

Darell Primary School

Darell Road, Richmond upon Thames, TW9 4LQ

Inspection dates

11–12 December 2012

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.

- The school has improved rapidly in recent times. Its leaders, governors and staff have worked together with determination to make sure the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement is now good.
- Pupils achieve well. From generally low starting points for their age when they join the school, they make good progress to reach average levels of attainment by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good and ensures that pupils learn new facts and skills quickly. Teachers plan work at the right levels of difficulty for most pupils. Together with interesting visits, this work supports pupils' positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe from harm. Older pupils enjoy supporting the younger ones by hearing them read and helping at break times. Attendance rates are improving.
- Senior leaders regularly check teaching. They set targets for development and provide effective coaching and training for staff to sustain improvements. Expectations of the quality of teaching and learning have been raised, and staffing issues have been dealt with efficiently.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some recently appointed teachers in charge of subjects are not fully involved in checking the quality of teaching and pupils' learning.
- Sometimes during whole-class teaching, the work set for pupils is either too hard or too easy for pupils.
- Although pupils write regularly and in a variety of styles in English lessons, opportunities for writing in other subjects are not systematic enough to raise attainment further in writing.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes and undertook some joint observations with senior leaders. They visited 28 lessons.
- Inspectors held discussions with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body and with two representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to groups of pupils reading. They looked at work in pupils’ books and tracking data showing pupils’ attainment and progress.
- The school website, development plans and records relating to safeguarding pupils were also seen.
- The inspectors took account of 45 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 32 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Madeleine Gerard, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector inspector
Peter Hare	Additional Inspector inspector
Teresa Keily	Additional Inspector inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Darell Primary School is a slightly larger than average sized primary school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two part-time Nursery classes and two Reception classes.
- More pupils than the national average speak English as an additional language. Few are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average and formed from a variety of different ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through school action is close to the national average. A slightly larger than average proportion are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. Most of these pupils have speech, language and communication needs or behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.
- The school has specialist resource provision for up to eight pupils aged from three to seven with moderate or severe learning difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided by the government for pupils looked after by the local authority or known to be eligible for free school meals) is slightly above the national average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- More pupils join and leave the school part-way through their primary education than normal.
- The breakfast and after-school clubs are not managed by the school and are therefore not part of this inspection.
- The school provides alternative provision for a few pupils with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2011. There has been a high number of recent staff changes.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - making sure the work set in lessons is not too hard or too easy for pupils during whole-class teaching
 - making sure teachers in charge of subjects check the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects so as to ensure that teaching contributes to improving pupils' achievement.
- Over the current academic year, enable pupils to make even swifter gains in their writing by encouraging them to practise their writing regularly across a range of subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- From relatively low starting points pupils make good progress to reach broadly average attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Increasing proportions of pupils reach above average standards, particularly in mathematics. Achievement in writing is improving although in some classes in Key Stages 1 and 2 it is not as consistently good as it could be.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes confidently select tasks for themselves from the wide variety of activities teachers plan for them in the indoor and outdoor spaces. The proportion of children attaining above average levels by the end of the Reception Year is increasing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those in the specialist resource provision and those who benefit from alternative provision, learn well and make good progress as a result of the support they receive.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium are well supported by the extra funding used to boost their achievement in literacy and numeracy. As a result, the gap is closing between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally and they achieve better than similar pupils nationally, particularly in mathematics.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds reach standards that are often above those achieved by similar pupils nationally.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress in catching up with other pupils nationally.
- Pupils who join the school part-way through their primary education settle well because pupils are friendly and make them feel welcome.
- These strengths show the school successfully promotes equality and tackles discrimination.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers' planning ensures that during whole-class teaching, pupils practise new skills which build their confidence in tackling activities during independent work. For example, pupils in a mathematics lesson in Key Stage 1 enthusiastically used different strategies to add two numbers together. They enjoyed the challenge of finding the answer as quickly as possible. They listened very carefully as the teacher explained how to use computers to practise doing calculations on their own, and set to work swiftly to complete as many sums as possible within the time the teacher gave them.
- Teachers check the progress pupils make and use the information to set work that is often well matched to pupils' abilities and to identify pupils who need additional support. However, the pace of learning is sometimes reduced when all pupils are expected to do similar work during whole-class teaching. At such times, work is either too difficult or too easy to ensure that pupils of different abilities make the best possible progress.
- Reading is promoted well through regular reading sessions. Parent and carer volunteers often hear pupils reading aloud to develop the pupils' confidence. Writing at length each week and regular opportunities for pupils to use mathematics facts that they have learned-by-heart underpin the pupils' good achievement in basic skills.
- Teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage serve as good role models so that children develop their social skills quickly. Home visits by staff before children join the school help them to settle well and enjoy their time at school. Activities are well planned to capture children's interest. For example, when working in the in the nursery outdoor area, children were engrossed in making a ramp for a car. They discussed sensibly together how to improve the ramp and listened attentively to the adult's questions in order to solve problems for themselves.

