

Dormansland Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124986
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	315109
Inspection date	15 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Christopher Gray

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	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	202
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	30
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Charlton
Headteacher	Mrs J Cowley
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Clinton Hill Dormansland Lingfield RH7 6PE
Telephone number	01342 832359
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: how well pupils' progress in writing and mathematics, how effectively leaders and managers ensure consistency in teaching and learning, and pupils' personal development. They gathered evidence from records of pupils' attainment, samples of pupils' past work, observations in lessons and round the school, meetings with staff, governors and pupils and an analysis of 49 responses to the parents' questionnaire. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is similar in size to most schools. Most pupils are of white British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language. A smaller than average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties but the percentage with statements of educational need is above average. The largest groups have specific or moderate learning difficulties or speech, language and communication problems. The percentage of pupils entitled to receive free school meals is much lower than 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 that is rightly popular with parents. Many wrote to praise the work of the staff, and in particular the wide range of activities and after-school clubs that enrich the curriculum. Parents show great confidence in the school; as one wrote, 'If my son is happy that makes me happy too.' This is an example of the excellent partnerships the school has established, not only with parents, but with other schools and professionals.

Pupils achieve well to reach well above average standards by the time they leave in Year 6. A slight fall in English standards in 2007 has been reversed in the unvalidated 2008 national tests. Pupils also achieve well above expected standards in information and communication technology (ICT). An example of good cross-curricular activities in ICT was seen in pupils' work: Year 6 pupils, studying Macbeth, had dressed as the witches to be photographed in appropriate attitudes. They then took their image and imported speech bubbles onto it, with their own versions of 'Shakespearean' language. Pupils also achieve well by Year 2, where they reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. A recent focus on writing has led to very good progress being made in these year groups.

Pupils' good progress is a result of good teaching. Lessons are interesting and draw on a range of pupils' skills. This is reflected in the good quality topic books that pupils produce with great care. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly, though they do not always offer sufficient challenge to those pupils who are at the top end of the average band. Targets are set for all pupils and are reviewed on a half-termly basis, but there is scope for greater challenge to be incorporated into the targets of this group of pupils.

The personal development of pupils is good. Outstanding features are their understanding of healthy lifestyles and their knowledge of how to keep safe. Pupils make healthy choices at lunchtime and know why certain foods are to be enjoyed in moderation. The new eco committee is working to improve the school's environment. The school's regular surveys show that pupils feel safe in school and trust the adults to deal with any problems such as bullying, which occurs very infrequently. Pupils behave well and enjoy their lessons, as is shown by the above average levels of attendance. The school council's functions have recently been split in order to encourage them to be involved to a greater extent in running the school, not only in choosing equipment.

'The school fosters a very caring environment,' wrote one parent. Inspectors endorse this view. The early morning breakfast club is an example. Pupils play contentedly with toys and games until their chosen breakfast is ready. They take this to a special table, laid with a cloth, where they eat with very good table manners. The school has canvassed parents to assess the likely support for other extended facilities, but has concluded that, at present, there would be insufficient take up. The school is refining its good assessment systems to include regular dialogue between senior leaders and class teachers to improve the target setting process. Pupils are beginning to be aware of their targets, but few currently know how to use them in order to move to the next level of attainment.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has an excellent vision for the school's future and as a result, school self-evaluation is good. Recent initiatives to raise standards in writing and mathematics have proved effective; this shows the good capacity to make further improvements. A current focus is on using pupils' self-assessment as a tool for helping them to reach even higher standards. Governors give good support to the school and seek the views

of the local community before taking action. They plan to introduce links with other more culturally varied communities to enrich pupils' good spiritual and cultural development. One parent commented: 'Excellent community spirit at Dormansland.'

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The quality of the learning environment in the Reception class is reflected in the comments of the parent who wrote of her son, 'Last Saturday, he got quite upset because it wasn't a school day and I had to explain that his teachers also need a day off.'

Children start school with broadly average skills. One of the things they are best at to begin with is their ability to sit still and listen. Good teaching builds on this essential skill; for example, children were seen listening to music depicting the eruption of a volcano in order to give them ideas for 'writing'. By the time they enter Year 1, children reach standards that are above average.

Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good and lead directly to the good provision. Many parents wrote to say how they appreciated the secure environment in the Reception class. Children can be seen to be happy and safe. They play and work in the classroom and, to a lesser extent, outside. The latter area is very small, so that only a small number can go out at a time. The school's plans to move the Reception class to another part of the school, to give a much bigger outside area, are complete; they await planning permission.

What the school should do to improve further

- Sharpen the use of assessment data to ensure that all pupils are set appropriately challenging targets, especially those whose abilities lie between the average and the highest attaining pupils.
- Increase pupils' understanding of how they may use targets and teachers' guidance, to know for themselves where they need to improve.
- Ensure that the plans for the new outside area for Reception children are carried out.

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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?	1
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	2
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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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 Dormansland Primary School, Lingfield, RH7 6PE

When we came to visit your school in the middle of October, all Year 2 were out on a trip. I hope they enjoyed it and did not get too wet. Thank you to all those of you who made us feel so welcome. We enjoyed our visit and were pleased to see how much you enjoy school.

Many of your parents told us that Dormansland Primary is a good school, and we agree. One of the many good things about it is how well you behave and how you look after the younger children, as some of you do at the Breakfast Club. You have outstanding understanding of how to keep safe, healthy and fit. When I asked a group of you what you thought might be the most valuable lesson you could learn in school, one person said 'Responsibility. When you start in Reception, everything is done for you, but, by Year 6, you have to learn to take responsibility for yourself.'

You achieve well in your time in school and reach good standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT. We also saw some good work in other subjects in your topic books. Your teachers plan interesting lessons, such as the one in Year 1 where you made or drew monsters in order to help you make better use of 'juicy' words. We asked you about your targets, which teachers set so that you can improve your work. At the moment, this approach is new to many of you, so we have asked teachers to use the targets so that you will know how to improve your own work. It's all part of that growing sense of responsibility that the Year 6 boy referred to. We have also asked teachers to include greater challenge in the targets they set for some of those who learn faster than others.

The children in Reception make good progress, as do the rest of you. The space they have for outside learning is too small, however, and I hope the school will be able to carry out its plans to improve it.

Your headteacher and her staff work hard to make sure you are happy, safe and learn well. Many of your parents commented on the extra work they do outside school hours, such as the trips to Hindleap Warren that you told me all about. I hope you continue to enjoy your time at Dormansland Primary School.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Gray

Lead Inspector