

Donnington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101520
Local Authority	Brent
Inspection number	355014
Inspection dates	26–27 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Martin Beale

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	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Cookson
Headteacher	Roger Roberts
Date of previous school inspection	12 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 16 lessons, seeing nine teachers at least once, and held meetings with staff, groups of pupils, and the Chair of the Governing Body. Informal discussions were also held with parents and carers as they arrived with their children at the start of the day. Inspectors observed the school's work, and scrutinised assessment information, pupils' books, records of pupils' progress and improvement plans. Inspectors analysed 58 parental questionnaires, 116 responses to the pupil survey and 15 responses to the staff questionnaire.

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

- The impact of the action taken by the school to improve achievement in mathematics.
- The effectiveness with which teachers use assessment to inform lesson planning and support the learning of all pupils.
- The extent to which pupils understand their targets and the steps they need to take for them to be achieved.
- How well the school supports the language development of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Information about the school

Most pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds in this average-sized school, with over a third being from either Black African or Black Caribbean heritages. The large majority speak English as an additional language. More than a third of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is much higher than average. The proportion of the pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well-above average. Their needs are mostly associated with learning difficulties related to literacy, and to speech and language. Staffing changes mean that the majority of classes in Years 1 to 6 are being taught by teachers new to the school this year. The school has received the Activemark award and has achieved Healthy Schools status. The school hosts a privately run playgroup, which is inspected separately.

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

2

Main findings

Donnington Primary is providing a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. It has some good features and has improved in several areas since the last inspection under the focused leadership of the headteacher, who is ably supported by the deputy headteacher in driving improvement forward. Parents are pleased with the school, particularly valuing the way their children are cared for and supported. This is one particular area of improvement since the last inspection and was reflected by one parent who wrote, 'The school provides a very welcoming and supportive environment for all children and clearly works hard to maintain and develop an inclusive and cohesive community.' This was typical of the views of others. Pupils of all backgrounds work and play happily together, which adds much to the happy atmosphere around school.

Children make satisfactory progress across the Nursery and Reception classes in a secure and welcoming environment. Progress had been good and improving since the last inspection across Years 1 to 6. Observations show it has slowed to a satisfactory rate this year, largely because of the considerable turnover of staff. However, it is on a path of improvement because of the action being taken. Pupils' attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6, but is lower in mathematics than in English because fewer pupils reach the higher levels. This is partly because some teaching does not consistently challenge the more-able pupils either through the teaching or the tasks that are set. Initiatives to close this gap have been introduced, such as providing weekly problem-solving activities. These are giving pupils the opportunity to refine and apply their skills, which they are doing with some success.

Teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory, with some lessons having good and outstanding features. The most effective engages pupils through expert questioning, which helps to draw out their ideas and check their understanding. However, not all teachers have perfected this skill. The focus on using talk to promote learning and language development is starting to bear fruit. Through their marking, teachers indicate what pupils have done well and how to do better, but they do not always give them time to read and respond to their comments and so improve their work to meet their targets. Pupils apply and develop their basic skills in different contexts, although not always systematically in the case of using their computer skills. In order to tackle this matter, the school is investing in new resources for use in classrooms.

Pupils make a major contribution to school life, such as when working as play leaders, acting as class representatives on the school council or supporting others as trained mediators. The pupils say that they feel safe in school, which is a view supported by their parents. They have confidence that any matters they bring to the attention of adults will be dealt with constructively. Pupils are known as individuals, which enables the school to focus its support sharply on meeting their needs. This is often enhanced when the school

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accesses the expertise of outside agencies to assist in the prompt identification and coordination of specialist support for pupils.

