

Deighton Gates Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107876
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	309526
Inspection dates	30 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Roger Gill

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	301
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Charlie King
Headteacher	Mr Jeremy Dunford
Date of previous school inspection	January 2005
School address	Deighton Road Wetherby West Yorkshire LS22 7XL
Telephone number	01937 584359
Fax number	01937 581643

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement; the quality of teaching including assessment and marking; and the effect of leadership and management on improvements in English and mathematics. Evidence was gathered from the school's judgements about attainment on entry, test results, teachers' records, observations of teaching, scrutiny of pupils' current work and discussions with the headteacher, staff, pupils and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector 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 is a large school situated in a relatively advantaged area. Some pupils travel from further afield. Few pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages or who are learning English as an additional language is small. The number with a learning difficulty and/or disability is broadly typical, but rising yearly; a sizeable minority have difficulties that fall within the autistic spectrum for which the school offers specialist facilities and support. Children's attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is below that expected for their age, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. The school has achieved the national award for Healthy Schools, the International School Foundation status and the Football Association Charter. It is a leading partner of a local federation of 22 schools from all phases.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features in which pupils of all ages are now achieving well. This includes pupils between Years 3 and 6, after a few years when their progress was satisfactory. The school has gained a justified reputation among parents for its distinctive care and support that result in pupils' excellent personal development. Typically, parental opinion is that, 'Deighton Gates is a perfect environment for children...self-esteem is high on the agenda.' The majority think that the headteacher and staff need to be, 'congratulated on the care and standards achieved'.

One of the most striking things about the school is the way that pupils with communication and social difficulties are welcomed and included. They are helped to make good progress, sometimes after overcoming marked behavioural disturbances. This side of the school's provision is very successful, owing to the governors' vision for an all-embracing school, the skill of the headteacher and staff, and the maturity shown by other pupils.

Pupils enjoy school. The vast majority like their lessons and are excited by the many additional activities on offer. The extremely useful connections which the school has with local support agencies and other schools, including those abroad, have a powerful influence on pupils' personal development. They know a tremendous amount about being healthy, not least through the frequent opportunities to prepare and cook food. Their enthusiasm is only dampened slightly when they talk about wanting more challenge in some lessons such as mathematics. Nevertheless, they are fascinated by the school's own archaeological dig (a section of a Roman road runs through the school grounds), their own apple orchard and the vast array of clubs such as gardening club. Since there are so many interesting things to do, the general consensus among pupils is that, 'we could never get bored'. Behaviour is good, which is a success for the school since several pupils find it very hard to control their emotions.

Cultural development is very strong. For example, pupils have been fascinated by being involved with the Primary Colour project about cultural diversity in Britain, and the connections with schools in Africa are recognised in the international status. Equally, pupils value the opportunity to devote time to helping out in school. Peer mediators, known as the Squabble Squad, healthy tuck shop assistants and school councillors are all very capable and respected by other pupils for what they do.

The trend has been for standards to be above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 until 2007 when, for particular reasons connected with the year groups, standards were around average. Progress from Foundation Stage to the end of Year 2 was always generally good but it was among older pupils that progress slowed a little. At the end of Year 6, in 2007, pupils had achieved well in reading and science but, as in previous years, they could have done better in writing and mathematics. The school has implemented some valuable methods to tackle these relative weaknesses. As a result, current standards in Year 6 are above the national expectation for their age, which represents good achievement for these pupils.

Teaching, which is good, has become more adept at using the information gained through the assessment of pupils' work to plan purposeful lessons. This is particularly true in the case of writing where a new found accuracy in judging levels of attainment has helped teachers to raise standards. Pupils capable of reaching above average levels could still do better, particularly in mathematics and writing, because teachers do not always provide them with sufficient challenge in lessons. Learning is beginning to benefit from improvements in teachers' marking, which now offers guidance in the form of targets. These goals are more precise in the case of pupils' writing than they are in mathematics. Even then, the quality of targets in writing varies between year groups with pupils in Years 2 and 6 receiving the most helpful advice.

The headteacher's skills of analysis coupled with the ability to create an inclusive school have inspired staff to improve the performance of all pupils. The newly created teams that manage subjects and the evaluation of standards are beginning to play a useful part in supporting the headteacher and governors in school improvement. The very accurate tracking of pupils' academic achievements and the use made of this information allow school self-evaluation to be very effective in gaining a picture of strengths and weaknesses. These are reflected clearly in plans for development. Considering the advances to date and the school's very good understanding of where improvement is still needed, the capacity to go further is good.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage gives children a good start. They reach nationally expected levels by the end of Reception after a below average start. As a result, achievement is good. Attainment on entry has fallen since 2006, but the teamwork of the staff, the purposeful activities available and the close observation of children's progress ensure that learning is geared to their particular needs. Good leadership and management of the setting provide a broad range of relevant activities. For example, in one session, children made good progress in learning letters and their sounds while having the option afterwards of learning socially, physically and intellectually in pairs while playing with wigs in the hairdressers. Elsewhere, children, some with learning difficulties, were getting the most from a sensory activity with plastic letters hidden in a tub of rice crispies. By contrast, a group of fluent talkers were challenged in their thinking about what conditions plants would need when growing in pots of soil. Outside play is undertaken with enthusiasm in all weathers. However, the school has rightly judged that facilities lack enough hard surfaces and a covered area to allow continual experience in all areas of learning. The school is working hard to improve this satisfactory aspect of provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils capable of above average attainment always receive the correct level of challenge in lessons.
- Improve the setting of targets for pupils, in writing and mathematics, so that they all understand precisely how to improve their work.

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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?	2
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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of boarding provision	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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	2
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	2
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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed, including the adequacy of staff, to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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



1 May 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Deighton Gates Primary School, Wetherby, LS22 7XL

Thank you for your help when I inspected your school. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit because everyone was so friendly. You go to a good school and your personal development is first-rate.

The children that spoke to me at break and lunchtime convinced me that some things about Deighton Gates are very special. I have never visited a school with an archeology club that actually 'digs' in its own grounds. In fact, break time was too short for me to hear everything that goes on. I was fascinated when you told me about all the instruments that you learn to play: from saxophone to drums. It was only afterwards that I read about the annual health week that includes developing mental health skills such as meditation and other relaxation techniques.

What struck me in listening to those on my table over lunch was the ease with which you all spoke about your feelings about school life. Your parents are correct when they point out that self-esteem is a very important factor in your school. Obviously the work, for example, of the learning mentor, the inclusion manager and the Squabble Squad is having a strong effect.

The children that I spoke to during the day told me how interesting lessons are. They say, correctly, that teaching is good and so is the curriculum. Despite all these good factors, I am suggesting two things for the school to do to become even better. First, to provide even more challenge for those of you who can manage harder work. This is an aspect that a survey of pupils has identified already and which was mentioned by some of you during my visit. Second, to make sure that you know exactly what targets you are aiming at and what you need to do to reach them.

Best wishes to you all and I hope that you find out more about your Roman road and the kind of farmhouse that it might have passed by.

Roger Gill
Lead Inspector