

Danetree Junior School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 124960 |
| Local Authority | Surrey |
| Inspection number | 328251 |
| Inspection dates | 27–28 April 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Grace Marriott |

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

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| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 7–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 425 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Elizabeth Knee |
| Headteacher | Mrs Dorte Neess-Cardie |
| Date of previous school inspection | 9 January 2008 |
| School address | Danetree Road West Ewell Epsom KT19 9SE |
| Telephone number | 020 8393 6406 |
| Fax number | 020 8786 8154 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Danetree is a large junior school. Most of the pupils are from White British heritages. A few pupils are of Indian, Bangladeshi and Black African or mixed ethnic origins. A very small number of pupils speak English as an additional language though none are at an early stage of learning English. The school has a slightly higher than average proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties, which include moderate learning, behavioural, speech and language difficulties and dyslexia. The school has several national awards including Investors in People; the Green Flag Eco award; Artsmark Gold awards; the FA Charter Mark and the International School Award. The school was last inspected in January 2008 when it was given a Notice to Improve.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Danetree is a welcoming school which is providing its pupils with a satisfactory education in a supportive environment. The headteacher and staff are working hard and effectively to improve the school and many pupils and parents said how much the school has improved since the previous inspection. Standards are average overall and are rising. In 2008, the school achieved results in Year 6 which were better than the national results in English and science, including at Level 5 (which is a level higher than Year 6 pupils are expected to achieve). Mathematics results were average but more pupils achieved Level 5 than had done so in the previous year.

Better teaching and an improvement in pupils' behaviour are contributing to faster academic progress and increased enjoyment. Although achievement is satisfactory, there is still variation between classes. In some classes, lively teaching and interesting tasks encourage pupils to apply what they know to new challenges and help them make good progress. This was very evident in an excellent Year 6 mathematics lesson where the teacher had judged pupils' attainment very accurately and had given pupils the opportunity to use their mathematical knowledge to solve increasingly complex problems. In some classes, lesson objectives are often still too general and, as a result, the work is too difficult for some pupils and too easy for others. Teachers' marking consistently encourages pupils but does not always provide enough guidance on how they could improve their work. The new tracking system ensures the easier identification of pupils who are not making the expected progress. The school acknowledges that information about pupils' attainment and progress is not being used consistently enough across the school to set targets for individuals as well as groups.

The pupils are friendly and confident. They attend regularly, enjoy school and respond well to the opportunities it provides. They understand how to stay safe and say they feel safe in school. They also understand how best to adopt a healthy lifestyle. They are active and enjoy using the spacious school grounds. The visits to places of interest, the visitors to the school and themed events help to make learning fun and give pupils a good range of new experiences. Work which uses their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills helps to prepare pupils appropriately for their future.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher is providing good leadership and she is well supported by the senior team and the chair of governors. They know that consistently good teaching is the key to raising pupils' achievement. Expectations for achievement and progress have been raised through a systematic and rigorous programme of monitoring and support. Despite these improvements, subject leaders are not yet having enough impact on the quality of work because many are new in post and do not yet have sufficient experience of judging the quality of lessons. The governing body is supportive of the school and is providing satisfactory challenge. The school has a satisfactory capacity to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- building on what has already been achieved, ensure that:
 - there is a better match of work to pupils' needs in lessons through the use of more specific learning objectives

-assessment and target setting are used consistently at both group and individual level to accelerate pupils' progress

- ensure that subject leaders gain the experience they need to improve the quality of learning and raise pupils' achievement.

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

Pupils join the school with standards that are a little above average and, overall, make satisfactory progress. In the higher-attaining groups for English and mathematics sets, the level of challenge is good and pupils make good progress. Effective support, which is targeted to meet individual needs, enables pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities to make satisfactory progress. Progress has been affected in some classes by staffing difficulties that the school has worked hard to overcome. Pupils' achievement and their progress are better in English and science than in mathematics. Progress is starting to improve in mathematics but pupils tend to lack confidence in their basic numeracy skills. In mathematics, boys have performed better than girls but evidence from lesson observations shows that the current focus on girls' achievement is having a positive effect. The school expects to achieve the targets set this year for English and to be close to the target for mathematics, which will be an improvement on the previous year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils know well how to stay healthy and keep safe through, for example, visits from the fire brigade and police. Their positive attitudes towards physical exercise reflect the work carried out through the 'Activemark Gold' award. Pupils increasingly understand about a healthy diet through developing their garden area. Pupils show real respect for each other's opinions during the good 'talk partner' sessions in lessons. The Second World War project encourages pupils to understand well the feelings of the people caught up in conflicts. Pupils make a good contribution to the community. School and eco-councillors willingly take responsibility and make decisions about lunchtime arrangements and how to raise money for charity. Pupils learn about handling money through such good activities as the Enterprise Day, although the school acknowledges the need to extend the number of such activities. Pupils also benefit from the good opportunities to work in teams.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

