

# Dundale Primary School and Nursery

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique reference number</b>	117286
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379388
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 June 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Ronald Hall

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

---

<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>	224
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steve Keil
<b>Headteacher</b>	Allan Lowe
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 December 2008
<b>School address</b>	Silk Mill Way Tring HP23 5DJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01442 822421
<b>Fax number</b>	01442 891925
<b>Email address</b>	admin@dundale.herts.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	21–22 June 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	379388



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012



## Introduction

Inspection team

Ronald Hall

Additional Inspector

Bimla Thakur

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors spent over six and a half hours observing teaching and visited 15 lessons. In all, 10 teachers were observed teaching. In addition, inspectors held discussions with pupils, members of the governing body and talked to senior leaders. Inspectors heard pupils read in both Year 2 and Year 6. The team took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school improvement plan, school policies and teachers' planning. Questionnaires from 89 parents and carers and those from pupils and members of staff were analysed.

## Information about the school

The majority of pupils in this average-sized primary school come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is above average. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision for children in Nursery and Reception. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and a number of the senior leadership team were appointed in September 2011. The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

**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

- Dundale is a good school that has sustained its caring community ethos and improved pupils’ achievement since the previous inspection. It is not yet an outstanding school because attainment is not yet consistently above average, particularly in writing.
- Teaching is good, and often of high quality. Typically, teachers’ questioning challenges pupils to reflect, and extend their understanding and breadth of vocabulary. During group work, pupils’ eagerly share ideas and collaborate exceptionally well. Pupils’ independent learning, self-evaluation and presentational skills are developing well. Extended writing skills are improving but pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to create extended pieces of writing across the curriculum.
- Pupils’ attainment is on track to be above average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Pupils’ speaking and listening skills, especially their vocabulary, are well advanced. Pupils’ skills and enthusiasm for reading are systematically developed throughout the school. All pupils feel valued and make good progress from differing starting points.
- This is an inclusive school where increasingly practical learning provides first-hand experiences and strongly promotes pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils feel safe, behave well and their attitudes to learning and relationships are extremely positive. Pupils greatly enjoy coming to school, demonstrated by their above average attendance, which also reflects excellent relationships between home and school.
- The new headteacher is well supported by his new senior leadership team and the governing body. Monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous, the professional development of staff is focused and staff skills are shared productively. These features reflect good leadership and management and the determined commitment to school improvement, as well as being closely linked

**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

to performance management across the school. Staff expertise has already broadened and enriched the curriculum, although not all teachers are consistently being creative and imaginative in their choice of curriculum content to enthuse pupils' learning.

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

- Raise attainment in writing by building on existing strengths and by systematically providing opportunities for pupils to create pieces of extended writing across the whole curriculum.
- Raise the percentage of outstanding teaching through more consistent use of teachers' creative and imaginative choice of curriculum content to enthuse pupils' learning.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Data demonstrate that pupils are on track to reach above average attainment by the end of Year 6 and pupils across the school all make good progress from their starting points. More-able pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs all make good progress in lessons because of the additional individual support they receive from staff. Often, such individual support for pupils who find learning difficult, especially in reading, enables them to make accelerated progress and bridge attainment gaps with other pupils. Inspection findings show that parents', carers' and pupils' positive views about achievement are well founded.

Attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage for the current year group was in line with age-expected levels but this varies year on year. Children derive great pleasure from learning together and make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. Children are on track to leave the Early Years Foundation Stage a little above age-expected levels, especially in developing their communication, language and literacy skills.

Good and often better progress continues in Years 1 and 2, where pupils' willingness to discuss and explain their ideas in response to challenging teaching rapidly extends their understanding of words and range of vocabulary. As a result, by the end of Year 2, there are increasing numbers of pupils working at higher levels than expected nationally. Pupils have an impressive ability to explain their thinking when writing and solving mathematical problems. Good progress continues through Years 3 to 6 as teaching successfully builds upon pupils' eagerness to learn in pairs or in groups. For example, pupils were keen to explain to each other how they added adjectival phrases to enrich their writing. As a consequence, while overall attainment is on track to be above average in English and mathematics, pupils' speaking and

**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

listening skills and their ability to reflect are even better developed. At times though, the richness of their expressive writing is clouded by underdeveloped opportunities to create extended pieces of writing across the whole curriculum.

Examination of teachers' assessments, listening to pupils' reading and talking with them about their reading, indicate above average reading skills at the end of Years 2 and 6 and reflect good progress in reading. In addition, observations of group reading in lessons showed that, in response to well-focused teaching, an increasing number of children in Reception and in Years 1 and 2 confidently blend letter sounds when tackling new words and are becoming competent readers. Pupils' skills and enjoyment in reading continue to be successfully fostered through Years 3 to 6 and enhance their successful learning across the range of subjects.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teaching is good and increasingly outstanding. Parents and carers confirm that their children are taught well. In all lessons, there are strong elements that help pupils to make good progress. In the large majority of cases, teachers set clear objectives and sessions are well managed. Pupils experience a good mix of listening to the teacher, responding to questions and opportunities to discuss their work among themselves. This experience, along with good strategies to manage pupils' behaviour, means that pupils are attentive and display positive attitudes to learning. For example, in an outstanding Year 4 mathematics lesson, the teacher facilitated learning as pupils stretched themselves to find increasingly wider ways of representing probability. They concentrated very well, responded to the challenges they had been set then fired these back to the teacher with even greater challenges. The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is good and the drive to improve reading skills has resulted in marked improvements in both Key Stages 1 and 2.

