

# Dame Dorothy Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108776
<b>Local authority</b>	Sunderland
<b>Inspection number</b>	377815
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Ann Ashdown

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	193
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Christine Stafford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Iain Williamson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Dock Street Monkwearmouth Sunderland SR6 0EA
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 5537610
<b>Fax number</b>	0191 5537615
<b>Email address</b>	dame.dorothy.primary@schools.sunderland.gov.uk

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<b>Registered childcare provision</b>	St Peter's Day Nursery
<b>Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision</b>	50
<b>Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision</b>	May 2008

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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Ann Ashdown  
Peter Eeva

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 10 teachers teaching 13 lessons of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, they visited specialist sessions teaching the links between letters and sounds and listened to pupils read. Meetings and discussions were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and school staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, progress data, safeguarding information, and other documentation. They analysed 41 questionnaires from parents and carers and also those from pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

This is a below average-sized primary school. A well above average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average, as is that of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported by School Action is below average while that of pupils who have statements of special educational need is well below average. The school meets the government's current floor standard which sets out the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. It has gained Healthy School status. A well above average proportion of pupils joins and leaves the school other than at the usual time.

St Peter's Day Care Nursery is managed by the governing body and was inspected as a part of the school inspection. A Children's Centre shares the school site. Breakfast- and after-school clubs also form part of the school's extended provision.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because the curriculum, although good, is not fully developed to provide outstanding opportunities for learning, poor attendance slows the progress of some pupils and teaching is good, rather than outstanding. Nevertheless, the school continues to improve. It is led very well by the headteacher whose high expectations and relentless focus on improving teaching and learning are shared by governors and all staff.
- Children enter the Nursery with skills which are below those typical for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in developing literacy skills as a result of the high-quality phonics teaching they receive. They achieve well in Key Stages 1 and 2 so their attainment is broadly average when they leave Year 6.
- Teaching and learning are good. In the most effective lessons teachers ask very perceptive questions and pupils have many opportunities to assess their own and each other's work. In lessons where the pace of learning is slightly slower, questioning is less challenging and opportunities for self-assessment are fewer.
- Pupils' behaviour is typically good. They are polite and respectful to staff and to each other and kind to visitors. They, and their parents and carers, feel that the school is a safe place to be. Attendance is improving and is now average. However, poor attendance remains a barrier to learning for some pupils.
- High-quality marking of pupils' work and better tracking of their progress have brought about improvements in pupils' achievement since the last inspection. Good leadership of teaching and learning, effective performance management of staff and high-quality professional development are all contributing to the school's good and growing capacity to improve further.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
  - asking more open and complex questions to challenge pupils' thinking and extend their understanding
  - providing more opportunities in all classes for pupils to assess their own and each other's work
  - sharing good practice and extending the high-quality teaching of phonics across the school.
- Raise attendance further by working even more closely with parents and carers to ensure that they understand the importance of sending their children to school regularly and the negative impact of taking them away from school on holiday during term time.
- Develop the curriculum to give pupils even more relevant and exciting opportunities to use their basic skills, initiate their own enquiries and solve problems across a range of themes and topics.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils have good attitudes to learning. Most are keen to succeed and in lessons answer questions readily and concentrate on the task in hand. Older pupils were seen making particularly good progress in a mathematics lesson as they confidently added and subtracted decimal numbers whilst enjoying playing 'mental maths decimal bingo'. Parents and carers rightly feel that their children are making good progress and that the school helps their children to develop good basic skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics. Pupils' good progress was confirmed when inspectors listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 5 read. Attainment in reading is below average at the end of Year 2, but is broadly average by the time pupils leave the school. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress because they receive timely and sharply-focused extra help when this is needed from teachers and teaching assistants.

Children's skills when they enter the Nursery are often below average but they make good progress, particularly in language and personal development. Many children move seamlessly from the registered day-care provision into the Nursery class. All settle happily into school routines and quickly become confident learners. A stimulating environment, both indoors and out, and a good balance of teacher-led and child-initiated activities ensure that they enjoy learning. Children were seen to use their imagination, construction and teamwork skills to good effect as they built a castle from cardboard boxes in which their 'king' and 'queen' were going to live.

Pupils' good progress continues as they move through the school. Results in assessments and tests show an upward trend. Pupils' attainment, although a little lower in reading than other areas of learning in Year 2, is broadly average at the end of Year 6. Displays on walls

and work in pupils' books all confirm pupils' good achievement. The school's rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress shows that pupils are on track to reach their challenging targets this year and any gaps in the performance of different groups of pupils compared with all pupils nationally are rapidly narrowing.

## **Quality of teaching**

Teaching and learning are consistently good across the school. Most parents and carers feel that their children are taught well. In the very best lessons teaching is outstanding and pupils make rapid progress. In these lessons very perceptive questioning challenges pupils to think deeply about complex topics. Work is extremely well-matched to pupils' needs and there is an excellent balance of activities led by the teacher and opportunities for pupils to solve problems, find out things for themselves and follow their own lines of enquiry. In Year 1, pupils made excellent progress as they enthusiastically spoke and wrote about the things they had really enjoyed doing when they visited a local nature reserve. Pupils confidently described bug hunts, pond dipping and nature walks which had revealed treasures such as snails, spiders, tadpoles and a birds' nest. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are enabled to make the same good progress as other pupils as a result of effective teaching and support from well focused learning plans. In the majority of lessons the pace of learning, although good, is slightly slower because questions are not as open-ended, complex and challenging. Teachers' marking is of a high quality and pupils have opportunities to respond to the comments teachers make. They are given clear pointers for improvement which accelerates their progress. In some classes, pupils are given good opportunities to assess their own and each other's work but this is not yet consistent across the school. Examples of high-quality phonics teaching were evident in some classes but the school has rightly identified that this good practice is not yet fully shared and this remains an area for improvement.