A significant proportion of good teaching was observed during the inspection. However, good practice is not yet consistent in all classes. Pupils make the most progress when their work is well matched to their needs and captures their interest and enthusiasm. For example, a group of Year 5 pupils were exploring the ways seeds are distributed from the parent plant. One group remembered that sycamore seeds have wings which act as a propeller. They then explored

different wings and propellers to see which were the most effective. The teacher helped them learn from their mistakes by asking well-framed questions. However, there are still some lessons where teachers do not pitch work at suitably challenging levels or miss opportunities to exploit fully the pupils' abilities at working independently or their skills at exploring ideas for themselves. As a result, they do not always learn as well as they should.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. In English, mathematics and science the planning is focusing more clearly on raising the level of challenge for pupils and developing clearer and more specific learning objectives. This is not yet being done well enough in all classes to ensure consistently good progress. The work being done to develop the links between subjects is helping to ensure that all subjects contribute to raising pupils' achievement in basic skills, but this is still at a relatively early stage. The good range of enrichment activities support learning well. These include residential visits, clubs, visitors to the school, sports and musical activities. The links with the local secondary school are helping to develop and improve provision in science and mathematics. Specific events such as the 'Tudor Days' and the work involved in achieving different awards, contribute to pupils' enjoyment of learning as well as extending their knowledge and skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils are well cared for and know who to approach with any concerns. The inspection evidence supports their view that the school deals quickly with any behavioural issues. Child protection procedures meet requirements. Some parents were concerned about the new arrangements for supporting pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These give class teachers more responsibility and they are involved in writing the individual learning programmes. As a result of these changes, teachers are now better able to provide appropriate work, using clear learning targets for pupils who find learning difficult. The quality of academic guidance and support is satisfactory and has improved with the introduction of progress meetings that monitor pupils' progress each term and identify any action needed. The system has yet to be developed to show whether pupils in other year groups are on track to achieve as well as they should by the end of Year 6. Apart from pupils who have learning difficulties, some teachers miss opportunities, both in lessons and when marking pupils' work, to devise learning targets that are tailored specifically to the needs of individuals. The provision for gifted and talented pupils is improving through the appointment of a coordinator and events such as the master classes in mathematics and science at a local secondary school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The good leadership of the headteacher has built a committed and effective leadership team with a common sense of purpose. Clear evaluation systems have identified appropriate priorities for development. These are well directed to where they are needed most. Standards and achievement are rising because the school is setting challenging targets and starting to attain them. The work of senior staff is improving teaching and learning across the school but subject coordinators are not yet as effective at influencing the quality of learning to ensure consistently

good or better progress in all classes. The school's work in promoting community cohesion is satisfactory. The school has increased its engagement with the wider community and is building on its relationships with parents and carers. However, it has yet to evaluate the impact of its actions on the community beyond the school itself. Governance is satisfactory. The new chair of governors has a good knowledge and understanding of the issues facing the school and leads the governors well. They are much more effective at holding the school to account for its performance than at the time of the last inspection. They are aware that they must continue to strengthen this area of their work.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| 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? | 3 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 3 |

Achievement and standards

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| 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/or disabilities make progress | 3 |

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

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|---|---|
| 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 | 3 |

The quality of provision

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

Leadership and management

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| 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 | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 3 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated | 3 |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 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 | 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**

12 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Danetree Junior School, Epsom, KT19 9SE

Thank you for making the inspectors welcome when we visited your school recently. You were polite and friendly and we very much enjoyed talking to you and hearing what you think about the school. You obviously enjoy school and like the various activities that it provides for you. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education.

You told us that the school is getting better and we agree with you. You are now making better progress in English and are starting to do better in mathematics. You behave well and get on well together. You understand about healthy eating and the importance of exercise and you take part in lots of clubs and sport. There are lots of activities that help you to learn. We were particularly interested in the special events such as Enterprise Day.

Your headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to improve the school. They know the school well and have good ideas about how to give you a better education. They agree with us that they need to concentrate on three things to improve the school further.

Some of your lessons are good, but sometimes the work is either too easy or too hard, so in these lessons your teachers need to give you work which has the right level of challenge for you. The teachers are going to improve how they check on your learning so that you can make even better progress. Teachers who are responsible for planning the different subjects agree that they need to check carefully how well the changes they are making are helping you to learn. They will then be able to improve your school even more.

You can help by working hard and taking notice of the advice you are given on how to improve your work.

Yours faithfully

Grace Marriott

Lead Inspector