

# Didsbury Road Primary School

Didsbury Road, Heaton Mersey, Stockport, Cheshire, SK4 3HB

**Inspection dates** 2–3 April 2014

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Didsbury Road's vision that 'We are happy, caring, confident learners, preparing for our future.' sums up the essence of this outstanding school.
- Pupils achieve exceptionally well in both their academic and personal development because they are provided with an outstanding quality of education. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well-above average although pupils' attainments in writing, especially for the most able, have not been quite as high as in reading and mathematics.
- The outstanding quality of the teaching ensures that a high proportion of pupils make more than expected progress when they join the school.
- Progress is particularly rapid in the Early Years Foundation Stage where children develop a love for learning which is apparent throughout the school.
- Behaviour in classrooms and around the school is excellent. Pupils enjoy their lessons and concentrate well on their work and this contributes highly effectively to their outstanding learning.
- Pupils are very confident they are safe in school and parents agree. Even from a young age, pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- The headteacher and other leaders are driving the school forward with a clear vision for continuous school improvement in all areas.
- The governing body has strengthened its membership. The Chair provides exceptionally skilled leadership to support and challenge the school's leaders highly effectively. As a result leaders have ensured that teaching has improved and achievement is outstanding.
- Didsbury Road pupils are very healthy. Pupils hugely enjoy and take part in competitions in a wide range of physical activities and sports. This, together with a very good understanding of healthy eating and healthy lifestyles, ensures pupils are fit and active.
- Pupils are kind, caring and thoughtful individuals and are confident learners, who are extremely well prepared for the next stage in their education.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 22 lessons or part lessons, four of which were jointly observed with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Observations included some small-group and individual support work led by teaching assistants or specialist teachers.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and senior and middle leaders.
- Discussions were held with parents when they dropped their children at school, with two groups of pupils and with other pupils informally during lessons and at break and lunchtimes.
- The team looked at a range of school documents, particularly those relating to school self-evaluation and improvement planning, the school's data on assessment of pupils' progress, records relating to behaviour and attendance and to staff training, reports to the governing body and documents relating to safeguarding.
- There were 76 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The team also took into account the school's own recent parent questionnaire and the 33 staff questionnaires returned.

## Inspection team

Hilary Ward, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Maureen Hints

Additional Inspector

Maria McGarry

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Didsbury Road is larger than the average-sized primary school
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is about half the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action is below average as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is significantly lower than that found nationally. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' learning and progress.
- The senior and middle leadership team and the governing body have been restructured since the previous inspection.
- The school works with a cluster of local schools.

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

- Provide the most able pupils with the necessary levels of challenge to enable more of them to reach the highest levels of attainment of which they are capable, in their writing.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children start school with skills which are broadly at the levels expected for their age. They make rapid progress because teaching is outstanding and activities are varied and challenging and exceptionally well-matched to their needs to ensure they learn quickly in all areas. Staff are very skilled at helping children to think more deeply. For example, children who were rolling balls down guttering were asked when they thought they went faster and why.
- By the time they move into Key Stage 1, the vast majority of pupils have reached a good level of development and are very well-prepared for the next stage in their learning.
- They make outstanding progress in their reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1. Pupils have a secure knowledge of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) and can use this knowledge in a wide range of reading and writing activities. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, a group of pupils were able to change words to the past tense by adding the correct word endings while another group answered questions about the text they were reading to infer meaning from it. Another group worked on their own to improve their handwriting or to read for pleasure.
- Almost all pupils go on to make outstanding progress in Key Stage 2 so that standards are well-above average by the time they leave, especially in reading and mathematics.
- After a slight dip in attainment in writing last year, pupils' writing is improving. They write extensively across a wide range of subjects and for different purposes; for example, a group of pupils have been working with a parent to produce a newspaper filled with their articles. Teachers have discussed topics with pupils to ensure they interest and inspire them to want to write and this is evident in the high quality of writing in pupils' books. Their understanding of the correct use of spelling, grammar and punctuation is of a very high standard. Nevertheless, too few of the most able pupils reach the highest levels of attainment in their writing.
- Standards in mathematics are very high across the school and a good proportion of pupils reach high levels of attainment by the time they leave. Pupils can calculate using different methods and choose the most appropriate method for the task. They use their mathematical skills to solve real-life problems, such as working out the dimensions for the bedrooms they were designing on computers. They respond exceptionally well to the challenge teachers build into their learning.
- Pupils are very proficient at using technology to find out things for themselves as well as to develop their computing skills. They used it, for example, to research information for their topic on planets and to design the bedrooms, which furthered their understanding of 3D shapes.
- Senior and middle leaders keep a close check on the performance of different groups and individuals through regular meetings with class teachers. Pupils who are not making expected progress are quickly identified and actions taken to ensure that each pupil has an equal opportunity to succeed.
- The pupil premium is used exceptionally well to boost the achievement of eligible pupils. Recent action, including additional individual and small-group support, is closing the gap between those eligible for free school meals and other pupils. As a result, although eligible pupils in Year 6 were a little behind their peers in 2013, there is no difference in the attainment of eligible pupils and other pupils in both English and mathematics in the current Year 6.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make at least good and some make outstanding progress in line with other pupils, due to frequent checks on the success of actions to support their learning.
- The most able pupils rise to the challenges they are given in all lessons and a much higher proportion than average make more than the progress expected of them. Teachers are keen to build further on this and programmes are in place to support more pupils to reach the highest levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.

