

Denbigh Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109534
Local Authority	Luton
Inspection number	337314
Inspection dates	8–9 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Roderick Passant

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Ward
Headteacher	Elaine Close (Acting Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	13 December 2006
School address	Denbigh Road Luton Bedfordshire
Telephone number	01582 571597
Fax number	01582 494356
Email address	denbigh.juniors.admin@luton.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

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

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 13 lessons or part lessons taught by 13 teachers and looked at a sample of pupils' English and mathematics work from Year 6 and Year 4. Meetings were held with various members of the school staff; members of the school council and pupils from Years 5 and 6; and two members of the governing body including the Chair of the Governing Body. They observed the school's work; looked at a range of policies and documentation relating to safeguarding pupils and the school improvement plan; and scrutinised questionnaires completed by 181 parents, 95 pupils and 42 staff.

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

- the quality of the language environment in the school to support bi-lingual learners
- the steps taken by the current leaders to raise standards
- the independence of learners.

Information about the school

This larger than average, urban school serves a largely Asian community. Pupils come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds but the largest groups are Pakistani and Bangladeshi. Most pupils speak English as an additional language. There is a small proportion of pupils who join the school with little English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average as is the proportion of pupils on the register for special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils who have statements of special educational needs is broadly average. The school is currently waiting for a decision relating to possible amalgamation with the adjacent infant school; both schools share the same site. The acting headteacher took up her role in September 2009 along with the acting deputy headteacher. The acting headteacher also manages the Children's Centre which serves both schools. This provides parental support, specialist support services and community access. The school has gained Healthy School status.

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

2

Main findings

This school has continued to improve since it was last inspected. There are a number of good features but because achievement is satisfactory, although improving, the school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. Overall standards in Year 6 tests in 2009 were below but close to the national average. Standards show year-on-year improvement as does pupils' progress. There are number of reasons that account for this. The school is now monitoring the progress of all pupils carefully. Work with specialised assessment materials in writing and reading and moderation of levels in other subjects, means that staff have an accurate picture of where pupils are in their learning. Through regular progress meetings and year-group action plans, specific interventions provide well-targeted support. In addition, staff understand the monitoring data and accept the accountability for the progress pupils make in their class. Historically the school has relied on pupils' progress accelerating in Year 6 rather than building good progress across all year groups. The effectiveness of these developments is evident in younger pupils' current good progress. The school is now narrowing the gap between where pupils are and where they should be.

Teaching is satisfactory. It has improved since the last inspection in that pupils now do not have widely different experiences depending on which class they are in. All lessons are at least satisfactory and many have good features but these are not yet consistent across all lessons. In some lessons there is insufficient challenge or support to meet the wide range of pupils' needs or an over-reliance on the ability grouping. Sometimes teachers talk for too long so that time for pupils' to get on with the task is not maximised. Some very good examples of marking were seen where teachers gave clear indications of how pupils should improve their work, but this too is not yet consistent across classes.

Pupils behave well; they are friendly, polite and clearly enjoy learning and school because it is fun and interesting. They are proud of their school and are very happy and motivated, have high aspirations and want to do well. The school provides good care and guidance. Pupils feel particularly safe because they trust and have confidence in the staff. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their above average attendance.

The acting headteacher supported by the acting deputy headteacher is leading the school well. They have an extremely accurate picture of the school and what needs to be done, plan effectively, set challenging targets relating to pupils' progress and attainment and are ambitious for the school and its pupils. Essentially the acting headteacher has sharpened the school's focus, raised expectations and made improvements, some of which need more time to ensure consistency and sustained good progress across the school. Nevertheless, given the developments that have taken

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

place leading to improving standards and progress, the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards and improve pupils progress by ensuring that the good practice seen in lesson planning and assessment is a consistent feature across all lessons, and in particular:
 - the use of assessment to plan lessons which meet the needs of all learners
 - the use of a variety of methods of assessment to monitor pupils' progress in lessons
 - planning lessons which provide sufficient time for pupils to be actively engaged in learning rather than passively listening to teachers
 - marking that informs pupils clearly how to improve their work.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

In a mathematics lesson in Year 6 pupils worked together very well, enthusiastically supporting each other, engaging with the task with concentration, and listening to their teacher very carefully. Individual white boards and demonstration by pupils were used to check on learning as the lesson progressed. The teacher's demonstration was effective because it was timely and clarified a point which the teacher recognised had confused some pupils. The ethos was supportive so that mistakes could be explored and used to illustrate a point to the rest of the class. Pupils made good progress in practising their skills and higher attaining pupils were challenged effectively.

Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils attained similar results to their respective national averages in the 2009 tests, and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals did well. Pupils on the register for special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress overall, but this is improving because of the range of interventions and regular checking on their impact. Pupils who join the school with little or no English make good progress in acquiring initial fluency because of careful induction and the quality of support that they receive.

Year 6 pupils are confident young people because the school successfully makes pupils feel valued. Pupils get on well with each other and respect others beliefs and values, which helps to make the school a cohesive community. They understand the school's framework of rules, learn to accept responsibility for their actions and are given the opportunity to reflect on moral questions and dilemmas. Pupils are curious about the world and they enjoy the sense of success they gain from their school production or their sporting activities. Through their fundraising activities, such as the Haiti Earthquake Appeal, they demonstrate their compassion for others. Pupils take their responsibilities

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

seriously be it as part of the school council, eco-team or play leaders. They have a good understanding of what contributes to a healthy lifestyle. Many are very keen to take part in the good range of sporting activities and respond well to the school's initiatives to promote health including some who are involved in growing their own food at home and in cooking healthy meals as a result of the cookery and gardening club activity.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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	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	3
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The good quality of relationships between adults and pupils underpins learning and classrooms have a positive ethos. Teachers manage their classrooms well. Teaching assistants, many of whom are bi-lingual, make a good contribution to pupils' learning. There are good examples where assessment is used effectively to support learning, for example, pupils assessing their work against specific success criteria in lessons, but these approaches are relatively recent and are not effectively applied by all teachers on a regular basis. Pupils now have more precise targets, enhancing their capability as independent learners, helped further by the home learning and the 'anytime anywhere' learning opportunities provided by the school's on line learning systems.

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

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 links between different subjects provide meaningful contexts for much of the work pupils do. The many partnerships with external groups and agencies, the use of practical problems, the utilisation of the local environment, first-hand experience and often memorable enrichment opportunities and trips help fire the pupils' imagination and interest. The curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development and well being. A full range of interventions including one-to-one support means that increasingly it is tailored to support individuals and groups.

The school is very aware of the language difficulties facing fluent bi-lingual learners and there are good strategies in place to tackle these. There is good emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills allowing pupils to rehearse and share ideas. In the main, adults model good speaking skills. Reading partners, use of accelerated reading programme and good resources for guided reading also help pupils understanding and the ability to 'read between the lines'. There is significant emphasis on developing pupils' first-hand experience as part of the preparation for writing. For example, the seaside trip helped pupils develop richness of ideas and variety in their writing. A pilot writing project has been particularly successful in improving pupils' writing in one year group and the school has made clear plans to extend this writing focus into other year groups. Specialist assessment materials, which help determine sharper targets for both teachers and pupils, is also helping improve writing and more recently reading. Multi-media work, associated with information and communication technology (ICT), is also used particularly effectively in developing pupils' language skills.

Subject leaders in English, mathematics and science have clear plans for future developments involving further work with specialist assessment materials and ensuring that there is even more emphasis given to modelling, visual approaches and practical work, strategies particularly pertinent to bilingual pupils.

There are effective induction and transition arrangements when pupils join and leave the school and close liaison with the adjacent infant and neighbouring secondary school. The school provides wide-ranging and very effective support for families and individual pupils through the Children's Centre and the family workers. There has been significant investment in energy and time to ensure that pupils' attendance is above average. All pupils are known as individuals. Support for pupils is targeted well, their progress is now monitored closely and the effectiveness of any strategies to boost achievement used is evaluated.

