

Dover Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118179
Local Authority	Isle of Wight
Inspection number	312836
Inspection dates	14–15 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Olson Davis

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	231
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	72
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr George Cooil
Headteacher	Mrs Mary Hill
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Dover Street Ryde PO33 2BN
Telephone number	01983 562617
Fax number	01983 615205

Age group	3–9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school is situated in the centre of Ryde. Pupils leave for middle school at the end of Year 4. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above the national average. Most pupils are of White British backgrounds and there are very few pupils at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils who find learning difficult, including those with a statement of special educational need, is well above the national average. There is a range of needs including pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties, pupils with autism, pupils with moderate learning difficulties and pupils with physical disabilities. More pupils than usual join or leave the school at other than the usual times. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision (EYFS) for pupils in the Nursery and Reception classes. The school has an Activemark award for physical education provision. It has a Basic Skills Award in recognition of its good practice in promoting pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Dover Park Primary School is a good school that gives its pupils a good start to their education. The school is strong in the caring approach adopted by all adults to ensure that there is a calm and supportive environment in which pupils can develop. Staff work hard to include all pupils, responding successfully to the needs of all, particularly those who find learning difficult and those who have newly arrived.

Central to the school's success is the strong leadership of the highly committed headteacher. She provides a clear direction to the work of the school. She is ably supported by her assistant headteachers in ensuring that all adults work closely as team to do their best for the pupils. As a result, pupils feel welcomed, are encouraged to learn, and achieve well. They make good progress from low starting points to attain average standards at Year 2 and national expectations at Year 4. It is an improving picture at Year 4 but standards are not as high in mathematics as they are in English and science. This is because pupils have difficulty in using and applying their knowledge in solving problems.

Pupils' good achievement is the result of focused teaching, good provision for pupils with disabilities and those who find learning difficult, and a varied and stimulating curriculum. There are effective systems to track pupils' progress. Teachers use this information well to plan tasks for their mixed-age classes that build well on previous learning, and this contributes to their good progress.

The school's good care, support and guidance contribute to pupils' good personal development. Pupils are friendly and behave well. They enjoy learning and are keen to do well in their work. They understand about the need for a healthy diet and they take plenty of exercise. Most parents are supportive of the school and feel that their children do well academically and socially. One typical remark from a parent is, 'We are very pleased with our child's progress at the school. He is happy and well cared for.'

Leadership and management are good. All staff are involved in the process of school improvement and share in the drive for higher achievement. Purposeful action by school leaders and governors has led to many improvements in provision and achievement. For example, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science have been rising faster than the national trend and they are higher than at the last inspection. There is good capacity to build on the school's successes.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the nursery with standards lower than those expected for their age, particularly in language skills, in social skills and confidence. Teachers use the information from careful observations to assess each child's progress and carefully identify the next steps in learning. There is a good balance between adult-directed activities and those chosen by children. The stimulating classrooms and outdoor learning areas are well organised and attractive. Good teaching and interesting activities focus on developing skills and nurturing confidence. Parents appreciate the way that teachers and teaching assistants are friendly and approachable. As one parent wrote, 'My son thoroughly enjoys his time at Nursery. The staff are welcoming and kind. My son's confidence has grown since he started school.' The school meets children's welfare needs well. Children are well cared for and happy. As a result children make good progress,

