

Darrick Wood Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101613
Local Authority	Bromley
Inspection number	335756
Inspection dates	12–13 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Joanna Toulson

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	290
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shelley Muscatt
Headteacher	Andrea Moss
Date of previous school inspection	0 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, governing body minutes, a variety of policies and risk assessments, documentation relating to data on pupils' progress and safeguarding, lesson plans and pupils' work. The 87 parent questionnaires returned were also scrutinised.

The team looked in detail at the following:

- how effectively the new leadership team is driving school improvement
- how effective the curriculum is in meeting pupils' varying individual needs
- how well the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is supporting good progress

Information about the school

This school is larger than average. A large majority of the pupils are White British with other pupils coming from a range of minority ethnic groups. Very few speak English as an additional language, although the number of pupils joining the Nursery who are at the early stages of learning English is increasing. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. A provision for pupils with hearing impairments is situated on the school site, and some of these pupils are integrated into the school for part of each day. There is a breakfast and after-school club provided by an independent company to which pupils are escorted by a 'walking bus'. At the end of Year 2, almost all pupils transfer to the adjoining junior school. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Award. The acting headteacher has been in post since September 2009, and was previously the deputy headteacher.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Darrick Wood Infant School provides an excellent education for all its pupils. It provides a very well cared for, bright and welcoming environment in which pupils feel very safe. An exciting curriculum, taught in lessons that are often outstanding by committed teachers and highly trained support staff, creates memorable experiences that inspire pupils' interest. Pupils respond very well to the challenges provided and thoroughly enjoy their learning. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and receive good information about school life, but opportunities are sometimes lost to provide precise ways in which they can support their children's learning or to encourage them to support pupils in school.

Parents and pupils say that staff provide excellent care for all the children. 'Teachers really care about the children' was the way one parent expressed this view. Very strong relationships across the school, with adults acting as good role models, result in pupils' personal development being outstanding. Pupils are developing an excellent awareness of other cultures. For example, they gained enormous benefit from being given reflection time during an assembly where a Hindu wedding was enacted.

Children join the Nursery with skills and understanding that are broadly at the levels expected for their age. They make consistently good and often outstanding progress as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 so that by the time they leave school, attainment is significantly above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Another reason for pupils' outstanding learning and progress is that teachers know their pupils particularly well. Teachers and senior leaders monitor pupils' progress very carefully and act swiftly to give additional support where it is needed. This is why pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make as much progress as their peers. Pupils with a hearing impairment receive excellent support from their support assistants and are therefore able to benefit fully from learning alongside their friends.

Teaching is always at least good and often outstanding. Monitoring and evaluation processes involve all leaders, and where unevenness in quality does occur, teachers are given appropriate advice and guidance to support consistently high quality teaching and learning.

Although the school recognises its strengths, there is no complacency and staff are continually looking for ways to improve. For example, attendance, which was satisfactory in the previous inspection and was affected by a bout of chicken pox and swine flu in the last academic year, is now just above average as a result of effective

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action by the school. There are now no persistent absentees and parents are, quite rightly, less likely to request holiday leave in term time.

A significant strength of the school is the very strong leadership of the new acting headteacher and her team. Together with the governors, they lead and manage the school very effectively. They are all involved in self-evaluation and accurately identify the school's strengths and relative weaknesses. The way the school has maintained its significant strengths during a change of leadership, together with the improvements since the last inspection, provides further evidence that it has excellent capacity for further improvement. The school makes a strong contribution to promoting community cohesion but senior leaders' plans to develop this aspect of pupils' education even further have not yet been sufficiently shared across the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By April 2010, improve the engagement of parents and carers by:
 - providing frequent information about precise ways in which they can support their children's learning across a wide range of subjects
 - creating opportunities for parents to work in school to support children's learning.
- By April 2010, share plans which further promote community cohesion beyond the immediate locality across the school in order that all staff can engage in them.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Pupils are eager to learn and their behaviour is exemplary. Teachers use information from assessment very well to make sure activities are appropriately challenging for pupils' different levels of ability. They use questioning skills well to assess children's learning during each lesson and adapt their teaching accordingly. Consequently, all pupils are able to succeed and make at least good progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported well in lessons. For example, a pupil new to the school and at the early stages of learning English was gently given extra support when sorting pictures of electrical appliances into different groups in a Year 2 science lesson. Pupils who need additional support with mathematics and or English make good, and sometimes outstanding progress as a result of high quality teaching in one-to-one and small group sessions.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. One pupil told an inspector, 'I can't go on the grass because if it's wet, I might slip over.' For their age, pupils have an outstanding understanding about how to keep healthy. One Reception child explained to an inspector why his lunch of cucumber, tomato and banana was healthy: 'Because they are full of vitamins and vitamins are good for me.' Pupils contribute very well to the community and enjoy taking responsibilities such as being a playtime pal or a member of the school council, or raising money for charity. A lesson where Martin Luther King and segregation was discussed illustrated both the high level of challenge that teachers

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provide and pupils' outstanding personal development.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

All aspects of provision are outstanding. Senior leaders are successful in supporting teachers so that they are able to teach at a consistently high level. Teaching is very clear and the use of 'I can' statements which are shared with pupils ensures that all pupils know the purpose of their learning. Pupils are given opportunities to talk about their learning with their 'talk partner', although occasionally too much reliance on the 'hands-up' strategy limits these opportunities. Marking of pupils' work is excellent and gives pupils encouragement while showing them how to improve. Pupils are given time to respond to comments made. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils talked excitedly about their 'revolting recipes' and were able to reach high standards, supported by word banks, writing frames and 'tips for writing'.

