

Darell Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102884
Local Authority	Richmond upon Thames
Inspection number	335983
Inspection dates	24–25 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Natalia Power

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	259
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Celia Hodges
Headteacher	Ms Laura Khalil
Date of previous school inspection	7 January 2007
School address	Darell Road Richmond upon Thames TW9 4LQ
Telephone number	020 88766721
Fax number	020 88763895
Email address	info@darell.richmond.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 20 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's plans, its self-evaluation, the data the school has collected on pupils' progress, and the minutes of the governing body. They considered the responses in 110 questionnaires that had been returned by parents and carers.

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

- the achievement of groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, minority ethnic pupils and those at an early stage of learning English
- pupils' learning and progress in mathematics
- the quality of teaching and its impact on how well pupils learn.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is a little higher than average. Almost half of the pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, with pupils from White heritages other than British forming the largest group. Around a third of pupils have first languages other than English, and those at an early stage of learning English most commonly have Arabic, Bengali or Portuguese as their mother tongue. An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Of these, pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties form the largest group. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is higher than average. The school has a small unit for pupils with cognition and learning needs.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. It cares for them well. The school is popular with parents, and one summed up the supportive ethos in the comment, 'Darell has caring teachers and, most importantly, it has a heart.' Pupils' safety is of paramount importance to the school, and it protects them exceptionally well. The headteacher, her staff and governors ensure that safeguarding procedures are of the highest quality.

Children get off to a good start in the Nursery, and continue to make good progress in the Reception Year, leaving with the personal qualities and language and number skills expected for their age. From Years 1 to 6, the progress that pupils make in their learning is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and make satisfactory progress in line with others.

Teachers have warm relationships with their classes and are popular with the pupils. One commented, 'All the teachers are very nice and they help me when I'm stuck.' Although there are many examples of good and outstanding teaching, the quality of teaching and marking is inconsistent across the school and pupils are not always clear about what they need to do to improve their work. Teaching in mathematics is stronger in meeting the needs of the most and least able pupils than in providing sufficiently challenging work for middle-ability pupils, which prevents these pupils from attaining high enough standards.

The good curriculum has particular strengths in enrichment. For one pupil, 'Music, football, art, book week and creative day are the best activities', and this wealth of opportunity is greatly appreciated by pupils and their parents.

The school cares for pupils effectively and looks after vulnerable children particularly well. As a result of good care and support, groups of pupils, such as those with statements of special educational needs and pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, make satisfactory progress in line with others. Those at an early stage of learning English are given effective support, and quickly catch up and make similar progress to others.

Leaders and managers have created a cohesive school, where pupils from all ethnic backgrounds make satisfactory progress. They have a broadly accurate understanding of the areas where the school needs to develop as a result of satisfactory self-evaluation. The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory, but is limited by the fact that its plans for the future are not detailed enough, and are not sufficiently focused on precise measures to raise pupils' attainment. Most issues arising from the last inspection have been tackled, though progress in mathematics remains slower than in English.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency and quality of marking to ensure that all pupils understand how to improve, by July 2010.
- Produce a revised and more detailed school development plan, by July 2010, focusing more precisely on raising attainment for all groups of pupils by ensuring that:
 - each area of focus has a clear timescale with measurable success criteria
 - plans are regularly reviewed by all concerned.
 - Raise standards in mathematics across the school, particularly for middle-ability pupils, by ensuring that tasks are accurately matched to pupils' capabilities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' overall attainment is broadly average at both key stages, and this has been the case since the last inspection. More able pupils are well supported by extension sessions, and the proportions of pupils gaining the highest levels in tests held at the end of Years 2 and 6 are a little above those for the country as a whole. Other pupils, including those with special educational needs, do a little less well than their national counterparts, but their attainment is still broadly average. The attainment of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is in line with that of pupils generally. Overall, pupils' learning and progress are satisfactory. Pupils enjoy learning but their enjoyment is greater where the work is more accurately matched to their capabilities. For example, in one class for able mathematicians the level of challenge was high and pupils tackled the computer tasks with enthusiasm. However, this level of challenge is not evident for all groups. As a result, some pupils made slower progress.

Pupils' behaviour is good in and around the school. This reflects their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. One parent commented that her child has gained 'confidence, ideas and social skills' from the school. Pupils' attendance is average. They feel completely safe. They are willing to embrace a healthy lifestyle, and contribute well to the school and the wider community, for example by helping at school fairs or playing an active part in the school council. The progress pupils make towards learning basic skills prepares them adequately for the next stage of schooling.

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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and are dedicated and supportive. One pupil commented, 'Even if you don't feel confident in a piece of work, they help you.' Teachers use questioning well to encourage pupils to think for themselves. Teaching assistants give good support to pupils with additional needs, to help them keep up with the pace of work. Most teachers keep up a brisk pace of learning, and divide the time well between whole-class sessions and individual or group activities. However, pupils do not always understand how they can improve, because marking is inconsistent and offers too little guidance on the next steps they need to take. In mathematics, work is sometimes not matched well enough to the needs of individual pupils, especially those who do not receive extra support or booster classes and this slows learning.

