



Danbury Park Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 114992
Local Authority ESSEX
Inspection number 290098
Inspection dates 5–6 December 2006
Reporting inspector John Messer

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Well Lane
School category	Community		Danbury, Danbury
Age range of pupils	4–11		Chelmsford, Essex CM3 4AB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01245 224994
Number on roll (school)	239	Fax number	01245 224673
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Peter Dollery
		Headteacher	Mr Mike Arnold
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school. Most pupils come from relatively advantaged families. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is low. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. A few are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a small number speak English as an additional language. Attainment on entry to the school is above average.

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 outstanding features. The headteacher gives excellent leadership and this is a key factor in the school's success. Standards are exceptionally high but the school never rests on its laurels. The headteacher and staff are constantly searching for ways to increase pupils' achievement and further improve the quality of education provided. Pupils enjoy school very much and are bursting with enthusiasm for learning. Behaviour is excellent. Personal development is outstanding. Pupils are self-assured and discuss their work thoughtfully. Excellent foundations are laid for their future learning and working lives. Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure in school. They have an extremely good understanding of how to eat sensibly, stay healthy and keep fit.

Teaching and learning are good and sometimes outstanding. Children settle happily in the Reception class, where the outstanding teaching helps them to achieve extremely well. Early reading, writing and number skills are taught rigorously and standards are well above average by the end of the Reception year. Teaching is good in Years 1 to 6 and pupils achieve well. Teachers' planning is thorough and shows that they have high expectations of pupils' performance. This is a key factor in pupils' consistently good achievement. Another is the strong support for learning provided by parents. The national assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2006 showed that pupils attained exceptionally high standards in reading, writing and mathematics. National test results for pupils in Year 6 were exceptionally high in English and mathematics and well above average in science.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The curriculum is good. It is relevant to pupils' needs and is supplemented by a good range of extra activities. The headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher are working closely together to design an even more exciting curriculum. Technology has been introduced to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Each classroom is equipped with an interactive white board and there is a good computer suite. Teachers are receiving good training in the use of this equipment. The school still has some way to go to develop the full potential of information and communication technology (ICT) to enrich teaching and learning across the curriculum. The overwhelming majority of parents are pleased with the education provided for their children. Governors work closely with staff and monitor the school's performance thoroughly. Finances are managed well to provide good value for money. The school's self-evaluation is mostly accurate. It has good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use ICT more effectively to improve teaching and learning across all subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

All groups of pupils achieve well. In the Foundation Stage, children learn rapidly and their achievement is excellent. Many are on course to exceed the early learning goals before the end of the Reception year. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is good and they attain exceptionally high standards. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 to 6, and by Year 6 standards overall are exceptionally high. In English, standards are exceptionally high in reading and well above average in writing. Pupils read avidly and their achievement is better in reading than in writing. The subject leader for English has introduced new ideas to promote greater enthusiasm for writing. Standards in mathematics have been exceptionally high consistently for the past five years and this is a key strength. Pupils develop a good range of skills in ICT and use computers confidently, but have too few opportunities to apply their skills. The school has good plans for greater use of ICT in literacy and numeracy.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are rightly proud of their school. They thoroughly enjoy coming to school and, as a result, attendance is very high. Pupils talk confidently to each other, their teachers and other adults. They are shown great respect by all adults. They are always ready for fun but know where the boundaries are and behave extremely well. They are sensitive to the feelings of others and share ideas eagerly. The school council ensures that pupils' views are heard. Healthy eating is very well supported by fruit snacks and well balanced meals. Pupils are very involved in the local community. They have worked with parish and borough councillors to consider the problems associated with traffic in the village. They are acquiring many skills useful to them in later life. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed extremely well through a stunning range of activities and experiences. They visit temples, synagogues and churches, participate in the annual 'village spring clean' and support many charities. This aspect of pupils' learning is central to the work of the school. Pupils are well aware of how to look after themselves and stay safe.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers plan lessons meticulously. A productive, business like learning climate typifies the classroom environment from Reception to Year 6. Relationships are excellent and sufficiently relaxed that pupils are confident in offering opinions or asking for help. Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly. Pupils are highly motivated to learn because teachers

