

# Downsview Primary

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	134515
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	328912
<b>Inspection date</b>	23 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jane Chesterfield

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	144
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	22
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Edward Young
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sue Woodcock
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 July 2006
<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>	Beech Avenue Swanley BR8 8AU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01322 662594
<b>Fax number</b>	01322 662594

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is smaller than average and has an above average number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. The proportion who are from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. These difficulties are mainly speech, language and communication, or moderate learning difficulties. The number of pupils with statements of special educational need is below average. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is available to the children in the Reception class. Privately-run childcare provision is also available on the school site. The school was formed from the amalgamation of the former infant and junior schools on the same site in 2004. It has gained a number of awards, including the Healthy School Award and the Activemark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Downsvie Primary is a satisfactory and improving school which is well regarded by parents. One commented that, 'The headteacher and her team are doing a wonderful job,' while another felt that, 'All the staff are very helpful.' The headteacher and senior leaders have worked hard since amalgamation to establish the new school, and their work continues to move it in the right direction.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, and they reach broadly average standards by the time they leave. They make satisfactory progress from Year 1 to Year 6. However, there has been a steadily improving picture of standards and progress in Years 3 to 6 since amalgamation to reach this point. Pupils' achievement and standards are weaker in science than in English and mathematics, and the school has identified that pupils are having problems with investigative work. This is now a priority for improvement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language are well supported in class, so that they make similar progress to their peers.

Teaching and learning in the school are satisfactory. This too is an improving picture as the large proportion of newly qualified teachers gain confidence and experience. Teachers generally match work well to the needs and interests of their classes and use resources well to engage the pupils. Sometimes, though, lessons lack pace and energy which slows down pupils' learning. Pupils enjoy school and feel lessons are fun. This is because of the well structured curriculum, which gives them memorable opportunities to learn new skills and apply them in different situations. They also feel very safe and well looked after at school, thanks to the good quality of the school's structures for their care, support and guidance.

The school has worked tirelessly since it opened to support pupils and their families in order to remove barriers to pupils' learning. As a result, pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They behave well in lessons and around school and are supportive of one another. Older pupils keep an eye on younger ones in the playground, and the younger ones feel they can turn to older pupils if they need help. Most pupils attend well, but a few families do not ensure that their children come to school regularly and on time. The school makes every effort to counter this.

The school's positive ethos and constant focus on improvement has been fostered by the headteacher, capably supported by senior leaders. They have created a good climate for learning in the school and continue to work to drive up standards. Staff professional development is seen as a priority, and new staff are being trained to take on the role of subject leaders. Senior leaders are currently overseeing the whole of the curriculum, and this has meant that the time available to focus on monitoring and evaluation of provision and outcomes in individual subjects has been limited. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and its capacity for future improvement is satisfactory.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children get a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. When they join the Reception class, most have a level of skills which is lower than that expected for their age. They make good progress, entering Year 1 with skills that are broadly average. Children's communication, language and literacy skills are weaker than their other skills when they leave

Reception. Staff are aware of this and have increased their focus on developing children's speaking and listening abilities, and on offering them opportunities to write for a purpose. This is beginning to have a positive impact on their achievement.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led. Staff are well organised and give children good support. Activities are well planned indoors and outside to provide children with exciting and stimulating opportunities in all their areas of learning. Assessment is thorough, and staff have developed a close working partnership with parents which helps ensure good provision for children's welfare. As a result, children feel safe, secure and happy in their surroundings, and their personal, social and emotional development is good. They are well prepared to move to Year 1.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise achievement and standards in science, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Develop the role of subject leaders in order to improve the consistency of teaching and raise achievement.
- Build on work done with families to reduce the number of persistent absentees.

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 enter Year 1 with the skills, knowledge and understanding that are broadly in line with expectations for their age and make satisfactory progress. By the time they leave Year 2, their standards in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly in line with the national average. In Years 3 to 6, progress and standards in English and mathematics have steadily improved since amalgamation and since the last inspection. Achievement is now satisfactory. Standards are broadly in line with the national picture, and pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points, so that a legacy of underachievement has been eradicated. Pupils feel that they are now doing better than before, and are capable of doing better still. The school has made good improvement in writing over the last year and pupils are making progress in this at a faster rate than before. Science has not improved at the same rate and is now the next area for attention.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Thanks to the positive ethos of the school, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a clear sense of right and wrong, and get on well with one another, irrespective of their different backgrounds, faiths and cultures. The small numbers in their school mean that pupils all know one another and feel part of a close knit community. They enjoy playing their part in the school and wider community, for example by running the school fruit tuck trolley, or by representing the school locally on the cluster council.

