

Dover Road Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118581
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	358392
Inspection dates	11–12 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Joanna Toulson

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	485
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neil Davdra
Headteacher	Rebecca Smith
Date of previous school inspection	3 July 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons taught by 15 teachers, observed an assembly, had a telephone conversation with a governor, held meetings with pupils, a representative of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the school improvement plan, the governing body minutes, and a variety of policies and risk assessments. They also looked at other documents including information relating to pupils' progress and attainment, safeguarding, lesson planning and pupils' work. The inspection questionnaires returned by 67 pupils, 56 parents and carers, and 38 staff were also scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether leaders and managers at all levels have demonstrated that their actions are having a significant impact on raising standards of attainment.
- How effectively the school is closing the attainment gap between groups of pupils and pupils nationally, in particular those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those known to be eligible for free school meals and girls.
- How well the school is improving the quality and consistency of teaching so that all pupils can make the progress they should.

Information about the school

The school is larger than most primary schools. Just over half of the pupils are White British. A much higher than average proportion are from minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being of Indian heritage. The percentage who speak English as an additional language is much higher than that found nationally. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is more than twice the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is similar to the national average. The school manages a breakfast club. The school has achieved the Activemark and 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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Pupils leave school with low attainment in English and mathematics. This means that they are not adequately prepared for their next stage of education. The quality of teaching is inadequate overall. While there is some effective teaching which motivates pupils, there is too much which is satisfactory, and this is insufficient to accelerate pupils' progress in order for them to reach the standards of attainment that they are capable of achieving. Furthermore, the lack of consistency in teaching and learning includes a very small minority of inadequate lessons.. Information about how well pupils are doing is not used effectively to match work to the needs of individual pupils. Teaching is not sufficiently clear and so, too often, pupils are unsure about their learning. Opportunities are lost to develop pupils' basic skills, such as phonics (the linking of letters to the sounds they make) or to allow pupils to write at length, particularly in Key Stage 1. The classroom environment does not provide well thought out displays to support pupils' learning so they are unable to refer to guidance and information if they are having difficulties or need ideas.

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is because there is a well-planned environment and adults interact well with children, challenging them in their play. Progress is inadequate throughout the rest of the school. Although a minority of pupils make satisfactory or good progress, pupils in Key Stage 1, those known to be eligible for free school meals, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and pupils who speak English as an additional language make inadequate progress. Girls make significantly less progress than boys in English.

The quality of care provided is generally effective in supporting pupils at key times, for example when joining the school or moving between classes or on to secondary school. The effective promotion of the importance of living a healthy lifestyle is resulting in pupils having a good understanding of how to keep healthy. Good safeguarding practices have been adopted across all areas of school life and this helps pupils feel safe. There is regular monitoring of teaching and learning but the school's judgements about the quality of provision and outcomes are overgenerous. Additionally, self-evaluation systems are not used effectively to secure rapid improvements.

The curriculum, described as 'developing' in the previous report, still does not meet the needs of different groups of pupils, particularly those in Key Stage 1. Marking of pupils' work is still not consistent across the school. Attendance is now above average but in

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other respects, improvement since the previous inspection has been poor. For example, pupils' attainment remains low and the quality of teaching overall is not as effective as at the time of the last inspection. The governing body is not challenging the school sufficiently to bring about improvement. These factors show that the school has inadequate capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

By January 2012:

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in order to secure satisfactory or better progress by ensuring that:
 - planned work is informed by assessment information and matched to the needs of individuals and provides appropriate levels of challenge
 - key vocabulary and learning prompts are clearly displayed so that pupils can refer to them for support and guidance
 - teachers clearly demonstrate the quality of learning expected so that pupils can work successfully and independently
 - marking consistently gives pupils clear guidance about how to move their learning on.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - developing the role of the governing body so that it challenges senior leaders and staff to bring about improvements quickly
 - ensuring that monitoring and evaluation are accurate and are followed through with high-quality support for all staff.

By July 2012:

- Raise pupils' attainment in English and mathematics by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write, especially in Key Stage 1
 - ensuring that the curriculum is matched to pupils' needs and promotes the acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy skills for all groups of pupils.

By January 2012:

By July 2012:

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Pupils say that they enjoy school. However, their achievement is inadequate. Since 2006, there has been a pattern of low attainment in both English and mathematics. Provisional results from national tests and assessments taken in 2011 show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected attainment in these subjects fell. The discrepancy between closing the attainment gap for all pupils and in particular those who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is not narrowing sufficiently because the curriculum and the teaching are not well adapted to meet different pupils' needs. There is too much variation between the progress made by different groups of pupils. In a few lessons observed by inspectors, pupils made faster

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progress because the level of challenge was appropriate for all pupils and teaching was clear. For example, in a successful Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils talked about their learning and effectively explored different approaches to solving problems because they were encouraged by good questioning from the teacher. Too often, however, work is either too hard or too easy for pupils and this hinders their progress. For example, in a different Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were unable to solve simple problems because they had an insufficient knowledge of multiplication tables. The pace of learning is slow when tasks lack challenge. In a Year 2 English lesson, pupils spent too long drawing and lost opportunities to write. In a Year 2 geography lesson, pupils spent too long on the carpet listening to the teacher before moving on to an activity. Pupils' learning is also hindered when teachers do not give clear instructions.

Pupils are polite and, although a few have difficulty behaving well, behaviour is generally well managed by adults. Pupils enjoy helping around the school, for example by being 'eco-warriors', play leaders or by being on the school council. They have a satisfactory understanding of the different cultures within the school. As a result of effective strategies, such as 'Rover at Dover' and 'Attendance Ted', attendance has improved this year and is above average.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
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	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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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How effective is the provision?

