

# Downe Manor Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101880
<b>Local Authority</b>	Ealing
<b>Inspection number</b>	323545
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Sudworth

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	419
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cllr Brain Reeves
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Elizabeth McAllister
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 November 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Down Way Northolt UB5 6NW
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8845 1155
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8842 2925

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 March 2009
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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 with 15 classes, including a Nursery where children attend either mornings or afternoons and begin in the autumn term following their third birthday. Most continue into the Reception classes. The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds is almost three times the national average. One third of the pupils speak a language other than English as their first language. Almost half the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is much higher than usually found. The proportion of pupils who have difficulties learning the basic skills is slightly above the national average. The school has a Unit for pupils with speech and language difficulties integrated into the Nursery which operates in the mornings (ICAN Unit). The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the customary times of the year is much higher than the national 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. Despite a considerable turnover of pupils, staff provide a very settled place of learning where newcomers quickly feel at home and adjust to their new circumstances. Good relationships between staff and pupils enable them to enjoy their work and make good progress in most areas.

Pupils behave well and are respectful of one another, so that lessons often proceed at a good pace. Most parents are very appreciative of what the school does for their children, although some feel that communication could be improved. Staff are always willing to speak with parents at agreed times, but have only just embarked on a formal process to gauge parents' views and make suggestions for improvement. One parent commented, echoing the views of many, 'Downe Manor is a great school that encourages the strong and helps the needy.' Another parent stated that all her children had attended the school and she couldn't speak highly enough of it. The school works hard to make links with parents through induction and educational evenings, such as family workshops, and through courses for them.

The care that the staff take of the pupils is very good. Everyone is included and is known well. Pupils feel very safe at school as a result and are confident in approaching staff with any concerns. Pupils' knowledge of safe and healthy living is excellent. Attendance is broadly average, but some parents do not send their children to school regularly enough and their work suffers. Pupils themselves value their education. As one pupil said, 'You have opportunities to do something that you will not do again.' All pupils, irrespective of background and abilities, achieve well. There have been good improvements since the last inspection, particularly in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which has resulted in raised attainment in these areas.

All staff give a high priority to ensure that pupils develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills. Pupils really enjoy the work in science when they can work practically and carry out investigations. However, in some classes there is not enough attention to developing pupils' skills and understanding in history and geography. By Year 6 boys do not make as much progress in writing as in their other studies. Their attainment in mathematics and science is much stronger. Year 6 pupils reach expected standards in the main.

The school works well with the community. The school's welfare officer, for example, works effectively with families to make sure that the children are well settled. The good use of interpreters ensures that parents who speak little English understand about the school and can learn about their children's progress. The school's outreach work is good, linking well with the local community and also helping pupils to respect cultural differences in the United Kingdom and to understand and support people's needs globally.

There is a good team spirit among the staff and the headteacher has worked hard to recruit high-quality teaching staff. This is reflected in the good teaching which supports the pupils' good progress and demonstrates that the school has good capacity to make further improvements. Staff work effectively to ensure pupils reach their potential and that they are well prepared for their future education.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children begin school with knowledge and skills well below those expected for their age, particularly in communication and language and in their personal, social and emotional development. From these very low starting points in the Nursery, children make rapid progress in becoming independent and happy learners. Attainment has been below expectations by the end of Reception, but exceptionally in 2008 results were close to them. This improvement is being maintained due to the careful planning of a range of interesting activities which allow children to have fun while learning. The focus on teaching letter names and sounds is having a positive effect on preparing children for reading.

Staff use observations well to gauge what children know and can do, to plan for the next stage in their learning. Behaviour is good and the children cooperate well with each other. They play independently with good levels of confidence, although the outdoor provision is not always used to its fullest potential to develop learning and the school is aware of the need to create an even more stimulating internal environment. Staff take excellent care of the children. They engage effectively with children and supervise them well, ensuring their safety and well-being. Children receive good levels of support which helps them make good progress, including in the ICAN Unit. Good leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage have resulted in considerable improvements over the past year. For example, in reading children's levels of attainment have risen as a result.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the standards in writing for boys so that their attainment is as good as in their other key skills.
- Give more attention to developing pupils' skills and understanding in history and geography.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well in the main from a very low base, reaching broadly average standards at the end of Year 6. They make good progress in Years 1 and 2, although results are often below average. Progress accelerates as pupils move through Years 3 to 6. This is because those pupils who are at the early stages of learning English make fast gains in fluency because of the sharp focus on listening and speaking skills, and on the use of drama. Progress checks on the pupils currently in Year 6 would suggest a similar outcome. Boys do not attain as highly as girls, particularly in writing. In 2008 boys' achievement in mathematics was above the provisional national average at both the expected and higher levels for all pupils. All groups of pupils make good progress, but those from heritages distinct from White British backgrounds usually make better progress.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and find it a refuge of security and stability. They understand how to keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet. They behave well and demonstrate a good awareness of healthy lifestyles. Many walk to school and take regular exercise by participating in after school sports clubs. Pupils have forged good links with the local community, distributing harvest produce to the elderly. They take part in fund-raising activities and give

