

# Dedworth Middle School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110072
<b>Local Authority</b>	Windsor and Maidenhead
<b>Inspection number</b>	337436
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Daniel Burton

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Middle deemed secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	9–13
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	443
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Christopher Upton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stuart Muir
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 May 2010
<b>School address</b>	Smiths Lane Windsor SL4 5PE
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 36 lessons delivered by 21 teachers, and held meetings with students, staff and governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at policies, data and analyses, including the school's self-evaluation, governing body minutes and 85 questionnaires completed by parents and carers. They also looked at questionnaires completed by students and staff.

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

- The quality of learning, and progress over time, for learners in both key stages.
- Attainment in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2.
- The impact of the creative partnerships programme and specialist school status in improving outcomes for all groups of learners.
- The effectiveness of strategies to raise attendance.

## Information about the school

Dedworth Middle School is served by 14 feeder schools. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage, although approximately 30% of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than in other schools nationally. While the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is average, the overall proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. Their needs include specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is around half the national average. The school is an associate specialist performing arts school.

**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

Dedworth Middle School has made important strides forward in the three years since it was last inspected. Whilst its overall effectiveness has not changed, a number of important features of the school's work have improved.

- Many aspects of pupils' personal development are now outstanding. Almost all pupils behave extremely well in lessons and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. A very large majority of pupils benefit from the excellent range of opportunities which are provided for them to contribute to the school and wider community. Pupils' commitment to healthy lifestyles is excellent and large numbers participate in extra-curricular sport.
- Provision for care, guidance and support is good. Pupils feel extremely safe in school and value the pastoral care they receive when they need help. Many pupils who need extra help benefit from good specialist support, for example through small group tuition and mentoring in the 'Reaching Your Goals' room. The school works well with a range of outside agencies to support pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable. Work to support pupils who experience difficulties in their mental health is particularly comprehensive and effective.
- The curriculum, while satisfactory overall, now includes a range of innovative features which complement the school's work to promote pupils' achievement and personal development. The 'Creative partnerships' programme, together with the school's status as an associate specialist school for the performing arts, provides pupils with valuable opportunities to extend their experiences through, for example, cultural and recreational visits, sporting activities and their work to promote a sustainable environment.

While these aspects of the school's work have improved, leaders and managers have been less effective in remedying a number of areas for improvement identified at the time of the previous inspection. Although inspectors saw good teaching, too many lessons continue to secure only satisfactory progress. Some teachers do not yet consistently provide clear and precise learning targets by which they and their pupils can accurately assess pupils' progress. Variability in the quality of marking means that not all pupils are secure in their understanding of what they need to do to improve. Not all teachers ensure that work is sufficiently well matched to pupils' differing ability levels. While the standards that pupils attain in English and mathematics by the end of Year 8 are broadly average and improving, standards remain low at the end of Key Stage 2, despite the intervention strategies which the school has put in place. Pupils' progress is hindered during Key Stage 2 because pupils are not yet given sufficient opportunities to practise and consolidate their literacy and numeracy skills across different subject areas.

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Although improved, school monitoring systems are not yet sufficiently refined or robust to enable leaders and managers at all levels to rigorously evaluate the impact of strategies to raise achievement. For example, a wide range of strategies are in place to support the large numbers of students identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, but analysis of their impact is not yet carried out effectively across all year groups. Nevertheless, leaders and managers have a broadly accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and have secured some significant improvements to provision and pupils' outcomes. As a result, the school has clear and satisfactory capacity to improve. Staff at all levels share the headteacher's determination to raise achievement so that it is more closely aligned with some of the outstanding features of pupils' personal development.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise attainment in mathematics and English by the end of Key Stage 2 by developing cross-curricular planning so that pupils have regular opportunities to improve their key literacy and numeracy skills in all subject areas.
- Improve systems of monitoring and evaluation in order to:
  - identify more precisely the strengths and areas for improvement in teaching and learning to ensure that more teaching is as good as the best
  - measure more accurately the effectiveness of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in lessons by ensuring that all teachers:
  - use clear success criteria so they and the pupils can accurately measure how much progress pupils make in each lesson
  - provide high quality oral and written feedback so that pupils understand what they need to do to improve and can take the necessary action
  - make effective use of assessment information to plan learning activities which fully meet pupils' differing needs.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Pupils relish the many excellent opportunities they are given to make a positive contribution to the school and wider community. Year 8 pupils enjoy training younger pupils to be school prefects, and are hugely enthusiastic about initiatives such as the annual '11 million takeover' day which provides opportunities for them to teach lessons and assume other responsibilities more usually reserved for adults. The school council has been instrumental in devising the new system of credits and rewards and regularly helps to organise charitable and community events. The creative council is highly valued and exemplifies pupils' commitment to promoting sustainability within the school. Pupils enjoy working with younger children in other schools in their roles as junior sports leaders, and value opportunities to sing to older members of the local community as part of the community choir. Such opportunities prepare pupils well for the next stages

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in their education and later life.

Pupils' outstanding behaviour makes a significant contribution to their satisfactory and improving achievement. The evidence from lessons and pupils' books confirmed the school's own view of attainment that is broadly average in Year 8, but still too low at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils thrive when they are given opportunities to participate in well-planned learning activities. When teaching is at its best they make good, and occasionally outstanding, progress. In the less effective lessons, the progress of some learners is hindered by overly-long teacher introductions or work which is not matched sufficiently to pupils' differing needs. Inconsistent use of clear success criteria, coupled with the variable quality of marking, means that, while pupils know their targets, they cannot confidently articulate what they need to do to improve. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive good support from specialist staff and, as a result, make progress in line with their peers.