particularly in their personal, social and emotional development, but many are below the levels expected for children of their age when they enter Year 1. Teachers realise that there is more to do to raise children's skills in communication, language and literacy, particularly as these skills are often at a low level when children start school. The EYFS leader provides clear direction with a strong focus upon achievement and the children's personal development and well-being. The headteacher and the EYFS leader have worked well in partnership with the local authority and other agencies to improve provision in the EYFS.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics for older pupils by improving their problem solving skills.
- Build on the current planning and action to raise children's attainment in communication, language and literacy in the EYFS.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress from low starting points to reach average standards at Year 2 and national expectations at the end of Year 4. Robust action by the headteacher and subject leaders has led to improvements in provision and achievement. Pupils' skills in reading and writing are improving because these skills are taught in a more consistent way throughout the school. Standards in science have risen as teachers give more emphasis to investigational work. Standards in mathematics at Year 2 are rising as teachers adopt a more practical approach to the teaching of the subject and make better use of resources to support pupils' thinking. However, pupils do better in English and science than in mathematics by the end of Year 4 because older pupils have difficulties in solving problems. Boys tend to do less well than girls in the national assessments at Year 2. This mirrors their lower attainment on entry and the greater proportion of boys who find learning difficult. Nonetheless, the school ensures that boys achieve well in comparison to their prior attainment and capabilities. Pupils learning English and pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities receive good additional support to enable them to progress as well as their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They develop spiritual awareness through opportunities for reflection in collective worship and within the curriculum. They show respect for each other's feelings and follow the school rules. They respond well to opportunities to learn about their own culture and the cultures of others. Art displays are impressive and pupils talk confidently about individual artists and their work. Pupils fully understand what is meant by a healthy lifestyle, for example in choosing a varied diet and packing a well-balanced lunchbox. They take plenty of exercise at break-times, in physical education lessons and in after school clubs. Members of the school council are proud of their role and represent the views of other pupils well. They are particularly enthusiastic about the recent planting of flowers to improve the school environment. Pupils take an active part in events within the local community such as the Ryde Carnival and JRock. They support charities and are aware of social, moral and environmental issues. Attendance is satisfactory. The school is working closely with outside agencies and with particular parents to reduce the number of absences.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy their learning and feel involved because they are given a clear idea of what they are expected to learn and achieve by the end of the lesson. Relationships between adults and pupils are good and this helps the pupils to tackle their work with confidence and enthusiasm. Teachers are skilled at questioning pupils to check their understanding throughout the lesson, adapting the teaching and tasks to meet their needs. They make creative use of interactive teaching programs on their electronic whiteboards. This adds interest to lessons and motivates pupils, particularly boys. Sometimes teachers' introductions to their lessons are too long, and consequently pupils do not have enough time to carry out their tasks. Support staff make a strong contribution to the good learning of pupils who find learning hard or who have disabilities. They manage these pupils sensitively and contribute effectively to the teachers' evaluations of the pupils' achievements.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is a strong focus on developing pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy, and these are reinforced well within other subjects. Teachers make creative links between subjects to make learning more meaningful and interesting for pupils. However, opportunities for older pupils to apply their mathematics knowledge are sometimes missed. Pupils use the good information and communication technology (ICT) resources effectively to support their work in other subjects. The school plans well for pupils' personal and social development. As a result pupils learn how to live healthy lives and to keep themselves safe. The needs of gifted and talented pupils are well catered for. An extensive range of visits (including a residential stay), visitors and well-attended clubs adds significantly to pupils' academic and personal development and to their enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Good arrangements are in place to ensure pupils' health and safety. Pupils feel safe at school and say of the adults, 'They take good care of you.' Effective support is available for those pupils at the early stages of learning English and pupils with learning disabilities and difficulties to enable them to make good progress. Effective intervention programmes are in place to address possible underachievement, particularly in English. The needs of newly arrived pupils are quickly assessed allowing them to settle quickly and to get the support they need. The school makes good use of assessment data to follow pupils' progress and to set challenging targets that are easily understood by them. However, this process is not yet sharp enough to ensure that older pupils do as well in mathematics as they do in English and science.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Pupils' good progress in their academic and personal development owes much to the good leadership and management at all levels. Effective school self-evaluation by school leaders and

managers leads to prompt and successful actions being taken to bring about improvements. Assessment information is used well to check that different groups of pupils are making the expected progress, and swift action is taken to remedy dips in performance. As a result standards at the end of Year 2 have improved significantly and standards are rising at the end of Year 4. Teaching is consistently good because school leaders rigorously monitor its quality and set targets for improvement. Some managers and teachers have recently taken on new roles. The school provides good support and professional development to ensure that they play their full part in monitoring achievement and improving the quality of teaching and learning within their areas of responsibility. Governors are supportive. They are determined to ensure the school continues to improve. They know the school well through their own effective monitoring. This allows them to participate fully in shaping the school's development.

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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?	2
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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

03 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dover Park Primary School, Ryde, PO33 2BN

On behalf of your inspectors I would like to thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school recently. We appreciated the help you gave us when we looked at you working and when you shared your ideas about the school.

Your school gives you a good standard of education, which prepares you well for middle school. Here are some of the many things that we think are good about your school.

- The work in the school Foundation Stage is well organised and gives you a good start in school.
- You make good progress in your learning.
- You enjoy your education and behave well in lessons and around the school.
- You are taught well and you are given good help when you find the work hard.
- You take lots of exercise and know a good deal about healthy living.
- You take the responsibilities you are given seriously and you all help the school to run smoothly.
- You feel safe because all of the adults in your school make sure that you are very well looked after.

Your headteacher, staff and governors run the school well and are continually trying to make your school even better for you. To improve further, we have asked the school to improve two main things.

- To help the older pupils do better in their mathematics.
- To help the children in the Nursery and Reception classes get better at their speaking and literacy work.

You can help by always trying your hardest and doing your best work. We hope that you will help your teachers as they try to make your school even better.

Yours sincerely

Olson Davis

Lead Inspector