

Donnington Primary School

Uffington Road, Willesden, London, NW10 3TL

Inspection dates

7–8 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Attainment has risen since the previous inspection and is now above average. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Progress is particularly rapid in Years 5 and 6 because of strong teaching.
- Children in Reception make good progress from their low starting points because of strong adult support and good teaching that meets their needs.
- Pupils enjoy reading and they use their understanding of letters and sounds well to read unfamiliar words.
- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is good overall with some examples of high-quality practice.
- Teachers make good use of questioning to test pupils' understanding and give pupils opportunities to speak and engage in lessons. This helps pupils to make good progress.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively to support the weaker learners who find learning hard. As a result, they make similar progress to their peers.
- Pupils' behaviour is good around the school. They are courteous and respectful of each other and adults. They say that bullying is rare and that they are kept safe at school, and their parents and carers agree.
- The school is well led and managed. Leaders, managers and members of the governing body are ambitious and have worked effectively to bring about improvements since the previous inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged in all lessons or given enough responsibility for their own learning.
- Pupils are not always given time to respond to teachers' comments in their books, to extend their thinking.
- In a few lessons, teachers do not make it clear to different groups of pupils what they are expected to learn by the end of the lesson, and some of the work set does not always match their abilities.
- Although attendance is improving and is now average, it is not yet high enough to ensure that no pupil falls behind in their learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They observed 17 lessons, four of which were joint observations with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. In addition, teaching of small groups outside of the classroom was also observed.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, and inspectors listened to some pupils read and discussed their reading with them.
- Discussions were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, senior leaders and managers, and a representative from the local authority. In addition, inspectors spoke to parents and carers in the playground at the start of school.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and examined a range of documentation, including records of the school’s own analysis of its strengths and weaknesses, the school’s own performance data, improvement plans, records of monitoring the quality of teaching and records relating to behaviour, safety and safeguarding. Pupils’ books were also scrutinised to look at their progress, the quality of marking and feedback, and curriculum coverage.
- Inspectors looked at 19 staff questionnaires and took account of 22 responses received from parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Avtar Sherri, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Kate Robertson

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an averaged-sized primary school.
- Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic groups, with the largest group from Black or Black British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average, as is the proportion of pupils whose first language is not English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in care of the local authority or children from service families, is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a morning Nursery class and a morning and afternoon Reception class.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, especially in Key Stage 1, from good to outstanding by ensuring that:
 - pupils are given more opportunities to be actively involved in their own learning
 - pupils are always encouraged to respond to teachers' written comments, so as to improve their work, enhance their self-assessment skills and deepen their understanding
- teachers always explain to pupils what they are expected to learn by the end of the lesson, and that the work set for pupils is always matched closely to their abilities, especially the more able.
- Improve attendance further so that it is above average by creating stronger links with parents and carers to ensure they understand the importance of their children attending school regularly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils make good progress from their starting points. Attainment in English and mathematics is rising and the current school data show that pupils make good progress across year groups, particularly in Year 5 and 6. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics is improving, but is not as good as it could be.
- Overall, children begin the school with basic skills well below those typically expected for their ages. They make good progress across the Nursery and Reception classes because they are taught well and receive good care and support from adults. By the time children enter Year 1, their skills are broadly in line with the expected level for their age.
- Attainment at both Key Stages 1 and 2 has risen over the years and pupils reach the expected levels by the end of Years 2 and 6, with pupils making faster progress in Years 5 and 6 because of stronger teaching. However, some of the more-able pupils did not achieve the higher levels of attainment in previous tests at the end of Year 6, particularly in mathematics. Scrutiny of the school data for current pupils shows improvements in the levels of attainment of more-able pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There are no differences in the levels of achievement amongst pupils from different ethnic groups. The school has effective systems in place to monitor the achievement of different groups of pupils and intervenes where necessary. This ensures equality in outcomes for different groups of learners.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported well in lessons by skilled teaching assistants and through very effective and well-taught small group work. As a result, these pupils make good progress.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language also make good progress. The school makes accurate assessments of these pupils who join the school, including those at very early stages of learning English. This enables the school to meet the needs of such pupils well. As a result, they begin to learn and understand English quickly and make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium funding achieve well because of the effective support they receive through a wide range of additional provision, including one-to-one sessions and catch-up classes. Consequently, their attainment, as measured in average point scores, has improved and is now similar to that of other pupils in the school. This is above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' communication and literacy skills are successfully promoted across the curriculum through giving them sufficient opportunities to learn new vocabulary, and to enhance their speaking skills through peer discussions and through skilled questioning by teachers.
- Pupils enjoy reading. Although pupils achieved below the national average in the phonic screening check at the end of Year 1, they are able to use their understanding of letters and sounds to read unfamiliar or difficult words with increasing confidence as they progress through the school.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching throughout the school has improved. This is because school leaders have invested a great deal of time and resources to support teachers and improve the quality of teaching through a sharper focus on performance management and appropriate professional development. However, there is still some variation in the quality of teaching across the school.
- Teaching in Nursery and Reception is never less than good, with some outstanding teaching in the Nursery. Adults engage children well in their learning through a wide range of interesting activities, initiated by both children and adults.

