

St Dunstan's Cheam CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102992
Local Authority	Sutton
Inspection number	308187
Inspection dates	23–24 January 2008
Reporting inspector	David Whatson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	487
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Brian Stevens
Headteacher	Mrs Christine Smyth
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2003
School address	Anne Boleyn's Walk Cheam Sutton SM3 8DF
Telephone number	020 8642 5463
Fax number	020 8770 7852

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is low. Many ethnic groups are represented in the school, but the vast majority of pupils are from a White British background. Very few pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. A lower than average percentage of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities. The number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs is average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The vast majority of parents are very happy with the school and feel confident that their children are extremely well looked after and educated. One parent's words, 'We can't praise them highly enough', was echoed by many others. The great sense of community, and the nurturing both of pupils' academic and personal development to create 'well rounded individuals', were also identified by many parents as particular strengths.

One of the many aspects of the school that is so striking on entering the building is its calm and purposeful atmosphere, which fully reflects the school's strong Christian ethos. In every classroom, from Nursery to Year 6, pupils are industrious, very attentive, and behave impeccably. They love learning and are very proud of their school. 'I am never bored, there is just so much for us to do'. This is how one girl summarised her view of the school and her friends agreed.

The exceptionally well-planned and enriched curriculum has been developed and extended to offer pupils the challenge they love. The problem solving and practical activities offered, sharpen pupils' thinking and debating skills well. Opportunities to learn French and touch-typing prepare pupils very well for their future. Pupils' extensive contributions to the wider community, such as music and dance festivals, and their charitable fund raising activities are exemplary. Pupils also excel in the school's many sports clubs and events. Pupils' safety is paramount. Relationships are excellent and pupils feel very safe and secure.

Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, senior staff and a superb governing body, an ethos in which all pupils thrive has been created. Pupils benefit from teaching that is usually at least good and mostly outstanding and progress at a fast rate. Lessons are often very challenging, lively and very well planned and at times extend pupils well beyond the expected level for their age. Marking provides detailed guidance and the use of individualised targets enable pupils to know exactly what they need to do to improve. Systems to check the pupils' progress are extensive and used very well to identify any potential underachievement. Those that need additional support receive it from the many well-qualified teaching assistants. Pupils make very good progress across a wide range of subjects, including information and communication technology (ICT). Standards at the end of Year 6 are very high and have been for the last five years.

Thorough and accurate evaluations of the school's effectiveness by the leadership team have meant that the school has built upon the very good foundations noted in the last inspection. Teaching is frequently and rigorously monitored in English, mathematics and science to check that it helps pupils do as well as they should. The quality of teaching in a few subjects, such as history and geography is not checked as thoroughly. Although teaching in these subjects is good, it is not outstanding. As a result, pupils learn quickly but not as fast or as deep as in subjects such as English.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children get off to an excellent start in the Foundation Stage and make very good progress. Many children start Nursery with levels close to those expected of their age and leave Reception exceeding them. The very careful tracking of children's progress ensures that all their needs are quickly met. There is a strong emphasis on their personal development and communication skills. This means that children quickly grow in confidence and their ability to express themselves

well. Exceptionally good planning provides excellent and very enjoyable opportunities to learn in all the areas of learning. There is a very good balance between activities directed by the teacher and those chosen by the children. Much use is made of the very stimulating indoor and outdoor space to extend children's learning. A very strong feature is the excellent leadership and commitment to teamwork. This, allied to strong parental partnerships and very good induction arrangements, ensures children are well prepared for transition to Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the school's good systems of teachers watching each other teach to include all subjects, such as history and geography, in order to deepen pupils learning even further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children achieve exceptionally well in Nursery and Reception and transfer to Year 1 with skills which are well advanced of those expected for their age. Pupils' good progress continues through Years 1 and 2 with standards in the end of Year 2 assessments being well above those expected nationally. In most subjects, this rate of progress continues between Years 3 and 6 but it is not always quite so exemplary in subjects such as history and geography. In recent years, standards have improved in science as a result of some excellent training and partnerships with other schools. By the end of Year 6 in 2007, standards in English, mathematics and science were much higher than those expected. They reflected the excellent results of previous years. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities do very well, often gaining standards much higher than their counterparts in schools nationally. Pupils learning English as an additional language also achieve particularly well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Their spiritual and moral development comes from the school's strong Christian ethos. Pupils are very proud of their school. They know that they are valued and they appreciate their superb learning environment together with the harmonious relationships they have with each other and the staff. As a result, their attendance and behaviour are consistently excellent. Pupils are right to feel safe and secure in their school. They are confident and outgoing. They enthusiastically take part in the extensive range of activities provided to keep them healthy and to achieve their full potential. The energetic and influential school council provides a truly effective voice for the entire school community. In a recent example, with the help of a parent governor, they were instrumental in suggesting and creating the "chill'n chat" zone in the playground where pupils can sit if they want to be quiet or have a chat with friends.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The combination of many good and outstanding lessons, pupils' keenness to learn and the high expectations placed on them ensures that they make very good progress. As teachers have very good subject knowledge and expertise lessons are taught very well; activities are challenging, meaningful and interesting. Teachers provide excellent role models and as their expectations

