

Downshall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102800
Local Authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	335971
Inspection dates	29–30 April 2010
Reporting inspector	JOHN HORWOOD

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	480
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mohammed Asif
Headteacher	Ian Bennett
Date of previous school inspection	20 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 18 lessons and 16 teachers. Meetings were held with parents, groups of pupils, staff and governors. They observed the school's work and looked at documents including pupils' work, progress records, governors' records and various policies. The replies to 119 parents/carers questionnaires were analysed and written comments examined.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- current progress across the school
- the key strengths that enable all pupils to apparently make similar progress
- the impact of low attendance.

Information about the school

This larger-than-average-size primary school serves a multi-ethnic community. The largest groups of pupils are from Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi backgrounds. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than in most schools. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The school has an average proportion of pupils who have special needs and/or disabilities mainly associated with moderate learning, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The school has been awarded the Activemark. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision is in three Reception classes and a Nursery. The school has just started to provide an on-site breakfast club. An after school club is managed by a private provider.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Downshall Primary provides pupils with a good education. By the end of Year 6 attainment is broadly average in mathematics and science and above average in English, representing good progress from pupils' lower-than-expected starting points. Teaching is good and pupils say they enjoy their work as a result of good relationships with teachers and each other. Pastoral care is good in the school and the school works well with external agencies to support pupils. In their responses to the questionnaire, a small minority of parents expressed concerns about the school's procedures for safeguarding and supervising pupils and dealing with pupils' medical needs. Inspectors found these procedures to be rigorous and effective. It is, however, evident that parents are not kept sufficiently well informed about how the school deals with these matters on a day-to-day basis. Most pupils say they do feel safe. The overall outcomes for pupils are good, including their behaviour. Pupils' development of workplace skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being is only satisfactory because of low but improving attendance.

Teachers plan their lessons well to make them enjoyable. Assessment is well used to match the work to pupils' ability so that work is sufficiently challenging and ensures all of them make the same good progress. The good curriculum supports all aspects of pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities get good additional support as needed. At present the way assessment systems are used in the classroom to inform pupils of how well they are doing and how to improve are variable in mathematics. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children only make satisfactory progress because assessment systems are not used effectively to record and monitor children's abilities on entry and the progress they make.

The leadership and management of the school are good. Issues from the last inspection, including raising standards in writing and helping pupils understand the importance of eating healthy food have been addressed well. Leaders' self-evaluation accurately identifies the strengths and areas for development in the school. Levels of attainment are still rising and leaders monitor progress well to ensure that additional support is provided where it is needed. Strong, effective action has been taken to improve attendance. The headteacher provides good leadership and his vision and determination to drive the school forward are recognised and supported by all. The school is a harmonious environment where behaviour has improved and strong links have been developed with the local community. The systems to safeguard pupils are good, but records of meetings with support agencies need to be more readily available. These outcomes, supported by an effective governing body, demonstrate that the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement

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

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment, particularly in mathematics, by consistent use of assessment strategies in the classroom so that pupils understand how well they are doing and how to improve.
- Develop the use of assessment systems in the Early Years Foundation Stage to inform planning and to clearly identify children's starting points.
- Work with parents/carers to raise attendance level
- Improve communications with parents so that they are fully informed about daily procedures for supervision and medical treatment within the school.
- Ensure that records of meetings with external agencies about pupils are readily available.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

All pupils, including those from ethnic minority groups, make good progress. Pupils say this is because teachers explain things very well. The majority of pupils say they enjoy their learning. This was clearly seen, for example, in a Year 4 lesson on how to deal with feelings about change, where good pace and challenge encouraged all to join in and enjoy their learning. Pupils like coming to school because staff are helpful and activities are fun. This was demonstrated in a year 2 science lesson where staff supported pupils well in practical work about reversible and irreversible changes. Pupils' behaviour is good both in and out of lessons, ensuring that all can learn and enjoy school. They say any bullying is dealt with effectively by staff. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities enjoy learning because they are well supported in lessons and set appropriate work.

There is a good focus on encouraging healthy lifestyles, which has led to the school being awarded the Activemark. The majority of pupils eat healthy food and participate well in sport. They make a very good contribution to the school community through the school council and taking on roles such as 'young leaders' to support the younger ones at lunch time. They interact well with the local community through sport activities and curriculum visits, such as visiting the 'roadworks' to see what is being done and why. Pupils' overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The rich range of cultural diversity in the school helps pupils to know about different faiths and cultures. This is enhanced by the curriculum and through visits within the local community.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Pupils benefit from good teaching supported by a good curriculum. There are examples of outstanding teaching such as in a year 6 numeracy lesson where there was good pace and well prepared resources, used to stimulate learning through problem solving. Most lessons are made interesting through good references being made to everyday experiences. This was seen, for example, in a Year 5 English lesson where the cookery topic had strong cross curricular links to food technology. Appropriate work is set for all pupils and there is good support for those who have limited knowledge of the English language as well as those with special educational need and/or disabilities. The methods used to monitor pupils' understanding of work within the classroom are variable at present and are better developed in English than in other subjects, especially mathematics. Marking of work is generally regular and helpful.