practical help, such as filling shoe boxes with goods for less-privileged children in Eastern Europe at Christmas. In so doing, they develop a good understanding of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves. They engage well in activities with other schools, especially in sport. Pupils readily take on responsibilities to improve their school. Recently they successfully petitioned the local council for a pedestrian crossing to keep pupils safe on the way to school. Attendance is broadly average. Pupils from different backgrounds and ethnicities get on well together like a big family; as one pupil said, 'Downe Manor is a place where it is easy to fit in with others.'

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Lessons are well prepared and meet the needs of all learners. Teachers make good use of ICT resources to present their lessons visually, which also speeds up the flow and helps to keep pupils' interest and enthusiasm. In a Year 3 lesson a clip from a Wallace and Gromit film helped to stimulate pupils' writing as they thought about character and vocabulary. Occasionally, teachers' introductions to lessons are over-long, which inhibits opportunities for independent learning. Pupils' good behaviour and enthusiasm for learning make a considerable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. Warm working relationships are reflected in the pupils' confidence in their teachers. Teachers give pupils clear instructions about their activities so they know what they have to do. Teachers use questioning well to involve pupils in the learning. A major strength is the focus throughout the lesson on the learning intention, which is always made clear to the pupils. Teaching assistants provide good extra support.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities, which pupils really enjoy. One such activity is in a nearby outdoor centre. These extra activities particularly support pupils' healthy life styles. There is a clear focus on basic skills, but in some classes insufficient attention is paid to history and geography and the work is often too shallow in these subjects to be really meaningful. The school has yet to make extensive creative links between subjects. Pupils enjoy the special days, for example science day. The school makes good use of visits to places of interest, linking them to topics of study. For example, a visit by Year 4 to Hampton Court further enlivened their study the Tudors. The use of ICT is good. Year 2 pupils made use of a children's programme website as a reference source when writing their own website in an English lesson. Good provision is made for pupils who have English as an additional language and for those who find learning difficult.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Staff promote pupils' personal development very well and take a personal interest in every pupil. Links with other professional agencies are strong and support for pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties is good. Pupils are kept safe and safeguarding procedures are securely in place. The school gives very good attention to pupils' health and safety and risk assessments are undertaken regularly.

Marking is effective, up to date and helps pupils to know how they can improve their work. Pupils know their learning targets and keep these in mind when they are working. Staff track pupils' levels of attainment well and use this to identify pupils who are not making enough progress and to gauge how well the large number of pupils whose first language is other than English are getting on. However, the current tracking system does not provide information quickly and efficiently about different groups of learners.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher and deputy headteacher form an effective working partnership and secure a good team spirit among the staff. Harmonious relationships create a good atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning. As one member of staff commented, 'This is a friendly place to work in.'

The leadership structure is well thought-out with clear roles and responsibilities, which staff execute well. Regular meetings with staff help to keep a good focus on initiatives to improve pupils' progress. Frequent monitoring of teaching and learning, using clear criteria for evaluation, leads to well-written reports which identify strengths and areas for development. School self-evaluation is accurate and has identified appropriate development priorities. Developments in these are on schedule. However, the school development plan does not include the full financial implications of new initiatives.

The new chair of governors has made a good start to leading the governing body. Its members are developing their skills and confidence to challenge and question the school in order to gain a deeper level of understanding. They manage the finances effectively and fulfil their statutory responsibilities well.

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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?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2
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?	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
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**

31 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Downe Manor Primary School, Northolt, UB5 6NW

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed our visit. You attend a good school where the staff work hard to make your lessons interesting. They care a great deal about you and work very well as a team, so that you make good progress.

You all get along very well together and your behaviour is good. You show a lot of interest in your lessons and try really hard. You feel safe in school and you know about keeping yourselves safe and healthy. You take a lot of interest in all that the school provides and you really want to do well. We were very interested in the mosaic which you are working on with the community artist and your involvement in activities with other schools.

You reach expected standards in much of your work, but we found that boys' writing is not up to the same standard as their reading and mathematics. We have asked your teachers to help the boys make better progress in this part of their work. Sometimes you do not have enough opportunities to do work in history and geography and we have also asked them to attend to this.

We wish you well for the future and hope that you will continue to work hard and do your best. Thank you once again for all your help and letting us see your work.

Yours faithfully

Peter Sudworth

Lead Inspector