

Dedworth Middle School

Smiths Lane, Windsor, SL4 5PE

Inspection dates 27–28 February 2013

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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress in all year groups and achieve well in their subjects, including English and mathematics, by the end of Year 8.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and school are exemplary. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. They enjoy their lessons and their attendance has continued to improve over the past few years and is now in line with the national average for middle schools.
- Most of the teaching is good, with some that is outstanding. Teachers have established purposeful relationships with their pupils. They are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subjects they teach and make the learning enjoyable for pupils.
- Leaders track pupils' progress very rigorously and organise extra help for pupils who are falling behind.
- Pupils experience a good range of subjects, enriched by an extensive variety of after-school clubs and educational visits. The school promotes pupils' personal development particularly well.
- School leaders at all levels, including senior leaders, subject and phase leaders, and governors, share a firm commitment to the school and have helped to bring about considerable improvements in the past few years.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The teaching is not always adapted well enough to the wide range of abilities in several classes. In some lessons, the more-able pupils are not stretched enough when they are given the same work as the rest of the class.
- There is an inconsistency in the way that extra adults are deployed in lessons, with some not being used as effectively as they could be.
- The school leaders' monitoring of teaching is thorough, but outcomes and programmes of support for teachers who need it are not systematically analysed and recorded in order to be able to readily judge improvements and impact.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection took place over two days, with a team of three inspectors.
- Inspectors observed 27 lessons, or part lessons, small group work, one-to-one sessions, an assembly and lunchtime activities, and carried out a learning walk to look at specific aspects of the school's work. They listened to pupils reading and talked to them about books.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils during lessons, around the school and in two organised meetings. They spoke with the headteacher, acting deputy headteacher, Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body, teachers with subject and other responsibilities, other teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector had a telephone conversation with a local authority adviser who is linked to the school.
- Inspectors analysed the 33 responses to the staff questionnaire, the 44 responses on Parent View and two letters from parents to the inspection team.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents provided by the school, including minutes of meetings of the governing body, the school development plan, self-evaluation summary, subject reports for the governing body, pupils' progress data, safeguarding documents and records, policies, a range of pupils' work and records of the monitoring of lessons.

Inspection team

Helena McVeigh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Allan Barfoot

Additional Inspector

Michael Buist

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Dedworth Middle School is much smaller than the average secondary school. It takes in pupils in Year 5, which is half way through Key Stage 2, and pupils leave after Year 8, which is one year before the end of Key Stage 3.
- The school has specialist arts status.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and children of service families) is in line with the national average. The school has a small number of children of service families in each year group and four looked after children.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is average, with small numbers of pupils from a very wide range of groups. The largest ethnic group is of White British heritage (76%), with pupils of Pakistani heritage being the next biggest (5%).
- Around 12% of pupils are learning English as an additional language, which is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive extra support through school action because of their disabilities or special educational needs is lower than the national average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The school has a much higher than average proportion of pupils that start or leave school at times other than the beginning of Year 5 or the end of Year 8.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for its pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching further by ensuring that:
 - teachers plan activities that are well matched to pupils' prior attainment, giving the more-able pupils work that they will find demanding to help them make more rapid progress
 - extra adults are always used effectively, with a clear remit and plan, when they are working in lessons with individuals or small groups of pupils, and during whole-class sessions.
- Improve leaders' monitoring of teaching and support for improvement by:
 - summarising the analysis of strengths and weaknesses in teaching, to provide a basis for planning professional development
 - recording more detail on what needs to improve where teaching requires improvement, how support will be provided and its impact evaluated, with dates and deadlines.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils enter Dedworth Middle School with a very wide range of prior attainment, broadly just below average. They make steady progress in the first term of Year 5 and thereafter make good progress so that by the time they leave they are reaching standards in most subjects, including English and mathematics, that are at least in line with expectations for their age, with many attaining above that.
- Results in the end of Year 6 national tests have risen steadily over the past few years and were in line with the national average in English, but below in mathematics in 2012. The progress of the current Year 6 pupils shows that they are on target to achieve better results this year, particularly in mathematics, with increasing proportions gaining the higher Level 5 in both subjects. Around 12 pupils are on track to attain Level 6 in mathematics this year; four did so in 2012.
- School data and evidence in lessons and pupils' work indicate that all groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds and who are learning English as an additional language, are making good progress. The school monitors this effectively and has identified pupils of White British origin as performing slightly less well than others and has instigated measures to address this.
- The school has concentrated successfully on developing literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. This was evident in the good range of pupils' extended writing in many subjects in addition to English, as well as in teachers' focus on the meaning and spelling of key words. Pupils are encouraged to speak aloud in front of their peers and they do this well very often. Their 25-minute weekly reading sessions with form tutors are very productive, with pupils reading silently or aloud, listening to their peers, and discussing the books and the meaning of the text. The pupils' focus, enjoyment of reading and behaviour during these sessions was impressive.
- Numeracy was promoted well in an effective and enjoyable assembly about the collection of litter, which involved the application of numbers and statistics. Pupils participated with enthusiasm and eagerly estimated the cost of picking up and disposing of the litter in this country.
- The school keeps very close track of the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and provides extra support in regular lessons or in small groups. As a result, these pupils achieve well in all of their subjects.
- Pupils are making good progress in reading and writing because of the high priority given to these aspects in English and other subjects. Boys and girls enjoy reading. They read aloud fluently and with expression. They write for a range of purposes in English and in other subjects, such as humanities, science and religious education.
- The school has been effective in reducing the attainment gap for its less advantaged pupils, including the children of service families and those who are looked after by the local authority. The school's data indicate that in 2012, Year 8 pupils who were known to be eligible for free school meals attained below their non-eligible peers, with average point scores of 32.5 and 36.5, compared with 34.4 and 37.2 for all pupils in English and mathematics respectively. However, the gap is closing and the eligible pupils made better progress than their non-eligible peers.