work very hard to make lessons stimulating and fun. Teachers have begun to use the new interactive white boards effectively, but have yet to realise their full potential in bringing learning to life. Pupils quickly gain high levels of self-confidence and independence as they are encouraged to think about what they are doing. They contribute eagerly to class discussions. Pupils often have good opportunities to contribute to the assessment of their learning in lessons, although this is not well developed in all classes. Effective support from highly skilled teaching assistants contributes to the good progress made by pupils of all abilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a broad curriculum that gives pupils a well rounded education. It is well balanced and enriched by a wide range of additional activities. Although there is a strong emphasis on the key skills of literacy and numeracy, drama, art, music and technology are well represented. Pupils learn about other countries, their faiths and customs. The school has reviewed the curriculum in Years 3 to 6 and has good plans in place to make it more meaningful and stimulating by making links across subjects. Pupils use computers confidently when the opportunity arises but the skills they learn in the computer suite are not always linked sufficiently to the work they are doing in class. In the Foundation Stage, the curriculum is outstanding and underpins children's excellent achievement. A wealth of purposeful and imaginative learning opportunities are organised, both in the classroom and outdoors, and imaginative play is well developed.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school ensures that the care of pupils is paramount. Child protection procedures are in place and are clearly understood by all staff. Teachers and support staff are sensitive to the needs of each individual pupil. Staff are accessible and encourage pupils to talk to them about any worries, even suggesting that messages by email are acceptable if this is the older pupils' preferred means of communication. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the high level of care provided for their children. From the Reception class onwards, great emphasis is placed on developing pupils' self-esteem and independence. There are many opportunities for pupils to exercise responsibility, such as manning the school office at lunch time. Academic guidance is good, although pupils have a much better understanding of how to reach the next stage of learning in literacy than they do in numeracy.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

A governor is attached to each class and this helps the governing body to monitor the work of the school closely. The headteacher sets the tone. He cares deeply about every pupil and has succeeded in establishing a learning ethos in which every child can

flourish. The school administrator is part of the senior management team and manages the day-to-day running of the school exceptionally well. This releases the headteacher to concentrate on supporting teaching and learning. The school analyses its performance carefully to identify any areas of weakness and takes rapid action to improve things. For example, progress in writing in Years 3 to 6 was identified as an area for improvement. The subject leader took swift action to improve teaching and learning in writing and improvements are evident. The school has adopted new systems to monitor pupils' progress frequently and in greater depth but it is too early to evaluate their full impact. The school is poised to make substantial advances in the use of new technology, including interactive white boards and digital cameras, to further enhance teaching and learning.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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

7 December 2006

Dear Children

Danbury Park Primary School, Well Lane, Danbury, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 4AB

What a great school! We thoroughly enjoyed our short visit. Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming. We loved your wonderful Christmas performances and so did your parents. We asked people what they thought was the best thing about the school. The answers were a little confusing. The children said that the best thing about the school was the teachers and the teachers said that the best thing was you, the children. I think that you are both right in equal measure. Another great strength is your headteacher, who has worked incredibly hard over the years to make the school so successful. He cares deeply about every one of you.

Children in the Reception class have great fun and learn quickly. Of course they can identify cubes, cylinders and spheres, but it is most unusual for children of that age to know what a torus is. You all work hard and you attain high standards in your work. You love reading and you read a wide range of literature. You are good at sport, although too many basket balls end up on the roof. You told us that yours is a friendly school and that everybody gets on well together. You are polite, full of fun and very well behaved. The teachers work extremely hard to help you to learn as much as possible. You told us, 'There are loads of clubs, something for everyone.' You like taking on responsibilities, such as being school councillors. You told us that one of the really good things about being in Year 6 is that you get 'reading partners' and that you love 'the bonding relationships that you make with the youngest ones, although some are little rebels'. You told us that you love using computers but don't get enough time to use them as much as you would like to help you with your learning.

We think that there is one important thing that needs to be done to make the school even better. We think that all the new technology that has been introduced, such as the interactive white boards, is great. We think that you should have opportunities in all subjects to use equipment such as computers, interactive white boards and digital cameras even more.

We know that the school is going to get even better. There are exciting times ahead.

With all best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Messer (Lead Inspector)