

Dallington Church of England Primary School

East Street, Heathfield, East Sussex, TN21 9NH

Inspection dates 23–24 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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

- Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is consistently above average in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is typically good which means that pupils achieve well. Pupils who find learning difficult make good progress because they receive effective care and support.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They say the school cares for them well. Their enjoyment of school is shown in their above average attendance.
- The headteacher is an ambitious and effective leader. She is well supported by senior leaders. Together, they have successfully improved the quality of teaching, the achievement of pupils and the curriculum over time.
- The governing body supports the school's drive for improvement effectively and challenges the school about its performance.
- Children make good strides in their personal development and in their learning in this caring school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not outstanding because teachers do not always have high enough expectations and ensure learning moves on at a fast rate in lessons. Marking does not always give clear next steps to help pupils with their learning and pupils are not given enough time to reflect on marking in lessons.
- Pupils' rates of progress are not always consistent in Key Stage 1, especially boys' writing and for some of the more able pupils across the school.
- Subject leaders are not yet skilled enough in monitoring their subject areas in pinpointing areas for further improvement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 11 lessons, all of which were conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, other staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor.
- The inspector held discussions with pupils, heard others read and met a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents including plans for improvement, information on pupils' progress, the school's monitoring information, safeguarding and attendance documents, governing body documentation and school policies.
- There were 30 responses to Ofsted's on-line questionnaire (Parent View) which were taken account of during the inspection.
- The inspector also considered the 16 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Sheila Browning, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- With the exception of the Reception Year, all are mixed-age classes.
- There have been some significant staff changes since the previous inspection, and changes in the membership of the governing body. Last year the headteacher was seconded to support another school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. (Pupil premium is an additional funding given to schools for pupils who are known to be eligible for free-school meals, those who are looked after and those from families in the armed forces).
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs supported by school action and the proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are broadly average.
- The school meets the current floor standard, which sets the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- None of the pupils are taught in alternative provision (other schools or units).

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding so more pupils make rapid progress, particularly boys in Key Stage 1, by:
 - setting clear expectations of what pupils can achieve, especially those more able
 - providing more opportunities for pupils, especially boys, to apply their writing and comprehension skills
 - maintaining a quick pace in all lessons so that learning moves on at a faster rate
 - making sure that the marking of pupils' work helps pupils to move onto the next stage of their learning and pupils are given time to respond to marking in lessons
 - developing the skills of all subject leaders so that they monitor and influence the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement more robustly in their subject areas.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' progress is good but not yet outstanding. Progress gets faster as pupils move up the school so that, by Year 6, attainment is well above average overall and in English and mathematics. Pupils work well with partners and small groups, for example Years 4, 5 and 6 enjoyed researching the different names of states for their Native Americans topic.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are broadly typical for their age. They make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development because they develop their confidence and levels of independence. Consequently, by the time children start in Year 1, attainment is securely in line with national expectations.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress, but occasionally teachers miss chances to really stretch those pupils capable of harder work and pupils capable of making better progress. Across the school boys are less confident writers. Sometimes pupils do not present their writing to the best effect.
- Good teaching of how letters and sounds link (phonics) help pupils to make generally good progress in their early reading and writing skills. Pupils' levels in reading by the ages of six and 11 are above average. The school uses the results of the national phonics screening check to pinpoint any pupils in need of extra support. Year 6 pupils read confidently, they talk about their favourite authors and discuss their preferences between fiction and non-fiction books.
- The school makes effective use of the extra money from pupil premium to employ extra staff, support small groups of pupils and individuals as well as additional learning activities. As a result, these pupils achieve equally well as other pupils in the school with an average point score of 29.8 and with no discernible gaps in achievement.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are very well supported and, as a result, achieve as well as other pupils because of the extra support teaching assistants give them and the very carefully tailored programmes that meet their needs effectively.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good. Teachers usually plan lessons carefully, take account of pupils' different starting points so work is not too easy, or too hard, and adapt learning activities where necessary.
- One of the key strengths is the way teaching develops the quality of relationships. Learning takes place in a supportive, positive and caring atmosphere. This ensures that pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Praise is given for effort, achievement and good attitudes. Adults know the pupils and their families well.
- Teaching is not outstanding because the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is not always as strong as in Key Stage 2. In a few lessons the pace of learning slows down because teachers spend too long explaining tasks. On occasions, expectations are not high enough, the more able are insufficiently challenged and find the work a little easy.
- Teachers' marking, although helpful, does not always pinpoint what pupils could do to improve their work or enable pupils to respond to the comments made.
- The school works hard to provide exciting starters to lessons and visits to engage pupils, particularly boys who are often reluctant writers. Teachers occasionally miss opportunities to guide higher quality writing by getting pupils to explore and apply a wider range of vocabulary and comprehension skills before they are ready to write.
- Teaching assistants and teachers work seamlessly together and intervene only when necessary, allowing pupils to gain in confidence and become more independent as they develop.
- The teaching of phonics and guided reading sessions helps pupils to make good progress in their reading and early writing skills. Mathematics is taught well, teachers use a wide range of