are very high pupil behaviour is exemplary. Teachers use a good range of activities that appeal to all learners. Many lessons provide pupils with many opportunities to discuss their ideas, think independently and report their findings creatively. These are not so frequent in subjects such as history and geography. Teachers successfully use a good range of resources and capitalise fully on the skills and expertise of support staff that especially help those pupils with learning difficulties. Pupils always know what to focus on because learning intentions are clear and based carefully on prior learning.

High quality written comments in books ensure pupils know about their achievements and are crystal clear about what they have to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstandingly rich and balanced curriculum is a reflection of the school's commitment to make learning meaningful and enjoyable. Pupils thrive and achieve well, both academically and personally. Much of the enrichment is because of the close relationships the school has with many outside organisations and Diocesan links. The school's collaboration with neighbouring secondary schools is especially valuable. They provide a variety of exciting workshops which not only contribute to a smooth transition for Year 6 pupils but also extend the most able pupils at the school. The links made between subjects are excellent. Every opportunity is taken to extend teaching into other areas of learning giving colour, stimulation and relevance to lessons. Pupils especially appreciate and enjoy the wide range of extended school activities. An example is the talented school orchestra, which also extends pupils' skills and talents very well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Following the support her child recently received, a parent commented 'Every child does matter in this school'. Child protection, health and safety, and risk assessments are clear, comprehensive and extremely robust. Pupils, and their parents, talk positively about the constant help they receive and the efforts made to support them whenever they face any difficulty or worry. Both personal and academic monitoring are extremely well managed. Pupils, including the most and least able, are rigorously supported and challenged to always achieve their best. Every opportunity, from residential trips to a plethora of roles and responsibilities, fully supports pupils' personal development. The tracking and support arrangements for vulnerable pupils are especially strong, as shown by the excellent progress these pupils rapidly achieve. Parents often comment about how closely the school involves them in their child's learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership and management are excellent at all levels. The headteacher is always striving for excellence. Because of her superb leadership, all members of the school community share the same vision which shines throughout the school's work. The headteacher, deputy, and senior team all play important roles. They work in very close partnership with governors through a highly effective committee structure and regular and focused visits. Very thorough and accurate evaluations of the school's performance in nearly all subjects underpin the school's annual plan for improvement. The plan outlines a very clear description of what they expect

to achieve. Challenging targets are set and the impact of decisions and activities is carefully evaluated. As a result, over the last couple of years the school has improved its performance, for example in mathematics. The very close monitoring of the effectiveness of teaching in some subjects has led to greater consistency in the quality of teaching and extending pupils' learning.

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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	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?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	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?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

04 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Dunstan's Cheam CofE Primary School, Sutton, SM3 8DF

I, and the other inspectors, really enjoyed visiting your school recently. We would like to thank you for being so friendly and helpful. Everything we saw convinced us that you go to an outstanding school. Our main findings are that:

- you all work very hard and achieve really well - the standards you reach in the national tests and assessments are much higher than in most schools
- the teaching is excellent; lessons include something to interest and challenge every group in the class
- you are growing up as very confident, polite, responsible, and extremely well-behaved young people who love learning
- the school really helps you understand the importance of keeping fit and healthy
- teachers and other adults take extremely good care of you
- adults organise lots of exciting events and activities for you to enjoy.

The headteacher, teachers and governors do a great job in running the school. They constantly look at how well the school is doing so they can improve it even more. They have been very successful. There is one little thing that could help the school be even better.

- The teachers need to look more carefully at the teaching in subjects such as history and geography to make sure that you are learning as quickly and as much as you can.

I hope you will continue to work hard and support your teachers and other adults so that they can help you do your very best at school.

David Whatson

(Lead inspector)