

Dinnington First School

Sycamore Avenue, Dinnington Village, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE13 7JY

Inspection dates

21–22 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils of all abilities make good and sometimes outstanding progress because they are taught well and are given effective support to catch up if they fall behind.
- Children get off to a flying start in the Nursery and Reception classes. An exciting learning environment and excellent levels of care ensure children settle quickly and become confident, independent learners.
- The quality of teaching is good because teachers use their knowledge of all pupils to plan activities that closely match their needs.
- Teaching assistants are highly skilled and give good support in lessons. This adds to the quality of learning and ensures that all groups of pupils progress at a similar rate.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning; they feel safe at school and behaviour is good at all times of the school day.
- Pupils are proud of their school and of what they achieve. They are confident and quick to tell visitors how much they enjoy their learning and how much they like their teachers. Pupils know that teachers, teaching assistants and lunchtime staff all take great care of them. Their attendance is good.
- The well-planned curriculum is a strong factor in pupils' good achievement. It is successful in engaging pupils of all abilities in their learning.
- Staff have excellent relationships with parents and the school is highly regarded in the local community.
- The headteacher is determined to ensure all pupils achieve their potential in all aspects of learning. She works in close partnership with a strong governing body. As a result, the school is managed well and this has a positive impact on teaching and pupils' progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- While teachers' marking is regular, it does not always result in rapid improvements in pupils' work.
- Subject leaders have not had sufficient opportunities to be as effective as they could be in improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 13 lessons. The headteacher joined them in two observations of teaching and learning.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including: the school’s own self-evaluation, school improvement plans, records and policies about teaching, learning, pupils’ progress, behaviour and safety. They also looked at the minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils in and around school, including break and lunchtimes, and spoke to pupils about what they most enjoyed about school.
- Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils from all year groups read and visited lessons where pupils were learning about letters and sounds.
- Inspectors looked at a range of pupils’ work both in their workbooks and on display around the school.
- Inspectors sought the views of parents by talking to parents and considering the 29 responses to the online survey, Parent View.

Inspection team

David Wilson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Deborah Wylie

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Dinnington First School is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is below the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is broadly average. Those identified at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics, do not apply to this school because pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- Since May 2014, the school has been part of the Gosforth Schools Trust (a group of nine local First Schools and two of their feeder Middle Schools).

