

Denbigh Primary School

Denbigh Road, Luton, LU3 1NS

Inspection dates 21–22 November 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and governors have managed a period of significant change well in amalgamating the infant and junior schools. They have brought about good improvements in the quality of teaching and in pupils' achievement.
- Teaching throughout the school is predominantly good and results in good progress for nearly all groups of pupils.
- Children have a good introduction to learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The strong focus on developing speaking and listening skills and their personal and social development ensures that they are well prepared for future learning.
- Pupils enjoy their learning. Attainment has risen in the last two years. Nearly all groups of pupils achieve well, including those pupils known to be eligible for support through additional government funding, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They show care and respect for each other and are keen to learn. They feel safe in school.
- Pupils are good ambassadors for the school. They take part enthusiastically in anti-bullying projects and actively raise money for charity.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Leaders have not yet secured outstanding teaching throughout the school. In a few lessons, the pace of learning is not fast enough and pupils are not given enough opportunities to work independently.
- Some marking does not help pupils to improve their work.
- The targets shared with pupils are not always helpful to them as they are sometimes written in language which is too difficult for them to understand.
- Not enough more-able pupils achieve the higher Level 3 in Year 2 and Level 5 in Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 31 lessons or part-lessons. Several lessons were observed together with the deputy headteachers.
- Discussions were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher and deputy headteachers, subject leaders, and staff with whole-school or year-group responsibilities.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence including: the school's tracking of pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, documents relating to safeguarding and special educational needs, and the school's view of its own performance.
- Inspectors took account of the work in pupils' books, listened to them reading and met with different groups of pupils.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class, at break times and at other times around the school.
- Inspectors attended an assembly.
- There were insufficient replies to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, for the responses to be made available to inspectors. However, the recent survey carried out by the school was considered. Inspectors spoke to parents at the school gate and in the playground. All these views were taken into account.

Inspection team

Gillian Bosschaert, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Matthew Klimcke	Additional Inspector
Patrick Walsh	Additional Inspector
John Greevy	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than most primary schools.
- The vast majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, predominantly Bangladeshi and Pakistani.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is above average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and other pupils.
- The infant school amalgamated with the junior school in January 2011.
- The headteacher was appointed to the primary school in September 2011.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school runs a breakfast club, managed by the governing body.
- There is a privately run preschool on site, which is subject to separate inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make more teaching outstanding and further improve pupils' progress by ensuring that all teachers:
 - maintain a brisk pace to pupils' learning in lessons
 - give pupils enough time in lessons to work independently
 - benefit from sharing best practice in marking and use it effectively to raise pupils' achievement
 - support pupils' learning by sharing targets with them in language which the pupils can understand.
- Increase the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in Year 2 and Year 6 by ensuring that teachers consistently provide more-able pupils with challenging work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Reception classes with skills and knowledge that are well below the levels expected for their age, particularly in communication and language, literacy and mathematics. Children settle well into school and make good progress, especially in their personal, social and emotional development. By the end of Reception, standards are broadly in line with children nationally, although skills in number, calculations and communication and literacy remain below average.
- The school's encouragement and development of pupils' communication skills is successful. Pupils are able to discuss with their partner what they are doing and what to do next. This consolidates their thinking and understanding.
- Key Stage 1 standards are average. They have risen since 2012, when they were below average. Pupils' books show this upward trend is set to continue, particularly in reading, where progress has been most rapid. This is due to the focus on systematically teaching the sounds letters make (phonics). Most pupils enjoy reading and read with fluency and accuracy. They are able to tackle unfamiliar words with confidence.
- Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment in mathematics has risen since 2011 and is broadly in line with schools nationally. Reading has also risen and is slightly above the national average. Writing rose in 2013 to be in line with the national average. School data and scrutiny of pupils' books show the improvements made are in every year group, displaying evidence that the upward trend is set to continue. However, not enough pupils are achieving the higher Level 3 at Key Stage 1 and Level 5 in the tests at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs benefit from good support provided by well-trained teaching assistants and an enthusiastic, knowledgeable coordinator. They make good progress and their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly in line with that of similar pupils nationally.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support pupils in a variety of ways. One-to-one tuition, a free breakfast club, small-group work with an experienced teacher focused on overcoming gaps in learning, and other support packages ensure that these pupils make as good progress as their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2013, their attainment was similar to their classmates in both English and mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. Planning and preparation are particular strengths of teachers' work. Pupils know what they have to do in lessons and quickly get on with their work.
- Teaching in the Early Years foundation Stage is good, children progress well the result of well matched learning opportunities and skilful questioning.
- Where teaching is most effective, the pace of learning is fast and teachers' expectations are high. Teachers ask demanding questions which make pupils think hard, and they regularly check on pupils' understanding. Pupils rise to these challenges and make rapid progress in lessons.