problem-solving activities and practical resources to spark interest and support learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good, but it is not yet consistently outstanding. The vast majority behave well and have good attitudes to learning. Pupils work well and are enthused and eager to learn in lessons.
- The strong pastoral care and family atmosphere help pupils to develop respect for each other and respect differences.
- Pupils get on well together. They are proud to be peer mediators and members of the school council. Older pupils told the inspector how much they enjoyed looking after the younger ones and how much they enjoyed the after-school clubs and school visits.
- Pupils say they feel happy and safe, that if they had any worries or concerns that they would be dealt with quickly. They understand about all forms of bullying and should it occur it is mostly occasional name calling. The school's records show that bullying and racist incidents are rare.
- Attendance continues to rise and is above average.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is an ambitious and very effective leader with a clear vision for school improvement that is shared by senior leaders, staff and governors. However, leadership and management are not outstanding because all subject leaders are not yet skilled in monitoring their subject areas.
- Accurate self-evaluation has strengthened plans to improve achievement, progress and the quality of teaching. Teaching is good, but outstanding teaching is not yet widespread. Leaders are clear about what is needed to move teaching on.
- The school has good arrangements in place for the appraisal and performance management of staff. Targets are based on pupils' progress and attainment, and salary progression is based upon the good performance. The well-established programme of staff development, support and expertise is also shared with other local schools.
- The well planned curriculum meets the needs of pupils and ensures English and mathematics are taught effectively. Exciting themes engage and motivate pupils, for example pupils said how much they enjoyed Tudor Day, and were looking forward to staying overnight on HMS Belfast.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity effectively so that all groups of pupils are included and achieve well. Any discrimination is not tolerated. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted most effectively through the strong links with the local church, the school's Christian values, the curriculum and the UNICEF Rights and Responsibilities initiative that promotes children's rights.
- Pupils use technology to link up with children in the United States, have raised funds for the Haiti crisis and show a good understanding of people from different cultures and traditions through their different topics on the Aborigines, Native Americans, and through studies of India and countries taking part in the Olympics.
- The school has a strong partnership with parents, the local community and other specialists.
- The local authority provides light touch support, but the school has particularly valued the advisory support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know where they want to take the school and have started a consultation process with parents and local schools on the possibilities of partnership work. The recent changes in governance have increased the drive for improvement and level of challenge for school performance. Governors are involved in decisions on staffing and pay related to the Teachers' Standards and pupils' performance. This means they have a good understanding of the quality

of teaching in the school. They observe the school's work first hand so are well informed about its strengths and areas for development. They understand how pupil premium funding is spent and the impact it has on their achievement. Governors have a good understanding of data and receive regular updates on pupils' progress. They know how well the school is performing in relation to other schools. Governors use regular training to broaden their expertise. They ensure that all safeguarding policies and procedures meet statutory requirements.

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	114498
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	403242

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Hutton
Headteacher	Shirley Frankis
Date of previous school inspection	01 July 2008
Telephone number	01435 830335
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