Teachers implement the planned curriculum well and use this to promote pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, in a thought-provoking assembly pupils reflected in a very mature way on the meaning of 'perseverance' and how this was important for them in their school work, in sport and at home. In lessons, pupils are successfully encouraged to work in pairs and teams to share and discuss their ideas and information. Pupils are given good opportunities to explore other cultures and religions, particularly through their work in art and music.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils typically behave well both in classrooms and around the school. Most parents and carers say that their children feel safe at school and that behaviour is of a good standard. Pupils have a mature attitude to learning and in lessons are keen to do their best. They clearly understand that there are different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying, but feel that if any incidents occurred in school they would be dealt with fairly and firmly. Consequently, pupils say they feel safe. They have a sensible attitude to risk-taking and are well-informed about topics such as water and fire safety. Parents and carers speak warmly of the support the school gives, particularly to children who join the school part-way through their education, to those who speak English as an additional language and to those whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. Pupils and their parents and carers are very appreciative of the good care and interesting activities provided by the breakfast- and after-school clubs. The school has made very effective efforts to improve attendance and it is now average. However, learning time is still lost when pupils go on holiday during term time and

the school recognises the need to work even more closely with parents and carers to emphasise the importance, wherever possible, of ensuring that children do not miss lessons.

## **Leadership and management**

Members of the governing body and leaders and managers at all levels have high expectations of the pupils at Dame Dorothy Primary and the school has good capacity to improve further. The school has improved since the last inspection and all staff, under the very skilful and determined leadership of the headteacher, have a clear vision for further improvement. Better tracking of pupils' progress and much improved systems for marking pupils' work are both helping to accelerate progress and raise attainment. Good leadership of teaching and performance management ensures that lessons are carefully monitored, and staff receive good-quality professional development which helps them to improve. However, the school is not complacent and recognises the need to share good practice even further, especially in the teaching of phonics. Members of the governing body know the school well and are fully involved in its strategic development and in monitoring its work. All pupils have good equal opportunities to succeed and consequently all groups of pupils make equally good progress. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Arrangements for safeguarding are fully in place and meet requirements. Staff are well-trained and highly aware of child protection and risk assessment issues.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets pupils' needs well. It has many strengths. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through an exciting range of lessons, trips and visits both within the school grounds and further afield. Year 5 pupils spoke with huge enthusiasm about a recent visit to a National Trust property where they had visited a chapel and explored the grounds, all of which provided an excellent stimulus for their descriptive writing. Younger children particularly benefit from a curriculum enriched by access to a well-designed, beautifully-maintained learning environment within the school grounds which includes a pond area, wildlife garden, maze, willow arch and various play areas. The curriculum is reviewed regularly and is a school focus for further improvement. It has yet to be fully developed in order to provide even more relevant and exciting learning for pupils and to give them greater opportunities to practise their basic skills, initiate their own enquiries and learn independently.

## The Early Years Foundation Stage delivered in the registered childcare provision

- Babies and children settle very well into the welcoming and stimulating environment the provision provides. They quickly become happy and confident, feel safe and relate very well to the key workers who care for them. All of their welfare needs are fully met.
- Children make good progress in all areas of their learning. Their personal, social and language skills are often below those typical for their age when they enter the provision and they make particularly good progress in making up ground in these areas. Detailed and well-presented books illustrating children’s ‘learning journeys’ are testament to the good progress they make.
- The nursery manager provides enthusiastic, determined and sensitive leadership. Staff are well-deployed and feel that their views are valued. Consequently, morale is high. They track children’s progress carefully and work is then well-planned to match their learning needs. Staff are very knowledgeable and acutely aware of the needs of particular groups of children. For example, those children who speak English as an additional language are given timely extra help to enable them to settle into the provision and acquire new language skills.
- Well-equipped learning areas, both indoors and out, provide babies and children with varied and interesting opportunities to learn. Children were equally enthusiastic about making jam tarts, building a railway track, listening to their favourite songs from ‘The Sound of Music’ or enjoying milk and bananas at snack time.
- Children have good opportunities to mix and play with those older than them and most make a seamless transition from St Peter’s day-care into the school’s Nursery class. Parents and carers rightly speak highly of the good care the provision provides. They feel welcome in school and well-informed about their children’s progress.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage of the registered childcare provision, inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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 for the registered provision	2



## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add up exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



17 May 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Dame Dorothy Primary School, Sunderland, SR6 0EA**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspection team when we inspected your school this week. A particular 'thank you' goes to those of you who read aloud to us and shared your views with us by filling in the questionnaires and telling us so much about your school. Please thank your parents and carers who also filled in the questionnaires.

This is what we have said about your school in our report.

- Yours is a good school and the youngest children get a good start to their education in the day-care nursery.
- Your behaviour is good and we agree with your view that you are kept safe in school.
- Your achievement is good because you make good progress and attain average standards.
- We agree with your view that the teaching you receive is good.
- The way your school is led and managed and the curriculum you follow are good.

This is what we have asked your school to do to help it improve.

- Make your lessons even better by asking your teachers to:
  - ask you questions which make you think hard
  - give you more opportunities to assess your own and each other's work
  - share their good ideas for teaching phonics.
- Improve your attendance by making sure that you and your parents and carers understand how important it is that you come to school regularly.
- Give you even more interesting and exciting topics to study which allow you to use your basic skills, start your own enquiries and solve problems.

You can help your school to become even better by coming to school regularly and working with your teachers to achieve the best you can.

Yours sincerely

Ann Ashdown  
Lead inspector

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