

Duston Eldean Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121945
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	314160
Inspection dates	20–21 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Paul Edwards

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	349
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Somogyi
Headteacher	Cathy Moore
Date of previous school inspection	14 June 2004
School address	Prestbury Road Duston Northampton NN5 6XP
Telephone number	01604 752283
Fax number	01604 586463

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Duston Eldean is a large primary school which is occupying the site of an old secondary school from September 2007 until completion of its new accommodation in September 2008. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Duston Eldean provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The headteacher and senior management team have been very successful in improving pupils' behaviour and addressing a decline in standards. Parents are very supportive of the school and the views of one are typical of many when commenting, 'The leadership team provide a clear vision and direction and we have seen good improvements over the past 12 months.'

Pupils achieve satisfactorily and, by the end of Year 6, attain standards that are broadly average. Following a significant dip in standards in 2007, the senior leadership team took swift and effective action to rectify the problem. Projects such as 'fresh start' and the focus on reading have had a good impact on pupils' progress in English. Although it is uneven, pupils are now making better progress. The school rightly recognises that more able pupils do not consistently make the progress of which they are capable. Pupils who find learning difficult, progress at the same rate as their classmates because their needs are identified early and they are provided with good support. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but the curriculum for these children lacks excitement and early reading skills are not taught sufficiently well.

Whilst teaching is satisfactory overall, there are examples of some outstanding practice where pupils are really challenged to do well. The sharing of clear success criteria with pupils has helped them to understand much better how well they are doing. Teachers are making better use of assessment information to plan work but the process is inconsistent throughout the school, as is the marking of pupils' work to identify what they need to do next to improve. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and, as a result, this is exemplary throughout the school. The otherwise satisfactory curriculum is enhanced by a very good range of visits, visitors and clubs that help to sustain the pupils' enthusiasm for school. Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils eat healthily and take advantage of the good range of sporting activities on offer and particularly appreciate the lunchtime 'circuit training'. Pupils' attendance has improved and is above average, the result of effective monitoring and the establishment of a 'meet and greet' club. Pupils feel safe in school, are well looked after and believe that incidents of bullying are dealt with well by the teachers. Much has been done to improve academic guidance but there is still a little way to go to ensure all teachers provide the same good level of direction.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The newly established senior management team has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It has managed the move to temporary accommodation well and parents appreciate the way in which the move has been handled. The introduction of much improved tracking procedures has provided the teachers with a clearer picture of the rate of progress pupils make. Senior leaders are using this information effectively to raise standards and governors are supporting them well in their endeavours. Some subject leaders are insufficiently involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across all year groups. Consequently, teaching is not accelerating learning as quickly as it should be. Based on the impact of initiatives seen to date, particularly in arresting the decline in standards and improvements in behaviour, the school is well placed to make further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

There is a good programme of induction, enabling children to settle to school life, and they are looked after and cared for well. Teachers have high expectations of children's behaviour and good attention is paid to their personal development. Children's skills on entry to the Reception class are similar to those seen for children of this age and they enter Year 1 with broadly average standards. There is still some way to go however to raise standards. Achievement is no more than satisfactory because there is not yet a rigorous enough approach to planning and assessing how well children are doing to ensure that all make the progress of which they are capable. Whilst staff have undergone training in the teaching of phonics, the implementation is weak and children make slower than expected progress in this aspect of their development. The curriculum lacks excitement and does not encourage children to explore and find things out for themselves. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage in order to raise standards.
- Ensure teachers make more effective use of assessment information to provide greater challenge, particularly for the more able pupils.
- Develop the skills of subject leaders in monitoring the quality of provision and raising the quality of teaching.