The school has worked hard to improve attendance and has been particularly effective in reducing the proportion of pupils who are persistent absentees. As a result, attendance is satisfactory and improving.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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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## How effective is the provision?

In the best lessons, teaching is well paced and challenging and enables pupils to measure their progress against very clear success criteria. In one outstanding art lesson, all ability groups made outstanding progress because of an excellent balance of teacher explanation and independent learning activities. Work was well matched to pupils' differing needs and, as a result, fostered high levels of enthusiasm. High-quality teaching and marking ensured that pupils had a very clear understanding of how to attain well, and the teacher skilfully adjusted the lesson to accelerate learning as a result of excellent strategies for assessment. However, these strong features were not typically seen and only half of the 36 lessons seen during the inspection secured good or better progress.

The curriculum is satisfactory in meeting learners' academic needs and makes a strong contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, not least through the enrichment activities brought about as a result of the school's specialist status. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. The curriculum is also increasingly effective in meeting the needs of less able learners through, for example, nurture groups, one-to-one tuition and schemes to address low achievement in literacy and numeracy. Planning is detailed in all subjects and for all year groups. However, while planning ensures that pupils build upon prior learning, it does not make clear which specific skills pupils need to develop to attain the next levels in their learning. Hence, in some lessons, opportunities are missed to build pupils' confidence and skills through work with talking and learning partners. Sometimes, pupils are provided with the same work, regardless of their differing abilities. This means that the limited basic skills of the younger pupils in particular remain a barrier to their all-round learning.

This caring school provides good support for all its pupils and is particularly effective in identifying and addressing emotional needs. For example, the school is extremely sensitive to the needs of children whose parents are currently serving in the armed forces overseas. Increasingly rigorous strategies to improve attendance have had a clear impact and reflect the school's good work with specialist support agencies, such as the education welfare service. One pupil who joined the school partway through the year described Dedworth as a school where, 'everyone is made welcome', and inspectors agree with this judgement.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

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## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and his team have worked hard and successfully to make significant improvements to the school which are recognised by pupils, parents and staff alike. The increasing number of pupils on roll reflects the school's growing reputation within the local community and this, coupled with highly resourceful financial management, has helped to put the school on a secure financial footing. Staff are highly committed to improving outcomes for pupils and willingly give up their time to broaden pupils' experiences, for example through their work running extra-curricular clubs. All are determined to raise achievement.

While the school has improved its systems to monitor provision, these have yet not proved sufficiently robust to help the school move forward in all areas of its work. For example, while systems to monitor the quality of teaching and learning are in place, they have not been sufficiently incisive in identifying the features which are holding back the quality of teaching.

The school makes a strong contribution to promoting cohesion. All pupils get on extremely well together, regardless of their diverse backgrounds. The school has secured links with schools in China and pupils participate in 'radio days' with children in Canada and the United States. The school has identified the need to improve links with other schools in this country.

The appointment of a substantive deputy headteacher has helped the school to consolidate improvements to the systems for tracking pupils' progress, and these are having a clear and growing impact on raising attainment. While the promotion of equal opportunities is central to much of the school's work, systems to monitor the progress and personal development of all groups of learners are not yet fully embedded.

Safeguarding procedures are good overall, and provision to safeguard the most vulnerable learners is exemplary.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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



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<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## **Views of parents and carers**

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who completed the questionnaires are very supportive of the school and the quality of education it provides. One parent, typifying the views of others, wrote, 'My child enjoys every minute of school.'

Parents recognise that the school has improved and are very supportive of the leadership and management arrangements. A few parents made negative individual comments about some aspects of provision. These were all followed up with the school, but reflected no particular pattern.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dedworth Middle 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 85 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 443 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	42	39	46	7	8	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	34	40	48	56	0	0	2	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	35	36	42	4	5	4	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	28	54	64	3	4	4	5
The teaching is good at this school	22	26	57	67	2	2	3	4
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	22	56	66	6	7	3	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	22	55	65	8	9	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)	29	34	47	55	3	4	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	28	52	61	4	5	4	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	33	46	54	5	6	3	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	26	52	61	4	5	4	5
The school is led and managed effectively	32	38	51	60	0	0	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	36	46	54	3	4	4	5

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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



13 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dedworth Middle School, Windsor, SL4 5PE

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave to inspectors when we recently visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you in lessons and in meetings, and are grateful to those of you who completed the Ofsted questionnaire. Here are our main findings, although we hope that some of you will read the full report.

We have asked your headteacher and his team to help you make more progress in your lessons and achieve higher standards in all your subjects, by ensuring that:

- teachers in Key Stage 2 give you more opportunities in all subjects to build up your literacy and numeracy skills
- teachers make better use of the WALT and WILF system so that you really know what you are aiming for in all of your lessons
- the work set in lessons is always pitched at the right level for each pupil
- teachers give you more thorough feedback so that you always understand how you can improve your work.

You can help by continuing to do your best in all your lessons.

We wish you every success in the future.

Daniel Burton

Her Majesty's Inspector

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