

Dover Park Primary School

Dover Road, Ryde, Isle of Wight, PO33 2BN

Inspection dates 10–11 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- The achievement of pupils requires further improvement. This is because it has been weak in some year groups in the recent past and is not yet good. Pupils are still making up ground in important literacy and numeracy skills.
- Pupils do not always present their work neatly and have insufficient opportunities to write at length. They find it difficult to use their numeracy skills in different situations.
- Teaching requires further improvement because it is not consistently good in all year groups. Some staff are not confident in teaching all aspects of mathematics.
- Lesson activities and marking do not always help pupils to make good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour for learning is not yet good enough. When teaching is less than good pupils are slow to settle and lose concentration quickly.
- Until recently, systems for checking the school's work were not robust enough. They did not provide regular and detailed information that allowed weaknesses to be quickly addressed.
- In previous years, monitoring of teaching and learning has not been accurate. This means the school leaders and governing body did not effectively hold staff to account for pupils' achievement.

The school has the following strengths:

- The headteacher is a very strong leader who has been the driving force during a period of significant change. Monitoring and development systems have improved especially well and the school is rapidly improving.
- The proportion of good teaching is rising well. Consequently the majority of pupils made good progress during this academic year.
- Achievement in reading is good. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well. Pupils who receive additional funding to support their progress are now closing the gap on their peers.
- Pupils feel very safe and secure in school because of the good level of care. The support for pupils who might be at risk of underachieving is especially good.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons or parts of lessons and undertook a joint scrutiny of a sample of pupils' written work with the headteacher and a senior member of staff. In addition the inspection team made a number of other short visits to special activities to support pupils at risk of underachieving and heard a sample of pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body and staff, including senior and middle managers. A conversation was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 15 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and a small number of parents and carers bringing their children to school were also spoken to.
- Responses from the 24 staff questionnaires were analysed.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents including the school's records on current pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. Documents relating to planning and monitoring, and safeguarding were also looked at.

Inspection team

Diane Wilkinson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jeanne Simpson