- Teachers' comments when they mark work are encouraging and give clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their literacy and numeracy skills in order to move up to the next level of attainment. Teachers often set additional tasks and ask questions to help pupils develop their understanding further. In a few classes, teachers do not always check that pupils routinely respond to their written comments and suggestions.
- Teachers in all classes, including in the specialist resourced unit, plan a good variety of visits to local places of interest, including museums and historical sites, which bring the curriculum to life and promote pupils' enjoyment of their learning. In Years 4 and 6, pupils enjoy a short residential trip to an activity centre.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs benefit from individualised support carefully tailored to their needs by staff and specialist therapists. Additional sessions outside lessons for selected pupils, including those who join the school part-way through their primary education, help them develop literacy, numeracy and social skills and catch up quickly.
- Children and pupils in the specialist resource provision receive individualised support from trained additional staff and specialist therapists. These staff provide the help and guidance needed for pupils to develop both their personal and academic skills.
- Additional staff support pupils at the very early stages of learning English to help them increase their proficiency in spoken English, and succeed in other subjects.
- The school uses pupil premium funding to organise extra literacy and numeracy classes, and additional small-group sessions to boost the learning of eligible pupils. The school also ensures that these funds are used to benefit entitled pupils through equal access to clubs and visits.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils from diverse backgrounds get on well together because the school fosters good relations. Their behaviour and attitudes make a good contribution to learning in lessons. Sometimes pupils need reminders from staff about the behaviour that is expected, for example when moving around the school.
- Through support from additional adults, nurture groups and, for a very few selected pupils, attending alternative provision, pupils with behaviour, social and emotional development build up effective skills to help them develop self-confidence and take responsibility for moderating their own behaviour.
- Pupils are confident that incidents of bullying are rare. They say there is some name-calling and that staff deal with this effectively. Anti-bullying events, guidance about safe practices when using computers, and road safety training help them develop an awareness of unsafe situations and how to keep themselves safe from harm.
- The school has tackled previously low attendance successfully so that it is improving. Clear guidance and discussions with parents and carers ensure the whole school community is clear about the importance of attending school regularly.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has led a determined campaign to bring about lasting improvements since the previous inspection and to raise pupils' academic achievement. Senior leaders check the quality of teaching and other aspects of the school's work very regularly. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas requiring improvement. Regular professional development for staff has helped the school's leaders and governors improve the school's overall effectiveness so that it is good.
- Recently appointed teachers in charge of subjects are not fully involved in checking teaching in their subjects to raise the quality and impact further.
- Leaders and governors have dealt quickly with staffing and performance issues. Through

wanting staff to give of their best, setting clear targets for development and providing additional training and coaching, leaders have successfully improved the quality of what was weaker teaching.

- The performance of staff is managed carefully so that promotion and salary increases are evaluated against pupils' progress and the quality of teaching.
 - Leaders have worked with staff to improve the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers follow a consistent approach to teaching letters and the sounds they make so that pupils develop their reading skills quickly as they move up through the classes, and enjoy reading. Skills in mathematics, including learning multiplication tables so that pupils can work things out quickly in their heads, are taught consistently well through the school.
 - Pupils are encouraged to write regularly and at length in a variety of styles in English lessons. However in other subjects, the planning of writing tasks is more variable and does not always ensure pupils practise their writing skills to help further their achievement.
 - Activities that support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are carefully checked to make sure these aspects of pupils' learning are promoted well. Pupils are keen to contribute to the life of the school, for example as 'eco warriors' and by making posters encouraging the whole school community to save energy by turning off lights when they are not needed. Thought-provoking projects, for example exploring how to be a good friend and learning about a wide variety of cultures and faiths, foster pupils' understanding of cultural diversity in the school and local area.
 - The very wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs, including knitting, choir, Arabic and art clubs, are popular and successfully promote social skills and pupils' wider interests.
 - The school's leaders have established close links with other local schools in order to support staff training and development.
 - The school effectively involves parents and carers in its work. Workshops for parents and carers, for example on how mathematics is taught at the school and on the teaching of letters and the sounds they make, support them in helping their children's learning at home.
 - The local authority provides good support for the school. Appropriate advice and guidance have been effective in helping the school to improve and to bring about the good overall effectiveness of its work since the previous inspection. It has also played a key role in improving the school's resources through a recent programme of building work.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body works closely with the school's leaders with a shared determination to drive improvements and promote ambition. Governors make sure they receive the professional training they need to become even more effective. They meet regularly to measure the school's progress against targets for development. They review the quality of teaching and the information that the school gathers about pupils' progress and identify further priorities. They know how well the school is performing compared with other similar schools and are confident in challenging the school to improve further.
 - Governors are clear about their role in performance management and are taking steps to ensure that teaching quality and pupils' achievement are reflected in the promotion and salary progression of staff. They know how the school uses additional funding to support pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium. They make a point of checking that the funding is used to benefit the pupils it is designed to support. Through examination of the information the school gathers on the progress these pupils make, governors evaluate the impact of this additional funding on closing the gaps between these pupils and all pupils nationally. Statutory duties are met including those relating to safeguarding pupils. The school site is secure and well maintained.
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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	102884
Local authority	Richmond upon Thames
Inspection number	400576

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	284
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Spencer
Headteacher	Laura Whateley
Date of previous school inspection	24–25 September 2009
Telephone number	020 8876 6721
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