

# Aycliffe Drive Primary School

Aycliffe Drive, Hemel Hempstead, HP2 6LJ

**Inspection dates** 26–27 September 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The vast majority of pupils make good progress in all year groups and achieve well in most subjects.
- Pupils read successfully and standards in literacy and numeracy are significantly above average by Year 6.
- Pupils in the Nursery and Reception make good progress academically and personally.
- Teaching and learning are good across the school. Teachers have high expectations and deliver lessons which are interesting and help pupils learn well.
- Pupils enjoy school and know how to keep safe. Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are proud of their school and have outstanding attitudes to learning.
- The headteacher has high expectations of all pupils and staff. The strong team of leaders, managers and governors are successful in continuing improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The school has excellent relationships with parents and carers. They overwhelmingly feel happy to engage with the school about the academic and personal development of their children.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small number of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not always achieve as well as other groups of pupils.
- School development priorities do not focus sufficiently on the progress made by all groups of pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons, of which four were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team made a number of short visits to lessons as part of themed learning-walks.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, three members of the governing body, which included the chair and vice-chair, and school staff, including middle and senior leaders. A telephone discussion was held between the lead inspector and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors analysed 10 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View) during the inspection and also 123 responses to a parental questionnaire issued by the school prior to the inspection.
- They observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents, including the monitoring of the quality of teaching, performance management documentation, minutes of governors' meetings, records relating to attendance, behaviour, safety and bullying, and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors also analysed samples of pupils' work.

## Inspection team

Richard Sutton, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Jackie Cousins	Additional inspector
Gillian Walley	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is average in size for a primary school. The number of pupils on roll has been stable for a number of years.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average, as are the proportions supported through school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs.
- About a fifth of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, which is below average, and the proportion of pupils identified as speaking English as an additional language is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- There is a pre-school that is not managed by the school's governing body. This is subject to a separate inspection.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- By July 2013, improve the achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs so that it consistently meets the high standards achieved by all other groups of pupils in all year groups by:
  - ensuring that teaching rigorously incorporates specific learning objectives which better meet the needs of all this group of pupils
  - making sure these pupils are effectively involved in discussing and identifying how successfully they have met their personal learning targets at least once a week.
- By January 2013, improve leadership and management so that strategic planning has a precise, measurable and time-related impact on the achievement of all groups of pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- When pupils join the school, overall attainment is below age related expectations. Pupils make good progress in the Nursery and this continues into Reception. Consequently, pupils begin Year 1 with attainment that is broadly average.
- The large majority of pupils, including those in receipt of the pupil premium, those speaking English as an additional language and those from ethnic minority groups, continue to make good progress in all year groups across most subjects as a result of good teaching, high levels of challenge and an ethos where pupils are motivated and encouraged to achieve their very best.
- As a result of consistently good rates of progress for the majority of pupils, attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 has been significantly above average for a number of years, including the last validated data in 2011. This data also shows that the proportions of pupils meeting and exceeding expected progress in English and mathematics are above national figures.
- Almost all pupils develop their literacy and numeracy skills at a good pace and apply these skills well across the whole curriculum. In discussions with inspectors, pupils were very clear that their favourite subjects were literacy and numeracy.
- Pupils enjoy the many opportunities they are given to read and they do so with confidence. Those who find reading challenging are able to use their knowledge of the sounds that letters make to work out words.
- Achievement is not outstanding because, occasionally, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not make the same good rates of progress in Years 1 to 4 that all other pupils do. This is a result of teaching which is not fully addressing the specific needs of this group of pupils, for example, in speech, language and communication. Progress for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs accelerates in Years 5 and 6.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The overall quality of teaching over time is good and so pupils achieve well. Relationships are positive and teachers create a climate for learning which enables pupils to develop good levels of resilience and independence. For example, in a Year 6 lesson pupils demonstrated a high level of independent thinking skills in order to analyse a writer's technique.
- In the best lessons, teachers ensure that all pupils learn exceptionally well and at a good pace because they plan activities which are specifically matched to individual pupils' needs. In a Nursery lesson, all pupils achieved well and were able to demonstrate good progress in reading and counting as a result of good staff guidance which was tailored to individuals.
- The effective use of questioning enables pupils to extend their thinking and provides a good level of challenge which pupils find motivating. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson pupils responded well to how they were expected to think for themselves and find alternative strategies to solve mathematical problems through probing questions from the teacher.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and this supports the effective marking, feedback and assessment given to pupils. Pupils respond very well to this and they act upon the advice

received in order to improve their work further. Much of the marking analysed during the inspection had had a positive impact on achievement although this was not always consistent.

