

Dovers Green School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125015
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	328263
Inspection dates	1 April 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael Pye

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

Type of School	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	158
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Keely Harrison
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Hillman
Date of previous school inspection	09 November 2005
School address	Rushetts Road Reigate RH2 7RF
Telephone number	01737 245 515
Fax number	01737 226 605

Age group	4-7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- how well pupils know how to improve their work
- the extent to which leadership and management responsibilities are distributed throughout the school, and what is the impact and quality of their development planning
- how well the school promotes community cohesion.

Evidence was gathered from observing lessons and break times; the school's documentation, particularly relating to pupils' achievements; pupils' work; interviews with staff, parents, governors and pupils; results of national assessments; and parental views as expressed in questionnaires and discussions. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This infant school has above the national average proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. The pupils come from a predominantly White British heritage. Seven pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English. There is a much higher proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs than is usual. This is because there is an on-site 16-place unit that caters for pupils with a range of learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities. All of these pupils have statements, and all have full access to the National Curriculum. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average; for those pupils in the main school, these are mainly associated with speech and language difficulties. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of two Reception classes. A new Children's Centre is shortly opening on the school site.

Privately run pre- and after-school clubs use the school premises.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding education for pupils. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive, with comments such as 'it provides the perfect start to my child's education', 'he has the best care and understanding - I cannot find any fault', and 'I have been more than happy with the school and my children love going there every day'. The inclusion of all pupils is at the heart of the school's approach.

Pupils make excellent progress and achieve very well. In 2008, in the national assessments at the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were average. Many pupils reached high standards. Although standards reached by those with learning difficulties are lower, these pupils nevertheless make rapid progress. In the current Year 2, pupils are on track to attain above-average standards. From their starting points, this constitutes exceptional achievement, and this includes those at an early stage of learning English.

Outstanding teaching and the high quality of pupils' personal development underpin the very high achievement level. Relationships with adults are extremely positive, and pupils want to do well. Regular, very good consolidation periods during lessons help to reinforce pupils' learning. Teachers' questioning explores and challenges the depth of pupils' knowledge. In mathematics, pupils are consistently encouraged to explain their answers in detail. In response to an identified need to improve writing, teachers now build in very good opportunities for pupils to speak and listen to others. The pupils listen carefully and show great respect for others' views. Within the special needs unit, the expertise of the adults is very apparent as they communicate clearly the objectives of the lesson, and give appropriate support for the pupils. A parent wrote, 'The teachers seem to be very tuned in to the requirements of individual children according to their ability, and this is evident in the way my child has progressed in reading.'

Pupils have an outstanding understanding of how to remain healthy and safe. This is due to the work of the school. For example, a teacher used very well an opportunity to promote dental hygiene during a lesson. Students from the local secondary school oversee a weekly fitness session for pupils. Through their work as school councillors and Eco Councillors, and when singing in the locality, these young people make an excellent contribution to the community. They certainly enjoy their education. The integration of the pupils from the special needs unit is seamless, and pupils relate extremely well to each other. Bright, vibrant displays around the school reflect the breadth of the outstanding curriculum. Pictures of the 'bubbles work' are the result of a workshop conducted by the science museum. The school is working on making the curriculum even more creative. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the Africa theme week, the farm visits, and clubs such as sports, gardening and knitting.

Care, support and guidance for pupils is central to the ethos of the school, and is outstanding. Pupils tell of feeling very safe, and know who to approach with any problems. One parent echoed the views of many when writing, 'The staff team take an inclusive, valuing, empowering approach to every single child, and this shows in the children's attitudes.' The pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve outstandingly because their progress is carefully tracked and needs are quickly identified and addressed. The unit is very well led. Senior managers carefully monitor pupils' individual education plans, allowing support to be adapted as necessary. Skilled teaching assistants play a very important role in overseeing these pupils' progress, carefully adapting the work in small groups to match the needs of each individual pupil. Regular assessments and an effective pupil progress tracking system have been established and are used well in lesson planning to meet pupils' needs. Pupils clearly know how to improve their work. One said, 'We don't learn if we don't make mistakes.'

The outstanding leadership of the headteacher has established a very clear and shared vision for the school. As a result, attendance has increased and standards have gradually improved over recent years. Excellent partnerships with external agencies exist. Effective management systems are in place which support thorough monitoring and evaluation, and allow training needs to be identified and effective development planning to take place. Moreover, the attention to detail is impressive. For example, the school has gone the extra mile to find a pupils' progress tracking system that allows them to identify the very small steps in improvement for pupils in the unit. Management responsibilities are thoughtfully distributed. Foundation subject leaders ensure that assessments are conducted accurately. They provide reports for governors twice each year. However, the emphasis in these reports is not as focused as it could be on pupils' academic performance, so as to give governors an even more detailed account of the school's success. The school has a

clear plan to promote community cohesion. This is already very effective at the local level, but the school has fewer national and international links to provide the pupils with a broad knowledge of places and people beyond their immediate neighbourhood. Governance is outstanding; regular focused visits help to ensure that governors have a very good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. The capacity to improve is excellent.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children achieve outstandingly within a caring and stimulating environment, where their individual needs are extremely well met. They enter with below the expected levels of skills and knowledge; some aspects of literacy are particularly weak. A productive partnership with parents is established from an early stage. There is, as one parent wrote, 'a well structured admission programme with visits, lunch and work packs, and fantastic workshop evenings for parents'. Children settle well and parents are reassured by booklets which show what they can expect in Reception. The welfare needs of the children are met extremely well. Relationships are excellent and children are guided very well towards developing independence and good habits. For example, they eat healthily and pay attention to hygiene when washing hands prior to eating. They respond positively to well-planned lessons. Teachers model, and provide excellent opportunities for speaking and listening. The current building work has limited access to the outside area; the school has ambitious plans to further develop this area. Curriculum planning is not as explicit as it could be to encourage the free flow of children between indoors and outdoors. Children from the unit visit the Reception class, settle very well and have their needs extremely well met. Progress is enhanced by their full involvement in the activities on offer. As one parent wrote, 'This is inclusion at its best!'

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend national and international links to improve community cohesion to the outstanding level of the rest of the school's provision.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are the children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

² IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interest of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B

Letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection.

23 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dovers Green School, Reigate, RH2 7RF

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school recently. You wanted to speak to us about your school. I feel you wanted to tell us how very good it is. Thanks particularly to the group who spoke to us - we listened carefully to your views. We judge your school to be outstanding, which means it is extremely good.

We especially liked how the adults make sure that you are all involved in the life of the school. Like you, we feel that the adults care for you very well and that you are encouraged, from Reception onwards, to enjoy your education, to think for yourselves and to grow into friendly, polite young people. We also liked the way you get along so well together. You told us how you feel very safe and are happy at school. The displays around the school show how much fun you have and the great many things you become involved in doing. The art club work looks really good, and the 'Easter gardens' produced as part of your 'home learning' project are excellent. Well done to you and your parents!

You learn very well because your teachers are skilled and plan your lessons so that you are challenged to do your best. You are prepared to work hard as well. Because of this, you make excellent progress. Those of you who find learning difficult, for whatever reason, make equally good progress. You are very well cared for, and teaching assistants are trained well to help you with your work.

Your parents like the school very much and wrote many positive things about it. They rightly praised the leadership of the school, the way you are prepared for Reception, the 'fun' activities that you have, and the support that you get.

We have asked the school to make more links with people in other parts of the country and abroad.

On behalf of my colleague and myself, I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Michael Pye
Lead Inspector