- Pupils are encouraged to discuss work and questions together; they share ideas, which helps them to clarify their thoughts, with the result that they are eager to start work on the tasks they do independently. Teachers monitor pupils' progress in lessons and use the information to adapt their teaching.
- Teaching is strong where subject knowledge is secure, expectations of what pupils can achieve are high and where questioning from the teacher and the teaching assistant is skilled. Tasks set motivate the pupils to succeed and they persevere when faced with difficult problems.
- Most marking is effective in moving pupils on quickly to the next steps in their learning. Pupils usually have good opportunities to mark their own and others' work, and to respond to comments made by their teachers. This is not consistent throughout the school, however. Some marking gives pupils insufficient guidance on what they need to do to improve their work.
- In a few lessons, these features of good teaching are not evident. Teachers do not always ensure that the pace of learning is brisk, give pupils opportunities to learn independently or provide enough challenging work for more-able pupils to help them to make rapid progress.
- Each pupil's progress in English and mathematics is regularly checked. Targets are set but these are not always helpful to individual pupils. Targets are often expressed in complicated adult language which pupils do not always understand.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are highly motivated and settle to learning quickly. They willingly take part in discussions. They are keen to answer questions and to accept advice.
- Pupils fully understand the card system for monitoring behaviour and eagerly discussed 'Blue Friday', when they wore blue clothes to signify the climax of anti-bullying week. Pupils say that they are very happy at school and that they feel safe. They add that bullying is rare but, should it happen, they are confident it would be dealt with quickly. A recent parental questionnaire confirms that most parents and carers share this view.
- The school is a calm and orderly place and pupils enjoy being there. They are polite and considerate to each other and to adults. Standing aside to let someone pass or holding open doors are accepted parts of daily life.
- Pupils understand how to keep safe, especially when using the internet. They discuss cyber-bullying sensibly and know what to do to combat it.
- Pupils actively raise money for the local hospice and take part in national fundraising for Children in Need.
- Prefects are used to reinforce the importance of good behaviour. They are positive role models; supervising in assembly, assisting midday supervisors and leading some lunchtime activities in the playground. Some pupils act as reading buddies, play leaders and sports captains. They support the youngest children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and older pupils listen to younger pupils reading to promote the raising of attainment in this key skill.
- Attendance has increased in the last two years and is average. Systems for monitoring non-attendance are robust and rigorous. The school places a high priority on ensuring that pupils

attend regularly.

- Behaviour in and around the school is good. Pupils are very proud of their school and talk enthusiastically about their achievements. However, on the few occasions where teaching is less effective, pupils become distracted.

The leadership and management are good

- Strong leadership from the headteacher, leadership team and governing body has secured improvements in pupils' achievement and in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. The amalgamation of the infant and junior schools to form a single primary school has been successful in raising standards.
- Teachers are fully aware that they have an important part to play in raising pupils' attainment and that they are accountable for the progress their pupils make.
- There is a successful emphasis on professional training and development for staff. Recently, good practice has been shared to help improve pupils' attainment in all subjects.
- Year leaders and staff with whole-school responsibility have worked very effectively to develop their leadership skills. They use tracking information well to support teachers in their planning and have ensured that nearly all groups of pupils make good progress.
- The curriculum has been reviewed to develop pupils' literacy skills and to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils now have the opportunity to write about Francis Drake's life. Similarly, they use Martin Luther King's 'I had a dream' speech to expand their vocabulary and to reflect on issues such as segregation and discrimination.
- Specialist teachers of art, instrumental music and singing enhance the curriculum. Artwork around the school is impressive. Year groups visit local theatres and visiting theatre companies perform in the school. Last year, Year 5 pupils presented *The Tempest* at the annual Shakespeare Festival for schools. This year, Year 4 pupils presented *Macbeth*.
- The additional funding recently provided by the government to help children to be more active and to improve their fitness is being used appropriately to employ a number of sports coaches and a specialist physical education teacher.
- Safeguarding meets all statutory requirements.
- The local authority has supported leaders well to enable them to develop their management skills. Teaching and learning consultants, the Early Years Foundation Stage adviser and other consultants have contributed usefully to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has recently been reconstituted to be more representative of the school community. Governors are ambitious for school improvement and challenge and advise the school effectively. Regular visits take place during the school day and training is enthusiastically undertaken to ensure that governors are able to meet the challenges involved in carrying out their roles.
 - Governors are able to demonstrate understanding of pupils' achievement and they use this information accurately to compare the school's progress against that of other schools, locally

and nationally.

- Governors employ an external consultant to help set performance management objectives for the headteacher. They understand how to set targets for teachers to improve their work and suitably link teachers' pay rises to improvements in their pupils' performance.
- Pupil premium money is used well and monitored by a governors' committee. Finances are managed securely and spent appropriately.

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	109534
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	425192

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	657
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roy Davis
Headteacher	Lynne McMulkin
Date of previous school inspection	12 January 2012
Telephone number	01582 571597
Fax number	01582 494356
Email address	denbigh.primary.admin@luton.gov.uk

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