Pupils enjoy school and generally behave well in class, although some occasionally speak out of turn. Most want to attend school regularly, but a small number are frequently absent, despite the efforts of the school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle and know how to keep themselves and others safe. Their good social skills and their average

standards in English and mathematics mean that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The majority of teaching and learning in the school is satisfactory, although there are good elements to be found in every class. The school has a balance of experienced teachers and new staff whose skills are nurtured and developed by senior leaders. Lessons are well planned to capture pupils' interests and provide them with the right level of challenge, although sometimes not enough is done to stretch the more able pupils. Teaching assistants are well deployed to support those with additional learning needs. Pupils say that they like the way technology such as the whiteboard is used in class, and that teachers make it clear what they have to do and how to do it. In some lessons, there is not enough pace and energy to motivate pupils, and they find it harder to maintain their concentration. Marking has improved since the last inspection, and is now good, although there are some inconsistencies between classes.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school offers its pupils a well planned curriculum. There is a good emphasis on literacy and numeracy coupled with good coverage of other subjects. Information and communication technology (ICT) is well established. The new ICT suite gives pupils good opportunities to develop their skills through a range of subjects. The school has begun to develop good links between different subjects to make learning more imaginative and stimulating for pupils. This is still at the early stages of development, but is already having an impact on pupils' enjoyment and commitment to learning.

The curriculum is well supported by a good, diverse range of clubs, visits and visitors which enhance pupils' learning and help them develop new skills. At the time of the inspection, for example, pupils had the chance to build their team-working skills at a residential activity centre, to meet with other local schools at a French workshop, and to develop life skills in the school sewing club.

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

#### **Grade: 2**

The school provides good care, guidance and support for all its pupils. It has worked hard to establish successful strategies for ensuring good behaviour and dealing with concerns, so that it offers pupils a safe and secure environment where they feel valued and ready to learn. The extended school provision is appreciated by pupils and parents alike. The school makes good use of its family liaison officer to work with parents, and has good links with support services where necessary to provide pupils with any additional help they may need.

Academic guidance is good. The school has established clear systems for assessment, tracking how well pupils are doing and target setting, all of which are having an impact on improving pupils' progress. Pupils generally understand their targets and say that teachers help them understand what they need to do to improve, although there is some inconsistency in practice between classes.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The headteacher and senior leaders give the school good direction. Since the amalgamation, they have developed good systems for pastoral care and for monitoring the work of the school, which have had a positive impact on pupils' personal development and on their progress. These have continued to improve since the last inspection. Senior leaders are focused on preparing for the next step of extending the responsibility for monitoring and evaluation to new subject leaders, by developing the leadership and management skills of new staff. The school makes a good contribution to the community, and plays a significant role in the local area. It has links with a school in Egypt, and is developing links with other schools in this country. The governors carry out their duties satisfactorily. They are very supportive of the school, but many governors are new to the role and are still learning what is required.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### 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?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<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	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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
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

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

24 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Downsvie Community Primary School, Swanley, BR8 8AU

Thank you for being so helpful and friendly when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you and talking to you. We found that your school is giving you a satisfactory education, and that staff and governors are working hard to make sure that you all do as well as you possibly can.

We were impressed with your good behaviour in class and around the school and we know that you and your parents are happy with the school because everyone gets on well together. The staff take good care of you, and those of you who need extra help are well supported.

The improvements your school has made so far are beginning to make a difference. We have agreed with the school that it is going to make sure that you all do as well as you can in your science investigations, especially in Years 3 to 6. The school is also going to work with your families to ensure that you all come to school regularly and on time. Finally, some members of staff are going to be given extra responsibility for the different subjects that you learn.

You can do your bit by letting staff know if there is anything you don't understand in your science lessons. You can also ask your parents to make sure that you don't miss any school unless you are ill.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Jane Chesterfield

Lead inspector