The way teachers make thorough use of assessment to check pupils' progress has improved markedly since the previous inspection. As parents and carers unanimously observed, every pupil is known as an individual. This is especially so in the well-focused support and guidance provided for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Although teaching is good overall, there are aspects of the curriculum that have still to become embedded in day-to-day practice. Not all teachers are consistently making creative and imaginative choices in curriculum content, in order to facilitate greater learning and enthusiasm by pupils. This is because some are still a little too formal and didactic in their approach. The variety of activities and the opportunities for pupils to make their own, well-defined choices in the best lessons were outstanding. When implemented with this enthusiasm, this approach provides effective opportunities for pupils' all-round development.

Throughout the school, there are very positive relationships between staff and pupils that contribute to the supportive ethos for study. As a result, the atmosphere for learning created by the whole staff is positive and caring. The impact of the school's positive support, guidance and care is evident in the pupils' good standards of behaviour and social development. Pupils whose circumstances make them

**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

potentially vulnerable are very well supported and the school works effectively in partnership with a wide range of agencies to meet their needs. Staff, often aided by parents, carers and visitors, successfully promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils' behaviour and safety are good and are sustained by very good relationships and diligent staff supervision. Pupils talk knowledgeably about bullying, for example its deliberate nature and the various kinds of bullying that can occur, such as verbal and physical abuse and cyber-bullying. Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying at this school, but say that behaviour is better now than at times in the past. Although some parents and carers expressed concerns about behaviour, observations of lessons and school records showed that learning is often enriched by excellent attitudes and behaviour. This is based on good behaviour management by staff resulting in lessons that are largely free from any disruption.

Parents, carers and their children agree that pupils are very safe at school, as exemplified by pupils' clear comments on how to stay safe outside of school. One parent commented, reflecting most of the views expressed, 'This is an exceptional school with a fabulous, dedicated, passionate and caring team of staff.' Pupils are very polite and their enthusiasm in sharing ideas with their 'talk partners' and when working in groups gives a powerful impetus to their learning and progress. Pupils enjoy a variety of responsibilities out of class, for example, as lunchtime helpers and peer mediators. Staff work very closely with parents and carers who, in turn, give full support to the work of the school. Pupils are confident that adults will sort out any problems they may have.

### **Leadership and management**

The new headteacher, well supported by the senior leadership team and the governing body, deploys the increased breadth of staff skills available within the school to sustain a very effective drive and ambition for continued improvement. In addition, by inducting and developing new staff effectively senior leaders have improved all aspects of the school and ensured its good capacity to improve further. Performance management is a key factor in raising standards as the schools uses this effectively to both enhance the school and individual staff. This is seen in the good, and at times outstanding, progress made by pupils, which also illustrates the school's diligent elimination of discrimination and successful promotion of equality of opportunity. Effective self-evaluation is informed by regular monitoring of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' work and progress. Strengths and areas to develop have been accurately identified and, for example, the quality of pupils' English and problem-solving skills are noticeably improving.

Close links with other schools, outstanding links with the local children's centre and excellent relationships with parents and carers are also extending the learning opportunities for pupils. The use of the high school facilities, specialist teachers and

**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

wider community groups, provide a wide range of enhancements which ensures the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils effectively. As a result, activities such as developing global awareness, including opportunities to study other cultures, have enriched the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Members of the governing body are fully involved in the school and they fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. For example, responsibilities for safeguarding are secure because they ensure staff are vetted, risks assessed and pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are supported effectively.



## 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 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.**



25 June 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Dundale Primary School and Nursery, Tring HP23 5DJ**

I am writing to thank you all for making us so welcome when we came to your school recently. We did enjoy our visit. Yours is a good school, and we agree with what you told us, and included in your questionnaires – it is a really fun and happy place to learn. Here are some of the things we found about your school.

- The school looks after you extremely well and you all make good progress in your learning.
- You all make a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- You behave really well, get along with each other and feel very safe in school. We were particularly impressed by the way you talked your learning through with each other.
- You all have very good ideas on how to make things better.
- You find lessons interesting and really enjoy school.
- The headteacher and staff manage the school well.

Even in good schools, there are some things that could be better. We have asked the teachers to make sure that they all make their lessons as exciting as the best lessons, and set you work that uses imaginative and creative ideas to enthuse you in your learning. We have also asked your teachers to make sure that you have greater opportunities to create extended pieces of writing across the whole curriculum. You can all help by continuing to listen carefully and take note of what the teachers say so that you can all make the best possible progress in your learning.

Yours sincerely

Ronald Hall  
Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**