe and healthy life style. Sound basic skills and good personal qualities give them a secure platform for their future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Whilst teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and some lessons are taught well, inconsistencies are apparent. Teachers' use of assessment data when planning lessons has improved but they do not always provide challenging activities for more able pupils. Pupils are generally made aware of the purpose behind their work and so respond well when working individually or in groups. They are keen to answer questions asked of them, but some teachers miss the opportunity to require detailed responses, particularly from more able pupils. Teachers deploy the large number of teaching assistants well to support the learning of individuals and groups of pupils. Teachers are now beginning to take advantage of the potential of interactive whiteboards to stimulate interest and develop key learning points more effectively.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum makes a sound contribution to pupils' academic and personal development. Programmes are provided to meet individual learning needs and for pupils who have fallen behind where they should be for their age. Useful cross-curricular links are beginning to support the development of basic skills. For example, pupils sometimes develop their writing through work in subjects such as history. However, there is no consistent planning for the development of pupils' writing, number or ICT skills in other subjects. Specific programmes and additional activities promote the pupils' personal development well. Pupils enjoy the good range of interesting projects and out-of-school activities, which enhance their learning and enjoyment. Such activities are well attended. An interesting range of visits and visitors complements the curriculum.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good overall. The school's commitment to pupils' welfare is reflected in the effective implementation of systems to ensure their care and well-being. Health and safety arrangements are thorough. Procedures for safeguarding and protecting children meet current requirements and are understood by all staff. Pupils from all communities are welcomed and helped to feel safe and secure. Close links with the families from Travelling communities supports their children's achievement and personal development well. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Target-setting, including for pupils with learning difficulties, has improved. Targets are more specific and individual, especially in writing, although more effectively used in some classes than others to guide pupils' learning. Marking is regular, but inconsistent in the guidance it gives to help pupils to identify what they need to do to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Satisfactory leadership and management have secured improvements in the school's performance in recent years. The school runs smoothly and satisfactory procedures are in place to care for pupils and keep them safe. There are suitable systems to monitor the school's work and identify areas for improvement. Recent initiatives have included the introduction of a more structured programme to improve standards in writing. This is beginning to show signs of success, especially in classes where teachers are using the programme effectively. Whilst senior staff check the quality of teaching regularly, they are not pinpointing clearly enough those features that help pupils to achieve well and those that hinder their learning. This means that the quality of the teaching varies considerably across the school. Planning for future improvement, whilst satisfactory, lacks clear and measurable targets through which to evaluate its success. The governing body provides satisfactory support. Individual governors bring a good range of expertise to support the school, for example in finance and computer technology.

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## Annex A

## 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>
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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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### 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	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<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.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

19 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Deneholm Primary School, Grays, Essex, RM16 2SS

I am writing to thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school. You were all very helpful. We enjoyed talking with you and your teachers and watching you learn.

You make satisfactory progress during your time at the school, although there are several aspects of your school that we judged to be good. Most of you meet the standards expected by the time you move on to secondary school. You enjoy school, work hard and mostly behave sensibly. You enjoy the clubs, trips and visits provided for you. The care, support and guidance you receive are good. You are learning how important diet and exercise are for a healthy lifestyle. You take your responsibilities seriously and make a considerable contribution to the life of the school.

Your teachers and governors are trying hard to make the school even better. There are some areas where we think that improvements could be made. There are times when your teachers could make lessons more interesting, by challenging your thinking more and giving you greater assistance through their marking. You need more opportunities to develop your writing, number and information and communication technology skills in other subjects. Finally, we have asked the staff and governors to make sure they are clear about the benefits to you of the improvements they have introduced.

We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale

Lead inspector