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

Children's levels of skills on entry to the school are similar to those expected for their age. The pupils make satisfactory progress and, by the end of Year 6, they attain broadly average standards. The more able pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Progress for all pupils has been accelerated in Year 6, addressing the underachievement seen in English, mathematics and science in the national tests in 2007. However, there are inconsistencies, and standards, though improving, are not as high as they should be. There has been a good focus on English and this has had a good noteworthy impact on the standards in this subject. However, in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, pupils make slow progress in the acquisition of learning letter sounds and blends. Good questioning by teachers helps to enhance the pupils' speaking skills which are consistently good. Pupils who find learning difficult progress at the same rate as their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' enjoyment of school is a particular strength and this is reflected in their improved attendance and their excellent behaviour. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school has worked hard to ensure that pupils have a good understanding of the culturally diverse society in which they live. Through the school council, pupils make a good contribution to the school community, bringing about improvements and playing a part in recruitment of staff. Older pupils look after younger pupils well, acting as play leaders for

instance. Pupils make a good contribution to the wider community, through a regular programme of fund raising to support a range of charities. They have a good awareness of the dangers of drugs and alcohol and keep fit and healthy through participating in the physical activities on offer. Pupils' positive attitudes and their ability to work cooperatively, together with sound basic skills, demonstrate that they are prepared satisfactorily for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The good relationships that exist in lessons are a strong feature. Pupils are keen to learn, particularly when given the opportunity to take part in practical activities. Teachers are especially good at questioning pupils, encouraging extended responses that do much to enhance their speaking skills. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory although the effectiveness of teaching phonics is let down by weak strategies for its implementation. Interactive whiteboards are used well to support both teaching and learning and this helps to motivate pupils. The planning of lessons is usually thorough. However, not all teachers make consistently good use of day-to-day assessments of what pupils already know and can do to modify their planning and to provide work with exactly the right amount of challenge, particularly for the more able pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

All subjects are covered in sufficient depth. There has been a good emphasis on developing the pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy that has successfully addressed the decline in standards. However, tasks for the more able pupils are not always matched sufficiently well to their needs. In science, there is an overuse of worksheets that lack challenge and inhibit opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills. A very good range of visits and visitors enhances the curriculum and there is an excellent range of well-attended clubs. The introduction of French for pupils in Years 3 to 6 enriches the pupils' experiences. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and especially their good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. The Foundation Stage curriculum lacks creativity, and consequently children are not sufficiently motivated to do as well as they should.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Child protection and health and safety procedures, including risk assessments, are rigorous and support pupils' well-being well. The school has maintained a secure, caring and safe environment during its temporary move. This contributes significantly to the pupils' enjoyment of school. Adults know the pupils very well, supporting those who find learning difficult effectively, so they are able to take a full part in the curriculum. The pupils' behaviour and attendance has improved because of the very well targeted additional support and guidance that is now provided. Pupils generally have a good understanding of their learning targets. However, whilst there are examples of very clear guidance, with pupils having their work marked with positive comments, the process is not consistent so that pupils are not always told what they might do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The senior management team has implemented positive initiatives, which have started to address the dip in standards and so establish a firm foundation for further improvements. They have introduced clear tracking procedures to monitor and track pupils' progress although these are too new to determine their impact. The strategies for improving behaviour have been very successful. Governors are knowledgeable, very supportive and are rigorous in holding the school to account. As a result of its good self-evaluation procedures, the school has identified clearly the improvement needed in the use of assessment and marking of work, and action to address these shortcomings has been initiated. However, the school rightly recognises that subject leaders do not yet take a sufficient lead in ensuring these initiatives are fully implemented. The school has set challenging targets to ensure that recent improvements are improved upon. Good links with parents, other schools and providers are helping to enhance the school's provision.

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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?	3
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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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

How good is 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
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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	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

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Duston Eldean Primary School, Northampton, NN5 6XP

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. You were very polite and friendly. We enjoyed talking to you and you told us a lot about your school. Your school is providing you with a satisfactory education.

This is what we found out about your school.

- You make satisfactory progress as you move through the school because teaching is satisfactory and there is some that is very good.
- You behave exceptionally well, enjoy school and take responsibility well.
- Adults are kind and caring and they look after you well. They give those of you who find work hard good support, helping you to make progress alongside your classmates.
- You are taught all the subjects you should be. The school works hard to teach you about the importance of staying safe and healthy. You really enjoy taking part in the many clubs that are available to you, particularly those that help you to become fit.
- Your headteacher and teachers have made a good start at improving the school.

What we have asked your school to do now.

- Provide children in the Reception class with more interesting activities.
- Look closely at how your work is marked, and how staff use information that tells them how well you are doing to help those of you who find work a little easy to make better progress.
- Ensure those in charge of subjects help to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

We enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn. We want you to help your teachers by continuing to behave well and working hard. We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Mr Paul Edwards Lead inspector