The curriculum has been developed extremely well to excite children's learning. Basic skills are developed well across the curriculum and good opportunities to use information and communication technology are taken to enhance learning. Subjects are

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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linked in a meaningful way and whole school themes, such as the 'Take One Picture' project, in partnership with the National Gallery, have inspired some outstanding creative work. A 'Maths Week' was taking place during the inspection and this was a good example of how pupils' ideas and interests are harnessed to make learning fun, while promoting excellent achievement.

Transition arrangements, for example from Reception to Year 1 and from Year 2 into the junior school, are very well planned and effective in ensuring pupils are well prepared for the next part of their school life.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher is extremely effective and all staff have a very clear view of what is expected of them. Together, they form an exceptionally strong team. Very good use is made of professional development opportunities and teachers 'shadow' leaders in order to learn. As a result, the staff team are highly motivated and new and more established leaders are being developed at a fast rate. Through excellent leadership, teachers and support staff are successful in ensuring all groups of pupils make equally good progress. All leaders are involved in accurately evaluating the work of the school and plans to support continuous improvement are appropriate and adjusted as the need arises. Governors are exceptionally supportive of the school but also ensure they hold the school to account. They are rigorous, for example, in ensuring that safeguarding and other procedures for ensuring pupils are safe are of the highest quality. Through its analysis, the school realises that it makes a strong contribution to promoting community cohesion within the school and immediate locality but plans to widen the scope of its work have not yet been shared with all staff.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Parents have many opportunities to visit the school with their children and as a result, children know the school rules and routines very well and settle quickly. Highly skilled staff extend the children's language and ideas by getting involved in and discussing the activities chosen by the children themselves. A rich curriculum of practical activities captures children's imagination and gives good opportunities to develop confidence and independence as well as basic literacy and numeracy skills. For example, during the inspection, Nursery children were enthusiastic about their walk when they identified changes in the trees and collected fallen leaves and bare branches. Staff were very thorough in their risk assessment of the walk, giving high priority to ensuring it was safe and that children were appropriately dressed. Children's behaviour is exemplary and they show very good levels of curiosity and the desire to learn while enjoying both the inside and outside areas, exploring the varied and imaginative activities and range of resources on offer to them. However, opportunities are occasionally lost to allow children to be independent, for example by selecting their own drink bottle or name card. Assessment is rigorous and used very well to guide planning. Staff have quickly adapted the provision to support the increasing, although still very few, number of children who are at the early stages of learning English. Additional support from the local authority has been harnessed to ensure that these children are well supported. The Early Years Foundation Stage is exceptionally well managed, led and organised to ensure that all children have good and often outstanding levels of achievement.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

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Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents say they are happy with the school and that their child enjoys being there. A few parents were concerned that they did not receive sufficient information about their children's progress. The school is aware of this and has already taken action to improve the frequency with which parents receive information.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Darrick Wood Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 87 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 290 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	60	69	25	29	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	49	56	37	43	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	25	52	60	9	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	40	45	52	3	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	48	55	35	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	37	48	55	3	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	44	47	54	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	35	40	35	40	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	41	38	44	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	31	47	54	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	24	47	54	5	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	42	48	42	48	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	52	60	33	38	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



16 November 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Darrick Wood Infant School, Orpington BR6 8ER

Thank you for your very friendly welcome when I visited your school recently. The other inspectors and I really enjoyed meeting you and seeing you working so well in your lessons. We were impressed with your behaviour and how kind you are to each other. Your school is outstanding. All the staff work really well together to make sure you are well cared for. They challenge you to work hard and give you extra help when you need it. You know how to keep yourself safe and healthy. We were very pleased to see what healthy lunches you eat ' well done! We know you are all proud of your school and we agree with you when you say that Darrick Wood Infant School is a fun place to be.

To improve your education even further, we have asked your school to:

- give your parents and carers more information about precisely how they can help you with your learning
- find more ways to encourage your parents and carers to come into school to help you
- share plans with all the staff and governors about how you can learn from and support communities beyond Orpington.

You can help your school by continuing to work hard and doing your best. Thank you again for welcoming us to your school. Enjoy the rest of the school year, especially Christmas!

Yours sincerely

Joanna Toulson

Additional Inspector

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