Staff and governors clearly understand the school's qualities and where they can bring about improvements. This is based on improved and rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures. The school's record is one of carefully planned improvement in recent years, as a result of the headteacher's relentless focus on driving up the quality of teaching. Evidence shows that the teaching of the new team is improving, even if it has not yet reached a consistently good level. On this basis, the school is judged to have good capacity for further improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in mathematics by ensuring that the more-able pupils are not held back and their learning is challenged consistently at all times.
- Bring greater consistency to the quality of teaching by:
 - ensuring that teachers engage pupils through more skilled and targeted questioning
 - extending the effectiveness of marking and feedback.
- Monitor carefully that pupils have planned opportunities to develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills across subjects and evaluate their subsequent achievement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Most pupils work hard in a range of situations. They show interest and enthusiasm when lessons are stimulating, although they can lose concentration when the work is not engaging. Pupils clearly enjoy their 'Big Solve' sessions in mathematics and are learning to apply their mathematical skills more effectively in a range of situations. The pupils' discussions with others and working as part of a team are key features supporting their more effective learning. This was seen to work particularly well as Year 5 pupils edited and redrafted their writing by sharing their ideas with a partner, and when Year 2 pupils sequenced the story of 'Little Red Riding Hood'.

Children enter the Nursery and Reception classes with skills broadly as expected for their age, but with many at an early stage of learning to speak English. School data, lesson observations and a scrutiny of the pupils' work show that the improving progress up to the end of the last academic year has flattened off slightly. Year 6 test results were average in 2010, but higher in English than mathematics. Pupils who have problems learning literacy and those with speech and language difficulties are supported appropriately through activities in lessons and specific withdrawal sessions. This enables them to make sound progress towards their individual targets. This also accounts for the satisfactory progress of pupils speaking English as an additional language.

Classrooms are calm and purposeful because the pupils understand and respect the teachers' consistently applied expectations. Behaviour is good around the school, although

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some pupils are concerned that it could be better at times, as some older pupils do not always show consideration towards others when playing outside. Pupils are interested in the diversity around them and enjoy learning about the customs and values of others. Through this, they develop a keen sense of similarities and differences between themselves and others.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and what they can do to adopt a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy the wide range of sporting activities made possible through the local sports partnership. Take-up of the school meals is high and most pupils make sensible choices because they understand what constitutes a balanced diet. Pupils are proud of their roles in school and take part in charity fundraising to help those who are less fortunate than themselves.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Within a pattern of satisfactory and improving teaching, there are strong features that move the pupils' learning forward well. For example, the pupils' thinking was challenged as they explored the validity of mathematical statements in an excellent Year 5 lesson. They were completely absorbed for long periods, working in groups and discussing and checking their hypotheses. Well-timed prompts from the teacher checked their understanding and posed further challenges. Skilled questioning drew out key points as the pupils presented their ideas to the class. However, this is not a consistent picture

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across the school, particularly when teachers do not involve them sufficiently in their learning.

Teachers focus sharply on developing basic skills. Writing is promoted effectively in subjects such as history and geography, while learning between subjects is linked where it enhances the needs of the pupils. Additional programmes are provided to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with particular talents. Good use is made of the school's proximity to London museums and other cultural venues to extend the pupils' experiences. Their learning is further enriched by the input from a wide range of visitors, including specialist sports coaches.

The close relationship with home means that appropriate members of staff have a good understanding of the circumstances of pupils and their families, using this to target guidance and support to meet individual needs. This is particularly effective in supporting potentially vulnerable pupils and their families and is enhanced by the school's close links with outside agencies. Thoughtful transition arrangements enable pupils to settle in quickly, and to move smoothly through the school and into the next stage of their learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The new team is pulling together in support of the headteacher's drive to break down barriers to learning so that pupils get the best possible start to their education. There is strong and shared commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and improving the quality of teaching. The variety of strategies to monitor performance gives senior leaders a clear picture of each teacher's qualities. Teachers are being successfully supported in developing their skills by working together to improve areas of their practice, or by having opportunities to observe and work alongside experts.

Governance is good. The work of the governing body is clearly focused on shaping the school's strategic direction and supporting its achievement. Governors also ensure that everyone is kept safe by carefully vetting all those who work in the school. Strong teamwork ensures that policies and procedures to safeguard the welfare of all pupils are implemented and their impact monitored.