Teaching is failing to promote satisfactory or better progress. Teachers do not take opportunities to make sure that key vocabulary is clear. As a result, this hinders the progress of all pupils, but especially those at the early stage of learning English and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Too much teacher-talk and an over-reliance on pupils who volunteer answers lead to too many being passive learners. There is some effective marking of pupils' work but this is not consistent across the school. Although some pupils know their targets, these are not referred to by the teacher when marking pupils' work.

The curriculum has strengths, in particular in promoting a good understanding of how to keep healthy and safe, and in the range of after-school clubs. However, improvements to the curriculum have taken too long to become embedded and, as a result, it is not well matched to meet pupils' needs. For instance, there has not been sufficient emphasis on providing opportunities to develop basic skills. As a result, too many pupils do not have the skills needed to be successful in their next stage of education. The learning environment gives a limited reflection of the different languages spoken by pupils in the school.

The care given to pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable is an established part of the school and pupils, parents and carers appreciate it. As a parent said, 'I am very happy with the level of care.' Pupils enjoy the breakfast club, which offers healthy food.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	4
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The effectiveness with which leaders and managers embed ambition and drive improvement is inadequate: key areas of provision are less effective now than they were at the time of the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is monitored and some points for improvement identified, but staff are not sufficiently supported in their improvement and areas identified are not sufficiently followed up. Frequent testing of pupils, together with meetings to discuss how well they are doing, give the school pertinent information about what to improve. However, actions taken following these meetings, such as providing additional support, are not used effectively to accelerate the progress of pupils. As a result, the school's ability to promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination is inadequate. This is seen, for example, in the inadequate achievement of girls in English and of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals. The governing body lacks a firm understanding about the school's weaknesses and

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does not hold school leaders sufficiently to account for the low attainment of pupils. Safeguarding procedures are good with regular training of all staff. Risk assessments are particularly thorough and personalised to take account of the circumstances of specific individuals. The school promotes community cohesion within its local community and ensures good relationships between different groups in school. A community cohesion audit has been undertaken and appropriate strategies have been identified to promote pupils' understanding of national and global matters. There are positive relationships with parents and carers, who receive adequate information about their child's progress. However, the school offers inadequate value for money, as resources are not resulting in at least satisfactory outcomes for pupils.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
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	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a key strength of the school. Its leadership is effective, and although teaching is stronger in Nursery than Reception, the sharing of good practice is driving improvement. Children settle quickly into Nursery. Adults know the children well and make careful and accurate assessments of their learning. Children choose from a range of activities which engage and sustain their interest. For example, during the inspection, children listened well to a story and were able to say what they liked in a sandwich. They enjoyed learning about floating and sinking, and good opportunities were taken to reinforce early reading and writing skills. Good questioning from the adults meant that they both asked and answered questions about what they were doing.

Children feel very safe and happy in this caring environment. Children in the Reception class do not have easy access to an outside playing area, which means they are restricted in choosing independent outdoor activities, although there are plans in place to relocate

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the outside space in September. From low starting points, pupils make good progress so that by the time they enter Year 1 they have developed skills, which are in line with age-related expectations and above in using language for communication and linking sounds and letters. Parents and carers appreciate the work of the staff, as summed up by one who described the Early Years Foundation Stage as, 'a happy environment for both my children' and wrote, 'The staff communicate really well with me, informing me of any problems and also giving advice on ways we, as a family can support my children at home.'

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 proportion of questionnaires submitted during the inspection was much lower than is typical of primary schools nationally. Most parents and carers who returned questionnaires agreed that their child enjoys school and is kept safe, and inspection evidence supports this view. A few parents and carers who responded were concerned about the amount of progress their child makes, the quality of teaching and learning, and how well the school meets their child's particular needs. The inspection evidence indicates that too many pupils make inadequate progress and the quality of teaching and learning overall is inadequate. A few responses showed concern about behaviour. However, the inspection evidence does not support this view. During the inspection, behaviour was satisfactory overall.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dover Road Community 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 56 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 485 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	64	14	25	4	7	2	4
The school keeps my child safe	38	68	12	21	5	9	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	32	57	20	36	2	4	2	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	55	16	29	7	13	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	36	64	12	21	5	9	3	5
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	64	13	23	4	7	3	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	70	12	21	3	5	2	4
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)	36	64	14	25	3	5	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	54	17	30	7	13	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	43	23	41	5	9	4	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	41	26	46	4	7	3	5
The school is led and managed effectively	31	55	21	38	1	2	3	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	68	11	20	5	9	2	4

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 all 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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



13 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dover Road Community Primary School, Gravesend DA11 ORB

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and finding out about life at Dover Road School. You told us that you enjoy school and feel safe. You also enjoy the breakfast club and the after-school activities. You have a good understanding about how to keep healthy and safe. We were really pleased to see that most of you are now attending school each day and arriving on time. However, you are not doing as well as you should, and are not making fast enough progress in your English and mathematics. We have put the school into 'special measures'. This means that your school needs help to improve and inspectors will visit again soon to check on its progress.

We have asked the governors, senior leaders and the staff in your school to make sure that:

- you get more opportunities to practise your writing
- the work you do is matched carefully to your needs so that you are able to be successful
- you quickly learn basic skills in literacy and numeracy, for example your multiplication tables and writing rules
- your work challenges you to work hard but is not too easy or too difficult
- you can see reminders and prompts that will help you while you work, such as important words you could use or hints to help you in your mathematics lessons
- teachers tell you clearly what to do so that you can get on with work on your own
- marking tells you exactly how to improve and how well you are doing
- staff in your school are helped to get even better at what they do
- the governing body checks that the school is improving quickly.

All of you can help by always working hard and letting your teacher know if your work is too easy or too difficult for you. Also, make sure you keep on attending school every day. I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Toulson

Lead inspector

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