The curriculum caters well for all pupils. The English curriculum, in particular, has been developed since the previous inspection to help pupils attain better by an early focus on reading and phonics. Provision for the most able is in place, seen in the challenge provided for this group to ensure that they make good progress. There is a strong focus on physical education with specialist sports coaching. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have an extra physical education lesson each week on their own, and to ensure the more able are well challenged, pupils are grouped by ability. There is a good range of extra-curricular clubs and visits which add to pupils' enjoyment.

Good procedures are in place to encourage high standards of behaviour and more regular attendance. Transition arrangements with the secondary schools are effective.

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The pastoral care in the school is good, with all staff strongly committed to the concepts of equal opportunities and that Every Child Matters. All requirements of health and safety are met. First aid provision is good and a comprehensive system of recording and reporting all accidents is in place. The breakfast club is in its infancy and provides a basic service for a small number of pupils in a well-supervised and safe environment. The provision for pupils with special educational needs/disabilities, including those who are vulnerable, is good but records of meetings and progress are not readily available to provide a full background of the support being provided.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership team has been restructured recently to be appropriate to a large school and to provide a better focus on raising attainment. Some middle managers are very new to post and still developing their roles, but overall leaders' ambition and how it is driving improvement is good. They have developed teaching to be close to outstanding in the main school.

The school's good work to create an inclusive community, which promotes equal opportunities and avoids discrimination by providing support to those who need help, ensures there is no significant underachievement by any group of pupils

Governors have a wide range of skills and provide good support and challenge. They understand what needs to be done in the school and have an effective partnership with the leadership team. They have been very proactive during the recent difficult period and have supported the leadership team well.

The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion is good. Leaders know the community well and much has been done to successfully promote good relationships with parents, most of whom are happy with what the school provides. Links with the local community, including the more difficult parts to involve, are in place. Safeguarding procedures are all in place to meet requirements including vetting of staff. There is a good approach to carrying out risk assessments for school trips. There are good partnerships with support agencies and secure child protection procedures.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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 leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with skills and capabilities below those expected for their age, especially in communication skills. They make satisfactory progress overall in the Early Years Foundation Stage as a result of satisfactory teaching. Their best achievement is in personal, social and emotional development, but by the start of Year 1 they are still below national expectations in the different areas of learning. Children are happy and considerate to each other and are courteous to visitors. They get on well together and play harmoniously with each other whatever their backgrounds. Relationships with staff are good and this contributes to children feeling safe and secure.

Staff plan suitable activities which generally interest and engage children. They use a reasonable range of resources which provide a sufficient range of experiences to meet children's different needs. However, staff do not record enough observations to identify children's starting points and the progress they make. Although staff manage children and their behaviour well, they are not always deployed effectively enough to support children's learning, especially when they are involved in self-chosen activities. Staff work well with parents and refer to outside agencies ensuring appropriate support for the children.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and the provision is well organised. The curriculum provides sufficient opportunities for children to use both the outdoor and indoor areas to support their learning.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Almost a quarter of parents and carers expressed their views and most are satisfied with the school. The general feeling from written comments is that the school is an excellent school but a small minority have concerns about safety because they have not been sufficiently informed about the school's procedures. These and other individual concerns were considered as part of the inspection process and are referred to in the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dowshall Primary 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 119 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 513 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	55	53	45	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	34	58	49	9	8	10	8
The school informs me about my child's progress	44	37	66	55	7	6	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	29	72	61	11	9	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	46	39	62	52	10	8	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	34	64	54	13	11	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	49	41	61	51	7	6	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)	37	31	64	54	9	8	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	29	67	56	13	11	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	31	54	45	15	13	8	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	27	64	54	14	12	6	5
The school is led and managed effectively	38	32	59	50	11	9	9	8
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	38	60	50	9	8	3	3

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



1 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Downshall Primary School, Seven Kings, IG3 8UG

Thank you for welcoming us and helping us when we came to your school. We really enjoyed visiting you in your school and seeing you learning and playing together. Your school is giving you a good education. You are making good progress in your work and are able to do the things that are usually expected by the time you are in Year 6.

There are many things we admire about your school and these are a few of them:

- you behave well
- adults look after you well
- you have good relationships with your teachers and with each other
- you play and work together well in a harmonious community within the school
- you have a good understanding of how to keep fit and healthy
- school leaders work well with other specialists to support your learning and care.

There are things we have asked the school to do to make it better:

- help you attain higher standards especially in mathematics by always involving you in assessing your work so you know how well you are learning
- improve how progress is recorded in the Nursery and Reception classes
- work with your parents/carers to ensure all of you attend regularly
- keep your families informed of how the daily procedures for supervision and medical treatment within school work
- ensure that records of meetings that are held about those of you who are getting e.extra help are always available.

You can help by carrying on working hard and helping your teachers.

Yours sincerely

John Horwood

Lead Inspector

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