The quality of teaching is good

- All teachers have developed positive relationships with their pupils and manage behaviour effectively. There are consistent approaches, such as the sharing of learning outcomes and success criteria, although teachers interpret the latter in slightly different ways.
- Teachers check pupils' work in books regularly and provide them with constructive comments on how to improve. Most pupils are aware of their targets, which they are given for all subjects, and

can describe in many cases what they need to do to improve. In some cases, pupils are given time to respond to the teacher's comments and to improve their work.

- The school has adopted a good approach to homework this year. This involves pupils engaging in extended projects that involve research and encourage them to use their initiative and creativity, as well as making good use of their literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills.
- Teachers use a good range of approaches to engage and motivate pupils, including work in pairs and in groups, role play, videos, computers and research. Pupils describe lessons as 'fun' and they appreciate the clubs and trips, which one boy described as 'amazing'.
- Although teachers usually provide success criteria at increasingly demanding levels for their lessons, they do not always plan tasks to match pupils' different prior attainment. As a result, the more-able pupils are not stretched enough as they find the work easy, which slows their progress, when they are given the same work as the rest of the class. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations for all pupils and set work that enables pupils of all abilities to excel at their own level and pace.
- The school benefits from a good number of extra adults in many lessons, mainly to support pupils with special educational needs. In many cases, these teaching assistants provide effective help and work in collaboration with the class teacher to ensure that all pupils make good progress. This was observed in a Year 5 English lesson in which the teaching assistant's clear knowledge of the book the pupils were studying enabled her to ask pertinent and useful questions. In too many other lessons, the impact of the extra adults was reduced because they did not have a clear remit or enough to do during whole-class sessions.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' attitude to lessons is a real strength and contributes to their good progress. They want to learn and respond well to being given responsibility or creative challenges. They take care over the presentation of their work.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They say that they feel safe and that there is little bullying or misbehaviour and that any incidents are dealt with effectively. They speak very highly of the staff, who they feel are fair and teach them well.
- Attendance has improved year on year and is now close to the national average for middle schools. Relatively few pupils are persistently absent.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent in lessons and around the school. Teachers and other staff manage the potentially challenging behaviour of a few pupils with special educational needs calmly and effectively. The credit and debit system used by the school for good work, attendance and behaviour is used well by staff and appreciated by pupils.
- Pupils respond well to responsibility, such as being prefects or members of the school and creative councils. They are respectful of each other and of adults, and are courteous and polite.

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders at all levels have a shared determination to improve that has helped raise standards of teaching and learning in the past few years. There is a good sense of teamwork among the staff. Middle leaders, who include subject and phase coordinators, several of whom are in 'acting' positions, contribute well to improvements in their areas and to the positive school ethos.
- The systems for monitoring pupils' progress and for identifying underperformance of individuals and groups have been refined and are effective. They are used for all subjects and help to ensure that pupils who are not on track are given additional help. Pupils receive extra support in one-to-one or small groups generally at the same time as the rest of the class.

- The senior leaders have a realistic view of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching due to their thorough monitoring, and have used a range of approaches to bring about improvements where needed. There is a useful record of the strengths of the different aspects of teachers' practice, but no clear summary or analysis of this to show how the information is used to plan professional development. In addition, there is not enough detail on how the teachers deemed to need help are being supported in order to be able to track their progress and show its impact.
 - All members of staff participate in an appropriate appraisal process. There is now a clear link between progression up the pay scale and the quality of teaching.
 - Self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate and is linked well to the school development planning priorities.
 - The curriculum is a strength. Pupils in Year 5 are helped to settle in well through a good combination of primary practice, with most lessons taught by their class teacher, as well as benefiting from teaching by subject specialists, for example, in art, physical education and music. All year groups receive a broad range of subjects with a good amount of time given to English and mathematics as well as other National Curriculum subjects.
 - The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development particularly well. There is a strong focus on creative subjects and developing pupils' initiative and creativity across the curriculum. They are given lessons in 'creative thinking' and 'choices' (personal, social and health education) and learn how to work effectively in teams in physical education lessons.
 - The school promotes equality of opportunity well and has a high regard for pupils' welfare and safety. All aspects of safeguarding meet requirements. Good use is made of the extra pupil premium funds for disadvantaged pupils, for example to provide them with reading books, lockers, breakfast, one-to-one tuition, and to pay for residential and day trips and extra-curricular and holiday clubs.
 - The local authority has provided effective support to the school's leadership and management, through, for example, training for the governing body. The amount of support has been reduced in the past two years to a 'light touch', as confidence in the school's leadership has grown.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors bring a good range of experience and expertise to their role. They are well trained and have a clear view about the strengths of the school, what needs to improve and how the performance of pupils compares with that of similar schools. They are kept well informed by the headteacher, but hold leaders to account through challenging questions and regular school visits. They have undertaken a useful self-evaluation and have audited their experience and expertise and training that will benefit the school. They ensure that all aspects of safeguarding are well managed and that the pupil premium funds are used effectively for eligible pupils. They oversee the management of the budget effectively and contributed to bringing it out of a deficit. They are aware of the performance management processes and how progress up the pay scale is linked to teachers' performance.
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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	110072
Local authority	Windsor and Maidenhead
Inspection number	401100

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	9–13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	458
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sharon Bright
Headteacher	Stuart Muir
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 May 2010
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