- Children are proud to 'show off' what they have learnt to adults. For example, in one of the Reception lessons, children were deeply absorbed in shaping a modelling compound into letters and words to help in their early writing and phonics, and one child excitedly shared what he had achieved, 'Look, I have made a word, "sat"!'. In a Nursery lesson, children developed their fine motor skills cutting paper to make a lantern, helped by the teacher's clear demonstration. They were delighted by their results. As one child remarked, 'Look Miss, I did it!'
- In Key Stage 2, teaching is consistently strong, particularly in Years 5 and 6 with some outstanding teaching. Teachers' good-quality questioning, closer monitoring of pupils' progress in lessons and pupils' high level of engagement secures good and occasionally outstanding progress for learners. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils were captivated in writing a spooky story using descriptive language, helped by words displayed on the wall and spooky music in the background. One pupil said 'I can't wait to finish off my story!'
- Teaching is not as strong in Key Stage 1, particularly in Year 1, where opportunities are sometimes missed to build on the children's phonic skills they have gained from Reception. Children occasionally lose concentration because the work is not always matched closely enough to their needs. As a result, they do not always make the expected progress.
- A particularly strong feature of teaching is the emphasis on speaking and listening, building pupils' vocabulary and modelling language development. This helps to build up the literacy and communication skills of all pupils, especially those who speak English as an additional language.
- Pupils are encouraged to write and there is good evidence of extended writing in books. They enjoy reading and are able to use their knowledge of blending sounds to read unfamiliar or difficult words. Their skills in numeracy are well promoted through opportunities for pupils to use their mental mathematics, for example by applying their knowledge to work out a formula for finding the perimeter of a shape. Teachers also make good links between learning in the classroom and real-life situations, such as by asking pupils to read weighing scales accurately at home.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed and they use their skills effectively to engage pupils and support their learning so that they make good progress, particularly those pupils who have special educational needs and those learning to speak English as an additional language. Pupils eligible for the pupil premium receive extra help from support staff, both inside and outside of the classroom. As a result, these pupils also make good progress.
- Although marking is good across the school, with comments on how pupils can improve their work, they are not always given time to reflect on these comments, to deepen their understanding and enhance their self-assessment skills.
- In a minority of lessons, the more-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged and are not always given enough responsibility to be actively involved in their own learning.
- In a small minority of lessons, teachers do not explain clearly enough what pupils are expected to learn by the end of the lesson and the tasks set are not always well matched to the abilities of different groups. As a result, some pupils complete their work too quickly while others have too much to do.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- There is a positive atmosphere of support and respect in the school. Pupils contribute to this with their good behaviour and attitudes to learning. They are polite and considerate, and work well together in lessons.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in the school and that behaviour is good. All staff responding to the questionnaire and most parents and carers responding to the online questionnaire (Parent View) also agree.
- Pupils say that incidents of bullying, racist behaviour or homophobia are rare. Pupils from all

backgrounds get on well with each other, both in the classroom and outside in the playground. They have respect for diversity, and appreciate similarities and differences between people, as promoted in one of the assemblies observed during the inspection. Pupils' good behaviour and the school's effective policies and practices to promote good behaviour result in minimal exclusions.

- Pupils have a secure understanding of different types of bullying and unsafe situations, including internet safety and cyber-bullying. In a discussion with pupils, one pupil was able to go into depth about what people should do if they receive 'nasty' text messages on their mobile phones.
- Pupils say that if and when an incident of 'bad behaviour' happens, the school deals with it effectively.
- Pupils speak highly of school mentors and play leaders 'who sort things out' quickly to maintain good behaviour and relationship at playtime.
- Attendance is broadly average but improving. The school monitors the attendance of different groups of pupils closely and meetings are held with parents and carers where there is a concern. There is good involvement of the education welfare officer to improve attendance. However, more work needs to be done to secure the commitment of some parents and carers, especially new arrivals to the area, to the school's expectations.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is ably supported by the deputy headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body in his ambition to improve the school further.
- School leaders have been successful in addressing the areas for improvement from the previous inspection and creating a culture where morale is high and where mutual support and teamwork help everyone to bring about improvements.
- Systems for performance management for teachers are effective, and professional development and support are successfully used to help teachers improve the quality of teaching. Teaching assistants are skilled in supporting the pupils' learning. There is a strong link between the judgements on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress and teachers' pay to ensure good value for money.
- Middle managers are increasingly involved in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school, and observing lessons and giving feedback to teachers. This has also helped to improve the quality of teaching since the previous inspection.
- The school has robust systems in place for monitoring the progress of different groups and identifying any groups that are at a risk of underachieving so that additional support can be arranged. As a result of this and good-quality teaching, all groups of pupils make good progress and standards are rising.
- The pupil premium is used effectively and, as result, eligible pupils make good progress. The focus on the achievements of different groups reflects the school's strong commitment to equal opportunities and inclusion.
- The curriculum has been reviewed since the previous inspection and this has also helped pupils to make good progress. However, some of the more-able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently to meet their potential. Pupils enjoy studying different topics through the cross-curricular approaches.
- The school supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils have a good sense of what is right and wrong, appreciate and celebrate differences and similarities, including cultural diversity. Pupils enjoy all the arts and sports opportunities that the school makes available to them, as well as through school journeys and links with other schools. They learn how to become responsible citizens through local youth parliament events.
- The local authority has provided some support on monitoring the quality of teaching; this has

had a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is well led by a committed and knowledgeable Chair and is effective in working with school leaders to bring about improvements. It has a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses, including pupil performance and the quality of teaching. Governors are involved in the performance management of the headteacher and are knowledgeable of how teachers' pay is linked to quality of teaching and raising achievement. Governors ensure the efficient management of financial resources, including the use of the pupil premium and its impact on the achievement of pupils supported by this extra funding. Governors are generally well trained through the training delivered by the local authority. All statutory duties are met, including arrangements for safeguarding. However, governors do not visit the school frequently enough or engage with staff and pupils, so that they can see and understand for themselves how well the school is doing and hold senior leaders more accountable for the work of the school.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	101520
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	404765
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Cookson
Headteacher	Roger Roberts
Date of previous school inspection	26–27 January 2011
Telephone number	020 8451 0761
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