

Davington Primary School

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	118338
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	326808
Inspection dates	22–23 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Sheila Browning

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)	414
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dot Neame
Headteacher	Clive Dunn
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Priory Row Davington Faversham ME13 7EQ
Telephone number	01795 532401
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Age group	4–11
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Amended Report Addendum

Report amended due to factual inaccuracy

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than nationally, most have specific learning (dyslexia), speech, language and communication or moderate learning difficulties. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provides for four- and five-year-old children, taught in two Reception classes. The headteacher was appointed in September 2007 having previously been joint headteacher for two years. The school has attained several awards in recognition of its work, including Active Mark, Arts Mark and Investor in People. On site there is a privately managed after-school club. The weekly pre-school Caterpillar and Butterfly club is managed by the governors but meets for less time than is required for it to be registered.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Davington is a good school. Since the last inspection it has made some significant improvements in important areas. Children join Reception with skills generally below those typical for their age, especially in language and communication. They get off to a good start and, because of good teaching and leadership, they enter Year 1 with standards that are just below average. Good teaching and learning and strong pastoral care underpin pupils' good personal development. As a result, pupils' achievement is good and previous underperformance has been successfully eliminated. By the time they leave school, pupils reach average standards. The school's latest test results were the best ever and results in English were above those nationally. The headteacher, senior management team and governors have a shared determination to build on this success. This determination, together with improvements in teaching and the curriculum, demonstrate a good capacity to continue the improving trend. Excellent partnerships and communications with all stakeholders, including staff, governors, pupils and parents, ensure that all are involved in the journey. Leaders rigorously monitor and evaluate provision. Self-evaluation identifies clearly what the school does well and where it still needs to improve. For example, the school has identified two areas for improvement: pupils' investigative skills and vocabulary in science are not yet good enough which hampers their achievement in this subject; and pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their own research, enquiry and problem solving skills in all subjects. Previous weaknesses in English and mathematics have been successfully eradicated through staff training and curriculum improvements. Numerous school clubs and visits, including a residential for Year 6, enhance the curriculum. As one pupil said, 'there's so much to do'. Pupils' work and their achievements are proudly displayed and complement the magnificent murals that brighten up the learning environment.

Pupils are looked after very well. Safeguarding procedures are robust and pupils know how to stay safe, fit and healthy. Pupils' behaviour is good and sometimes exemplary. Above average attendance reflects their enjoyment of school. Academic care and guidance are good. Analysis of pupils' progress is a strength, and such information is used well to provide a good range of support programmes and challenge. The school successfully nurtures pupils' knowledge of their own, as well as their appreciation of other traditions. For example, web-cam links with schools in Europe and Asia help pupils learn about different cultures. Pupils make a positive contribution to the school and wider community. This is seen in their excellent involvement in the Caterpillar Club, as school councillors, in budgeting for new play equipment, in a local arts project and through several international and multicultural festivals. Most parents are very supportive of the school. One comment typical of many was, 'Davington offers a well-rounded education – something for everyone, the bright, the sporty, the arty, the singers and dancers, children with special needs and all who want to have fun and learn.'

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Parents value the excellent links that the school establishes with them and pre-school providers, which ensure that children settle quickly. Children enjoy a good range of exciting learning activities and make good progress, so that by the end of Reception standards are just below national averages. Behaviour is good due to the strong focus on children's personal development. Good leadership ensures that the diverse needs of all children are effectively met through carefully planned lessons and activities. This term's theme of Traditional Tales came alive when