Additional Inspector

David Howley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Dover Park is an above average-sized primary school. Some pupils are taught in mixed age classes.
- The proportions of pupils with special educational needs supported by school action and school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, is well below average although this is rising.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is high. This funding is to provide extra support for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children.
- There have been a significant number of staff changes since the previous inspection. A new deputy headteacher joined the school in September 2013.
- Chatterbox, a private provider, took over the management of the pre-school provision for children from two to five years in 2013. It also provides before- and after-school care for school pupils. This was inspected separately in April 2014.
- Very recently, links have been set up with a Local Leader in Education to support development at Dover Park.
- The school meets the government 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 so that the majority is good or better by:
 - ensuring that all teaching staff develop a good understanding of mathematics so that they can teach new skills and knowledge well
 - consistently providing lesson activities that ensure pupils working at different levels make at least good progress
 - ensuring that marking clearly identifies what pupils have achieved and what they need to do to improve their work.
- Raise pupils' achievement through:
 - making sure that pupils write neatly, spell accurately and punctuate correctly
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at greater length in a range of subjects
 - helping pupils to use their numeracy skills confidently when working with measures or data and in undertaking mathematical investigations.
- Ensure that all staff with leadership responsibilities and the governing body take a greater role in leading school improvement work.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Progress in all year groups has not been good enough over the past few years and has varied considerably between classes. Inspection evidence indicates progress is improving strongly, especially in Reception and Years 1 and 2. It is not yet consistently good in other year groups.
- Children enter the school with skills at below the levels expected for this age. Progress in Reception has varied and has not been good enough in the recent past. Pupils are still making up for the slow progress made in the Reception Year. Good teaching means pupils no longer underachieve, but their progress is not yet good in all subjects.
- Good progress in Reception this year has resulted in the proportion of children reaching a good level of development, matching national figures. Children have a good understanding of what they are learning and a real thirst to do even better.
- Pupils have not made enough progress in mathematics until this year because teaching has not been good. This year their achievement improved considerably due to the strong actions taken by senior staff and the new subject leader. Pupils no longer underachieve, but their achievement is not yet good.
- A very strong focus on calculation and place value has seen these aspects improve especially well. Achievement requires further improvement because pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not fully confident in using their good calculation skills when working with measures and data.
- Pupils in Year 6 work confidently with a range of measures using decimals, fractions or ratio. They present data in a variety of ways, for example in pie charts. Their attainment is now broadly average, having been below average for the previous two years. Attainment is not better than average because pupils are less confident in planning and carrying out their own investigations.
- The strong push to raise attainment in writing over the past two years has seen positive improvement. Below average previously, attainment is now broadly average, but limited by careless or untidy presentation and lots of inaccurate spelling.
- Year 2 pupils write successfully in different genres; for example, when explaining a scientific experiment. Older pupils write confidently in a range of different styles. However, too few opportunities for undertaking an extended piece of writing and editing and refining their work limits attainment, especially at a higher level.
- Pupils achieve well in reading. Below average in the Year 1 phonics (the sounds letters make in words) check for the last two years, it is now average. Year 2 pupils progress well and their attainment is average. Attainment in reading in Year 6 has risen well since the previous inspection. Currently broadly average, it continues to rise because the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in the Year 6 national tests is increasing especially well. Pupils are confident and enthusiastic readers. They enjoy reading for pleasure and also to find out information.
- The school's commitment to equality of opportunity is clearly evident in the good achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Many reach the expected level by the time they leave.
- Good use of additional funding means the pupils who receive it are now closing the gap on their peers in both English and mathematics. Currently they are about one and a half terms behind whereas it was over a year previously.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language, achieve as well as their peers. They often do well in mathematics.
- The more able pupils now make the progress they should although they have not done so in previous years. They make good progress in reading and the proportion of pupils exceeding the expected levels in national tests for writing and mathematics is also rising.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The school has largely eradicated inadequate teaching, but the quality is still too variable and consequently the rate of learning differs between year groups. An increase in good teaching helps pupils to make up for weaker learning in the past, but the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement is not yet good.
- Teaching in mathematics has improved significantly this year. This is because teachers have received good quality training, particularly in teaching calculation skills. However, too little emphasis has been placed on teaching younger pupils how to use these skills when working with measures and data although their learning in this aspect is now satisfactory.
- In Years 3 to 6, the lack of confidence in helping pupils to carry out mathematical investigations had a negative impact on attainment. Due to good teaching in Year 6 this has improved, but previous slow progress still limits pupils' attainment.
- In most lessons the activities provided are suitably challenging for the different stages at which pupils are working. This helps ensure that there is no longer the level of underachievement seen in the past.
- The more able pupils make the progress they should. However, not all teachers make it clear what they want from them. This limits these pupils' understanding of what is expected of them and slows their progress.
- Both class teachers and teaching assistants provide good support for pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs in lessons and in special group activities to help them catch up. They make sure pupils always know what they are expected to achieve, helping ensure their learning is good.
- The quality of marking and target setting has improved considerably over the past two years and helped to raise achievement. However, not all staff make it clear in marking what pupils have learnt and what they need to do next.
- Reading skills, especially phonics, are well taught so learning in this subject is good.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because, when teaching is less than good, pupils lack the ambition to do well and do not concentrate sufficiently. This has a negative impact on their learning.
- Positive relationships between pupils and with staff, and an effective programme of rewards and sanctions help ensure that lessons are rarely interrupted by disruptive behaviour. Pupils from different ethnic, religious or cultural backgrounds feel well supported by both staff and other pupils. This clearly indicates the success of the school's work to discourage discrimination and foster good relationships.
- Outside of lessons and when moving around the school pupils behave well. They generally behave well at playtimes and in the hall at lunchtimes.
- Staff keep effective records of pupils who find good behaviour difficult. They quickly identify who needs extra support and good strategies are swiftly put in place to address any poor behaviour. Consequently their behaviour improves well over time and the number of incidents has decreased. There have been no exclusions for three years.
- The improved curriculum and teaching have enhanced pupils' attitudes to school. Very good support for attendance has seen this improve and poor absenteeism decrease. Attendance levels are broadly average.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Both pupils and their parents and carers recognise that the site is very secure and that the former are well looked after.
- Pupils report that bullying in any form is rare and always dealt with successfully. The work of pupils who are Anti-bullying Ambassadors is effective and pupils are confident that staff will help sort out any problem.
- Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay safe and avoid hazards, including when using the internet.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because, until recently, school leaders and governors did not effectively monitor the school's work and help plan accurately for its future development. Consequently the school was slow in addressing weaker areas.
- Previous systems for checking the school's work were not regular or rigorous enough. They did not pinpoint specific weaknesses nor help quickly address them. Subject leaders and teachers did not keep a close check on pupils' progress and were not sufficiently held to account when this declined. The governing body did not sufficiently link the quality of teaching to pupils' achievement.
- The decline in achievement was halted due to the skills and determination of the headteacher. Much of the improvement work since the last inspection has been driven forward by herself and a few strong leaders in the school. Although both have improved significantly, some aspects of writing and mathematics still need to be addressed. The school is well placed to improve further.
- Improved systems for tracking pupils' progress and robust self-evaluation are leading to rapid improvement. The current leaders for English, mathematics and special educational needs understand well what needs to be done and are effectively held to account. The skills of other subject leaders and staff are less effective.
- The monitoring of and support for teaching have strengthened considerably as other leaders and governors contribute effectively to this. The proportion of good teaching is rising. The statutory performance management of teaching is much more accurate and effective. Governors only agree salary increases for good performance.
- The revised curriculum and more practical activities engage pupils' interests and enhance learning. That to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are now more reflective and their knowledge and respect for different cultures or religions prepare them well for life in a diverse society.
- Safeguarding, including the vetting and appointment of staff, fully meets requirements and pupils are well cared for.
- Partnerships with parents, carers and other schools and institutions are good and effectively support pupils' learning. Most parents and carers are appreciative of the school.
- The current local authority provides good support and challenge through a range of training and monitoring strategies.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has become much more effective over the past year. Good training, provided by senior school staff, ensures governors are knowledgeable about data. They now compare the school's performance well with others nationally and locally. Governors' current first-hand monitoring ensures they are well informed, including about teaching quality. They now challenge and support the school more effectively. Inevitably, past weaknesses in governance have limited the impact this current good work has on pupils' achievement. Governors rigorously pursue value for money. Effective teamwork with school leaders helps ensure that the extra funding for some pupils is used to good effect. During the inspection it was evident that the staff and resources provided support these pupils' achievement well. The governing body has effectively allocated the sports funding to improving staff expertise and increasing pupils' participation in sport.

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	118179
Local authority	Isle of Wight
Inspection number	431022

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	258
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rob Cooney
Headteacher	Anita Wilcox
Date of previous school inspection	25–26 April 2012
Telephone number	01983 562617
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