The curriculum is exciting and wide-ranging. It is appreciated by pupils and their parents. One parent commented, 'In particular, I like the enriched curriculum, with a strong emphasis on art and the wonderful school trips ' even the seaside!' The curriculum provides pupils with a broad range of experiences which contribute well to their personal development and creativity. However, the mathematics curriculum is not adjusted sufficiently to meet the needs of all the different ability groups.

Pupils are cared for very well and given very strong support. Vulnerable children are looked after exceptionally well. The school's effective partnership with a range of external agencies enables pupils with language and learning needs to make satisfactory progress in line with others. One parent of a pupil with mild speech and language difficulties commented, 'The school has been absolutely superb, both in helping my child and in communicating with me.' However, support for some middle-ability pupils does

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not fully meet all their learning needs and, consequently, some do not do as well as they might.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
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?

Leaders, managers and governors are committed to the school. They have created a happy environment where staff and pupils feel valued and respected. They promote equality of opportunity satisfactorily, enabling pupils from all ethnic backgrounds to make satisfactory progress. They are proactive in ensuring that safeguarding is of the highest quality. Their relationship with parents is good and most parents feel that the school communicates well with them. The school works in effective partnership with a range of external agencies to promote pupils' well-being. For example, it has a long-standing relationship with the Orange Tree Theatre to develop in children a love of Shakespeare.

Monitoring procedures are satisfactory but are not always sufficiently rigorous and sharply focused. Consequently, leaders' and managers' plans for the future do not always tackle the main areas requiring improvement in sufficient depth. This limits the effectiveness of leaders and managers in communicating their high expectations to staff, including those relating to teaching and learning, and the precise measures necessary to bring about substantial improvement.

Leaders and managers have created a cohesive school with a strong sense of its own history and place in the wider community. As yet, school leaders do not sufficiently evaluate the impact of their measures to promote community cohesion, but plans are in hand for improved evaluation. Governors are fully involved in the life of the school and provide satisfactory support.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3

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The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with social and language skills a little below those expected for their age. Close partnerships with parents are maintained through the regular support of parent-helpers. Children's progress is regularly assessed and this information is used successfully to plan for them and to support their individual needs. As a result, children make good progress and in many areas reach or exceed expected levels by the end of the Reception Year. Adults promote children's welfare well. They provide firm but kind support and, as a result, children develop good social and emotional skills. There is a good balance of child-initiated and teacher-led activities. The outdoor space is safe and attractive, with a wealth of exciting activities to stimulate children's curiosity. These activities take good account of the children's own interests and nurture their sense of wonder at the world around them. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is new in post and is effective in planning the day-to-day curriculum and meeting children's learning needs. However, long-term whole-school planning for the future is not fully developed in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The large majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires or who spoke to the inspection team are happy with the school. Parents feel that the school provides a safe environment for their children, and that it has a warm, friendly atmosphere. They

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value the care and support provided by the staff. Around one fifth of parents, however, expressed minor concerns about the school. There was no specific trend or pattern to these issues.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Darell 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 110 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 259 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	79	73	28	26	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	75	69	33	30	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	62	57	39	36	3	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	61	56	40	37	3	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	69	63	35	32	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	66	61	36	33	7	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	57	52	46	42	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)	53	49	42	39	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	68	62	35	32	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	58	53	36	33	4	4	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	61	56	39	36	2	2	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	59	54	42	39	2	2	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	76	70	29	27	2	2	1	1

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.



28 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Darell Primary School, Richmond upon Thames, TW9 4LQ

You may remember that three inspectors recently visited your school and talked to some of you.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. We liked the happy atmosphere at the school, and were impressed by your polite behaviour and your consideration for others. Even though your playgrounds and corridors are smaller than in some schools, you move around sensibly, taking care not to hurt other pupils. You told us that pupils are kind to one another and that the school keeps you extremely safe. You enjoy taking responsibility for others, for example by serving as school councillors and by helping at parents' events.

Your school takes you on many trips and visits, helping you to learn about different people and cultures. Your school gives you many opportunities to acquire new skills, for example to learn French and a wide range of musical instruments, and to join many clubs.

All the adults look after you well. You behave well in class. You listen well in lessons and join in sensibly. The children in Nursery and Reception make good progress. Most of you in the rest of the school make suitable progress. We feel you could make better progress than this, and we have, therefore, asked the adults to mark your work even more carefully than they already do, to make sure you all know exactly what to do to improve. We have also asked the adults to make sure that each of you receives work that is more accurately matched to your ability, especially in mathematics. We have also asked those in charge to plan carefully for the future, to make sure that they take every opportunity to make the school better and better.

In the mean time you can play your part by continuing to contribute well to the life of the school and working hard. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Natalia Power

Lead inspect

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