Senior staff and governors have a clear understanding of the context within which the school operates. They have used this to plan a wide range of activities that are securing greater community cohesion within and beyond the school. The school's cohesiveness is an indication of its success in tackling any forms of discrimination. By carefully evaluating

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assessment and other data, the school is able to identify any emerging differences in the performance or participation of different groups of pupils and take effective action to close gaps.

The headteacher is strongly committed to partnership working by bringing in expertise not otherwise available to extend the opportunities provided for the pupils and to support their welfare. He has also committed the school to forging an ever- stronger partnership with home, by reaching out to all groups represented in the school. The weekly Parent and Carer Forum has helped to engage the increasing number of Somali families in their children's learning as well as in school life.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The provision in both classes is steadily improving and the children's attainment rising. Children respond with enjoyment to the learning environment and settle in quickly to the life of the school. This is aided for some by their experiences in the on-site playgroup. The environment is warm and welcoming. It both reflects and celebrates the children's different cultural backgrounds. Children are happy and polite, and are confident to approach an adult and ask for help where needed. They develop respectful relationships and are considerate towards each other at work and at play. Children enjoy their learning and their attainment is broadly average by the time they enter Year 1. ♦

The adults in both classes work closely as a team, sharing a common sense of purpose, and are sensitive to the children's needs. They work effectively to ensure that the children are kept safe at all times. They have also formed a close relationship with staff in the playgroup and with parents and carers. They provide a reasonable range of activities and resources to stimulate learning both inside and outdoors. However, they do not always

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use their observations of the children to assess their progress and plan activities to promote the next steps in their development. Sessions where the children learn the sounds letters make and how they might be combined are a valuable opportunity for children to tackle unfamiliar words. However, opportunities are missed for the children to apply these skills to develop their writing while participating in the activities prepared for them. Consequently, their attainment in writing is lower than in other areas by the end of Reception.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

A lower proportion of parents responded to the questionnaire than in most primary schools. The level of parental satisfaction is above average in response to almost all questions. The inspection evidence supports the positive views of parents and carers about how their children are helped to adopt a safe and healthy lifestyle. The inspection evidence shows that teaching is satisfactory, although parents suggest it is good. Inspection evidence largely does not support the views of a small number of parents who believe that the school does not meet their children's needs, provide sufficient information about their children's progress or manage behaviour well. Pupils feel they are prepared well for future, even if some parents do not. Inspectors investigated these concerns through an examination of documents, discussion with staff and pupils and by taking account of the large majority of parents' views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Donnington 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 58 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 240 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	60	23	40	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	38	66	20	34	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	32	55	21	36	5	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	43	25	43	4	7	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	27	47	28	48	3	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	36	32	55	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	36	35	60	2	3	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)	27	47	20	34	5	9	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	31	31	53	7	12	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	47	23	40	1	2	5	9
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	38	28	48	3	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	25	43	27	47	2	3	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	57	22	38	2	3	0	0

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 2009 to 31 August 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 2009/10 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.



28 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Donnington Primary School, London NW10 3TL

Thank you all very much for your friendliness and help when we visited your school recently, for making us feel welcome and for being so ready to share your thoughts with us. We had a chance to talk to quite a lot of you and we have told your teachers that you were helpful and polite. Donnington Primary School gives you a satisfactory and improving education. We agree with you that your teachers take good care of you and try hard to keep you safe. Your behaviour is good and we were impressed by the way you try to stay fit and healthy. You make a valuable contribution to the life of the school and take all of your responsibilities very seriously.

You make satisfactory progress during your time in school, learning the skills you need for the future. In many, but not all, lessons you are taught and learn well. Those of you who find learning more difficult also make satisfactory progress because of the care and support you receive. The youngest children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes and those of you new to learning English quickly develop a secure command of the language.

Everyone is trying hard to make the school even better. The three things in particular we have asked the teachers and other adults to do are:

- raise your levels of achievement in mathematics
- improve teaching so it has an even greater impact on your learning
- make sure that you have consistent opportunities to develop your computer skills.

You can play your part in helping the school to get even better by continuing to work hard. Well done for showing such pride in your school.

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale

Lead inspector

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