**The quality of teaching is outstanding**

- Teaching, especially at Key Stage 1, has improved since the previous inspection. All teaching is at least good and a majority is consistently outstanding.
- Children get off to an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are provided with a wealth of activities to develop their early reading, writing and number skills. Children often chose to spend time on these tasks because adults make them enjoyable, such as counting out meals in the home corner for the number of children and not forgetting the Easter bunny.
- Teachers throughout the school are very clear about what they expect pupils to achieve and share this with them. They have the highest expectations for all pupils and plan tasks at the right level which are neither too difficult nor too easy so that individuals can make the best possible progress. Learning is challenging. The excellent marking in pupils' books helps them to build quickly on their previous learning, particularly the most able.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning highly effectively to help pupils develop their reasoning skills. Learning is linked to real-life situations. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils worked on managing a budget while the teacher added increasingly complex issues about economies of scale, unexpected costs and failure of income in order to make pupils think more deeply.
- Pupils say they love learning and this can be clearly seen across the school and in all subjects. Learning is enhanced by teachers' own passion for their subjects and their excellent subject knowledge.
- School leaders have looked at ways to support learning to best meet the needs of pupils of all abilities. For example, additional teachers provide specialist teaching to groups of pupils, sometimes to the most able and sometimes to those of lower ability, those eligible for free school meals or who speak English as an additional language.
- Sports teaching is exemplary and a real strength of the school. Some new sports such as diamond cricket and basketball are provided by sports coaches who are bought in through the government's additional primary sports funding. Teachers and teaching assistants give of their own time to take pupils to competitive sports events at weekends and holidays, such as a recent cross-country event where many of the school's pupils won prizes.
- Teaching assistants have been keen to develop their skills. They provide highly effective support to individuals and groups of pupils, especially those with special educational needs.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They are very rarely off-task in lessons because they enjoy their learning and are keen to do well. As a pupil put it in one of the group discussions, 'Teachers make the learning fun and it's good when we can all join in when they are giving us examples of good work.'
- Pupils love to gain rewards such as stars of the day and week, house points and headteacher's awards. They carry out a huge range of responsibilities such as prefects, house captains, school councillors, eco-warriors, e-safety rangers, sports leaders and playground leaders.
- The few pupils who occasionally show challenging behaviour associated with their special educational needs are managed exceptionally well by staff who have had additional training. Other pupils are incredibly kind and thoughtful about how they too, can support these pupils.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils demonstrate a remarkable understanding of how to keep themselves safe on the internet. Pupils say they feel very safe and learn about road safety and 'stranger-danger' and how to avoid unnecessary risks.
- Pupils have a secure knowledge of all forms of bullying and share values about how bullying should be managed. Strong and supportive relationships between staff and pupils give pupils the confidence that problems will be sorted out and concerns will be investigated.
- The school promotes a restorative justice approach to resolving disagreements which pupils respond to extremely well. All staff, including lunchtime supervisors, have received training in

this approach. As a result pupils develop a very strong sense of right and wrong and a mature attitude to listening and valuing the views of others which will stand them in very good stead for their futures.

- Attendance is consistently above the national average and is still improving.

## **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- Staff in Didsbury Road School work as one highly effective team. The senior leadership team are passionate about driving the school forwards to offer the very best and equal educational opportunities to each pupil and this energy is shared by everyone in the school.
- The headteacher and governing body have taken effective action to strengthen senior and middle leadership. All staff are involved in curriculum teams in developing a vibrant and exciting range of subjects and activities. Pupils have been consulted on what they would like to learn so topics chosen will enable them to learn well. They especially enjoy the new Forest School outdoor provision.
- Senior leaders have taken effective action to deal with weak practice. As a result the quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Leaders ensure teachers are accountable for the progress of pupils in their class and have clear targets and actions to support those who are not making the progress expected of them.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted outstandingly well through all areas of the curriculum. Provision encompasses cultural visits, assemblies, work on different faiths, the achievement of eco-schools status, residential visits from Year 4 upwards and the production of 'movies' and posters about issues such as anti-bullying.
- Staff look at issues such as the confidence of quiet learners and share best practice with other staff to meet the needs of such pupils. As well as learning from and supporting other schools, Didsbury Road is a lead school working with Manchester University's primary postgraduate teacher-training course and various teachers from the school deliver training to the next generation of teachers.
- Partnerships with parents are strong and parents feel well-informed about what their children are learning. Parents have especially enjoyed 'book-share' when they have been invited to discuss their children's work with them. Phonics work and 'chatty-sacks' go home with younger children to help parents develop their child's speaking and early reading skills. Parents of pupils with special educational needs spoke with appreciation about the care shown to their children and the extra steps which had been taken to meet their needs well.
- The local authority has provided support to the school in developing a new leadership and governance structure and undertaken monitoring visits with headteachers from the cluster of schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have reviewed their membership, roles and responsibilities and taken action to broaden their expertise and ensure good parent representation. Under the leadership of the outstanding Chair, governors are further developing their links into school so that they receive information at first-hand and are able to question, challenge and support staff and pupils exceptionally well. They have a clear view of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. They ensure performance management is linked to school improvements and pay progression is appropriately matched to consistently good and outstanding teaching. Governors ensure funding is spent appropriately including the pupil premium and primary sports funding and have taken steps to strengthen the leadership of the work with those receiving the pupil premium. This has resulted in improved achievement of these pupils. Safeguarding is an absolute priority, is managed extremely well and meets 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106098
<b>Local authority</b>	Stockport
<b>Inspection number</b>	439568

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>	454
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andy Kent
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tim Kendrick
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 June 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 4322240
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