- Occasionally, pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs do not regularly discuss their personal learning targets and help to find evidence which shows that they have successfully met them. This means that they are not totally clear about what they have done well and can do to improve their work.
- Teaching assistants work closely with teachers in planning lessons and in the large majority of lessons observed they made a good contribution to the learning of individuals and small groups. In a small group numeracy session, the teaching assistant skilfully enabled the pupils to consolidate their prior mathematical learning very well.
- Sometimes teaching is less successful when teachers take too long to explain the work. This results in lost learning time. It is also less successful when learning objectives are too broad and so they do not fully match the needs of all the different groups of pupils in the class, especially some disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school at break times is exemplary. Pupils conduct themselves to an extremely high standard and they have excellent relationships with staff and each other, showing mutual respect and courtesy at all times.
  - Attitudes to learning are always positive and pupils are highly motivated to succeed. They enjoy attending school, as exemplified by the school's improving attendance figures, which are now above average.
  - The outstanding behaviour of pupils makes a significant and sustained contribution to the highly positive learning environment and as such plays a key role in enabling them to achieve well.
  - Pupils feel safe at school. They were able to explain to inspectors their clear understanding of safety issues, including e-safety, appropriate to their age and maturity.
  - Pupils are confident that, on the rare occasions when bullying takes place, their teachers deal with this quickly and effectively. Pupils understand the various forms of bullying and actively engage in positions of responsibility which enable them to foster positive relationships across year groups. Parents agree that bullying is rare.
  - Teachers use the school rewards system consistently and to good effect and pupils value this greatly. Inspectors observed pupils very proudly receiving rewards in the form of different coloured house points and gold wrist bands during the inspection.
  - The school has appropriate sanctions to address poor behaviour. It is significant that inspectors did not observe any circumstances where such sanctions were needed. School records confirm that such events are rare.
  - Parents are unreservedly positive about the behaviour of pupils at the school. One parent referred to pupils at the school as 'polite, friendly and well mannered'. Inspectors agree that
-

this is the case.

## **The leadership and management are good**

- The high expectations of the headteacher and the relentless focus on continually improving achievement results in staff, pupils, parents and carers all being committed to a common vision and ambition for the school.
  - The headteacher, ably supported by her leadership team and group of middle leaders, has put in place effective systems to develop teaching further and improve achievement. For example, all staff have personal development profiles which are linked to the performance management process. These act as a useful tool for mutual support through coaching and paired lesson observations.
  - Improvement plans are developed from accurate and robust self-evaluation. Although these plans identify the most important areas to develop they do not contain sufficient information on how the achievement of all groups of pupils will be monitored and evaluated.
  - Parents, carers and pupils really value the school's work. In the school questionnaire distributed to parents and carers prior to the inspection, virtually everyone who made a return stated that they would recommend the school to other parents.
  - The curriculum is broad, balanced, exciting and stimulating for pupils. It successfully enables the large majority to achieve significantly higher than average attainment in English and mathematics and is enriched and enhanced by a wide and diverse range of educational visits, theme days and the 'forest classroom'.
  - The curriculum promotes pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. Opportunities for reflection were observed by inspectors in several lessons. In Year 3, pupils learn about how to make a turban when studying the Sikh religion and in Year 4 pupils explore the cultural differences of Japan and the United Kingdom.
  - Leaders and managers have a strong capacity to maintain and improve the quality of education. For instance, in recent years the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels of attainment in English and mathematics has increased steadily.
  - The local authority has provided an appropriate level of support and challenge to the school.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - holds the school to account effectively and this includes scrutiny of the performance management process and its links to staff pay progression
    - ensures that financial resources are used effectively and efficiently. In particular, governors have overseen the spending of the pupil premium to good effect.
-

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	117335
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	403318

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>	328
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Pam Gent
<b>Headteacher</b>	Maria Green
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 April 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	01442 404008
<b>Fax number</b>	01442 404008
<b>Email address</b>	head@aycliffedrive.herts.sch.uk



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', 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).



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 and as part of the inspection.

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