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

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The governing body is relatively new. The Chair of the Governing Body is very experienced. Under his leadership, the governing body is improving, providing good support and beginning to question effectively. The school's senior leadership are open and honest in their appraisal of the school and provide the governing body with good information. There is regular parental consultation and the governing body have gained the financial management in schools award. The governing body take their role regarding keeping pupils and staff safe very seriously. Safeguarding procedures across the school are good. There is a clear timetable to keep policies under review and rigorous checks on all adults who work at and visit the school.

The school understands the needs of the local community very well and it is very active in responding to those needs through the work of Children's Centre and family workers. The range of support is wide, including for example, operating Arabic classes within the centre, tackling the perceived stigma associated with disability held within some community families, and working with families with children at possible risk of diabetes. The school is a very cohesive community and it has initiated some links with other schools locally and nationally to further promote community cohesion; however links with a Polish school have ended, so there are no international links to act as a focus for the work within the curriculum to extend pupils' awareness of how other communities live. The school is very inclusive in its philosophy and it has precise information about the performance of its pupils. It has targeted its efforts on particular groups and is beginning to raise achievement.

Under the leadership of the acting headteacher there is a sense of the school moving forward as a team. Morale is high as reflected in the staff questionnaire. Staff share the acting headteacher's vision for the school and their role within it. Initiatives are therefore whole-school, helped by the open, professional and supportive ethos and the depth of good leadership across the school. Teaching is improving because the acting headteacher and deputy have an extremely accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses based on regular monitoring. They have high expectations and provide both challenge and effective tailored support where it is needed.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2

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 with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents and carers who responded agreed with the statements that their child enjoys school, they were happy with their child's experience at the school and that it kept them safe. Most parents agreed with all the other questions although a few parents did not agree that the school takes into account their suggestions, deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour and helps in promoting a healthy lifestyle. The school surveys parents regularly and asks for parents' views which are then used as part of the decision-making process. Inspectors judged behaviour as good. Staff's consistent positive encouragement enables pupils who have behaviour difficulties to manage and improve their behaviour over time. The school strongly promotes the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Denbigh Junior 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 181 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 360 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	106	59	75	41	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	92	51	84	46	3	2	2	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	84	46	89	49	5	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	73	40	100	55	5	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	85	47	95	52	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	69	38	101	56	10	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	59	33	106	59	15	8	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)	80	44	92	51	5	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	60	33	112	62	4	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	72	40	92	51	13	7	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	53	29	100	55	18	10	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	74	41	93	51	3	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	87	48	91	50	2	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

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.



12 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Denbigh Junior School, Luton, LU3 1NS

Thank you for making us so welcome to your school. Our particular thanks go to those pupils who gave up part of their lunchtime to talk to us. What you had to say was very helpful. I would like to share our findings with you.

This is a school that continues to improve. It has come a long way since it was last inspected. It has a number of good features and is satisfactory overall. You make the progress that is expected for your age so that standards by the end of Year 6 are the same as you see in many schools. Your progress is improving. This is because the teachers keep a very careful eye on the progress that you are making so that if you are finding some aspects of the work difficult they step in and provide you with support. In many lessons you make good progress because teachers have worked hard to improve their skills and your learning. At the moment good progress does not happen in all lessons because some of the good features introduced in lessons are not yet a regular enough feature across the school. I have asked the headteacher to make sure you have enough time in lessons to get on with your work and that activities have the right level of challenge for you all. I also asked her to ensure that teachers always indicate in their marking the next steps you can take to improve your work. Teachers and adults in the school care about you a great deal and because you help create a very friendly school, you feel very safe. You enjoy school because of the 'fun' and interesting things that you do in your lessons and clubs. We were very impressed by how friendly, polite and well-behaved you were.

The headteacher leads the school well and there is a strong sense of teamwork amongst all who work in it. She and the senior leaders who support her have an extremely accurate picture of the school, its strengths and what needs to be done. The school sets you challenging targets which you largely meet. The headteacher is ambitious for the school and for you. You told us you are extremely proud of your school and so you should be. You can all help the school go from strength-to- strength by continuing to work hard and enjoy learning as much as you do now.

Yours sincerely

Roderick Passant

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.