children made real porridge and talked about which sized bowl belonged to which bear. Staff know the children well and make regular checks on their progress, using this information effectively to extend their learning. Children are safe, secure and very well cared for and they benefit from a good balance of self-chosen and adult-led activities. The outdoor area is used well to enrich learning in creative development but provision for children's physical development and opportunities for them to work together outside are limited.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve the achievement of pupils in science through the development of their investigative skills and scientific vocabulary.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils in Years 1 to 6 to develop research, enquiry and problem solving skills in their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children make a good start in Reception and steadily build on this from Year 1 upwards. By the time they leave Year 6, they reach nationally expected standards overall and above average standards in English. In recent years, standards have shown good improvement and in 2008 the school had its best national test results ever for both Years 2 and 6. This success reflects the robust way in which the school has effectively tackled a history of considerable underachievement. The school's performance data show that most pupils in Year 6 are on track to exceed challenging learning targets. This indicates a dramatic improvement in the achievement of pupils across the school. The school's focus on improving pupils' writing skills has paid dividends. A similar pattern is seen in mathematics, where a greater focus on teaching advanced skills has led to improvement. The school is just beginning to tackle pupils' weaker performance in science, especially their investigative skills and use and understanding of scientific language. Individual support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and higher ability pupils helps them to make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils enjoy their education and have a positive attitude to learning. They are concerned, polite and tolerant towards their peers and adults and accurately describe the school as 'a happy family'. Pupils have benefited from involvement in framing the school's rules, which they understand, respect and abide by. They are keen to work hard and give of their best, making the school a calm and purposeful learning environment. The school, in collaboration with other agencies, has effectively raised rates of attendance since the previous inspection, such that it is now above the national average. Pupils' social, moral and cultural development is good and, though it is presently less well developed, they show a growing awareness of spirituality. They have a good sense of community responsibility and an awareness of the needs of others. They develop a good understanding of healthy living and of their own and other's safety around the school. With the development of a positive work ethic, keen sense of teamwork and good progress in their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, pupils are effectively prepared for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching effectively enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress. Planning shows clear lesson objectives so that pupils know what they should achieve by the end of the lesson. Appropriate work is planned to challenge pupils of different ability. Effective support is given to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, often by teaching assistants, and extension work ensures that higher ability pupils are suitably challenged. Setting in English and mathematics enables good support to be given to all pupils, with particularly effective support from teaching assistants. Good use is made of 'discussion partners', encouraging speaking and listening skills and cooperation – all important for pupils' future economic well-being. ICT is used effectively, especially interactive whiteboards and handheld sets, for pupils to respond to the teacher's questions. Relationships are good, eliciting good, and sometimes exemplary, attitudes to learning. Teachers display good subject knowledge, enabling them to give clear and accurate explanations. Lessons are made enjoyable for pupils, so they remain on task and work hard. Marking does not always indicate how pupils can improve their work, and there are too few opportunities for them to develop their own research, enquiry and problem solving skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The completely reviewed curriculum typifies the school's flexibility and commitment to ensure it meets the range of needs and interests of all learners. New planning for literacy and numeracy, the purchase of a range of books to appeal to both boys and girls, greater opportunities for writing in different subjects, and practical investigative learning in mathematics are some of the improvements that have led to rising standards. The science curriculum, especially opportunities for investigative work and use and understanding of scientific vocabulary, is not yet developed well enough. Pupils' personal, social and health development has improved significantly since the introduction of a programme that promotes the social and emotional aspects of learning. Creativity has a high profile and the excellent artwork displayed confirms this. Pupils value the numerous clubs, activities, visits and visitors offered. Additional activities and clubs, together with smaller focus groups, support those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and higher ability pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Arrangements for pupils' pastoral care and support are particular strengths. Teachers' good quality planning ensures that the generous level of skilled adult support is effectively deployed. All pupils, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are well supported and make good progress overall. A comprehensive and exceptionally detailed range of policies and procedures is effectively implemented. This ensures that the personal development, health and safeguarding of all pupils are carefully and appropriately managed. Assessment provides encouragement to learners and suitably informs subsequent teaching plans. While progress is regularly monitored and carefully tracked against learning intentions, the school has yet to consistently help pupils to clearly understand the strengths and areas for improvement in their work, so that they become more effective independent learners.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and senior management team show vision and are sharply focused on raising standards. Leaders rigorously monitor and evaluate provision, leading to improvement. Leaders are beginning to devolve responsibility appropriately to subject leaders. Subject leaders monitor their subjects well, but are only just beginning to develop their role in monitoring lessons. There are good systems in place for tracking pupils' progress. This enables intervention programmes to be implemented and support to be given to all pupils, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Governors have a good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, particularly with regard to standards and achievement. They effectively challenge and support the school. The governors and the senior managers work together well on strategic planning and this has had a positive impact on school improvement. The school has excellent links with parents and local schools that are beneficial to pupils' learning. The school's audit of how it promotes community cohesion is thorough and indicates its strong commitment to this aspect of its provision. It shows that the school is already doing a good deal at school, local, national and global level, and that it has clear plans for further 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?	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	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	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**

26 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Davington Primary School, Faversham ME13 7EQ

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We agree with you and your parents and teachers that Davington is a good school.

Here are some of the good things about your school.

- Children in the Reception classes get off to a good start.
- You really enjoy school, behave very well and participate fully in everything the school offers.
- You are making good progress because teaching is good.
- Your headteacher, the staff and governors do a good job and are always thinking about how they can improve things for you.
- The school has excellent links with your parents and others to help you learn.
- You know about keeping fit and active and the importance of eating healthily.
- Your involvement in local events and links with children in the United Kingdom and in different countries help you to think about others.
- All adults who work at the school take very good care of you, making sure you are safe and that there is someone there to help you if you have a problem.
- You told us how proud you were to be school councillors and 'buddies'.

We have asked the school to do the following things to make your school even better.

- Make sure that you are helped to do even better in science by giving you more opportunities to develop your investigative skills and scientific vocabulary.
- Provide you with more opportunities to develop your research, enquiry and problem solving skills. You can help by continuing to work hard and doing your best.

Yours faithfully

Sheila Browning

Lead inspector