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Fully implement the school's marking policy to ensure that:
 - pupils are always clear about how well they have achieved
 - pupils are always clear about how to improve their work
 - all teachers make sure that pupils act upon advice given in marking and so improve their work.
- Improve the school's overall effectiveness further through the development of leadership roles by:
 - clarifying the specific roles of senior and middle leaders to support the school's priorities for improvement
 - encouraging and enabling middle leaders to use their expertise fully to accelerate school improvement.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Under the leadership of the headteacher all pupils and staff are encouraged and supported to achieve as well as they can. She is ably supported by the recently appointed deputy headteacher. Working closely together, the headteacher and the deputy headteacher have quickly established a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning through more effective use of data to drive forward school improvement.
- School leaders have established a friendly, purposeful atmosphere where pupils and staff are valued and supported to achieve their potential. The school works closely with parents and encourages them to be fully involved in their child's learning from the earliest possible time.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching through planned lesson observations, analysing teachers' planning and workbook sampling. Teachers are set meaningful targets, linked to individual and whole-school priorities, against the national Teachers' Standards to improve pupils' progress. This is contributing positively to the improvements in achievement.
- Senior leaders collect data and information to check the progress made by individuals and groups of pupils. This is used to identify where anyone is in danger of underperforming. Good quality support is then provided for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those receiving additional pupil premium funding.
- Subject leaders are involved in school improvement planning procedures. They are becoming more involved in analysing whole-school data to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in key areas of reading, writing and mathematics. This is at an early stage of development and as yet they have had insufficient opportunities to be as effective as they can be in improving further the quality of teaching and learning.
- A broad, balanced curriculum successfully meets the needs of pupils in terms of preparing them for the next stage in their educational journey and for life in modern day Britain. A strong emphasis on citizenship, through personal and social development, ensures that every opportunity is taken to promote respect, tolerance and positive attitudes to all in the school community. The curriculum is further enhanced by opportunities to take part in activities such as art, Spanish, dance, music and various sporting clubs. In addition, pupils talk excitedly about and value the opportunities for external visits to places of interest. One Year 4 pupil thought the residential visit they had to a local Outdoor Centre was 'the best thing in her life'.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support disadvantaged pupils as part of the school's determination to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make progress in line with their classmates.
- Primary schools sports funding is used well to improve the quality of teaching in physical education (PE). The appointment of a schools sports development teacher, across the Gosforth Trust schools, has had a significant impact in improving the skills and expertise of teachers. It has also increased the range of PE skills available to pupils and extended the range of after-school activities as well as enabling pupils to take part in sports events and competitions.
- The local authority works closely with school leaders and governors to provide effective support to move the school forward. It has brokered a range of support in aspects of finance, use of data and school improvement planning to enable governors to undertake their role effectively.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a strong commitment to the school and visit regularly. As a result, they have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and learning, this also includes the arrangements for rewarding good performance. They are clear about the impact of additional pupil premium and sport funding in the school. Since the last inspection, governors have played a significant role in improving the provision for outdoor learning in the early years. They are clear about the positive impact this has had on children's learning and development.
 - Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and that regular health and safety checks result in pupils and staff being safe on site. Finances are well managed and as a result, good levels of staffing and resources are in place to support good learning for pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are kind and supportive of each other; they are polite and courteous and are eager to tell visitors what is good about their school. Their positive behaviour helps create a warm, happy school where learning is enjoyed.
- Adults promote positive relationships and set high expectations for pupils' behaviour. All parents who took part in the online survey unreservedly agreed the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They work hard in lessons and are eager to learn. The vast majority of pupils apply themselves fully to the tasks they have to complete. They told inspectors that teachers and teaching assistants are always there to help them when they find things difficult.
- Pupils move sensibly around the building and are sensitive not to interrupt the work of others as they pass through general teaching spaces. At playtimes, pupils behave well in the playground. In the hall where pupils have lunch, a calm, orderly atmosphere is typical with little need for adult intervention to manage behaviour.
- Attendance is consistently at or above average because pupils enjoy coming to school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Safeguarding processes meet statutory requirements and all staff follows effective policies and procedures.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Parents are unanimous in their view that their children are safe, happy and well looked after in school.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe both in and out of school and when they are using computers. They have a good awareness of different types of bullying and can distinguish between bullying and times when friends can 'fall out'. Pupils were clear that bullying hardly ever happened because, 'teachers sorted things out straight away'.
- Excellent pastoral care ensures that pupils are very well supported and this has a positive impact on children's well-being and learning.
- Pupils who attend the breakfast club enjoy their experience. Staff ensure a safe and caring environment and set high expectations. They provide a healthy meal and pupils have good access to a range of activities, toys and games.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good across the school because teachers know the pupils well and plan lessons that meet the needs of all ability groups. In the main, teachers and teaching assistants use skilful questioning to find out what pupils already know in order to pitch the learning at just the right level. Parents have high levels of confidence in the quality of teaching and believe their children are well taught.
- All teachers have high expectations and encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. They encourage pupils to share their ideas with one another and work collaboratively. This helps pupils work successfully independently, in pairs and in groups and supports their social and communication skills.
- Teachers capture the interest of pupils and motivate them to want to learn. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils were highly excited and enthused to discover how the density of different materials affected the way in which they either passed through or floated on different liquids.
- Reading is well taught across the school. Pupils of all ages are confident and expressive readers. Younger pupils use their phonic skills to good effect when they are faced with the challenge of unfamiliar words. Older pupils use their reading skills successfully to study texts and increase the creative element of their writing. For example, Year 3 pupils were able to create an exciting resolution to a dramatic episode, linked the class story of *The Iron Man*. The use of powerful adjectives and dramatic use of punctuation captured the imagination of others as they read their stories. The teaching of writing and mathematics is consistently good and teachers are successful in using these skills across all curriculum areas.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support learning particularly in mathematics. Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled in supporting all ability groups when engaged in learning in the school computer room. As a result, all groups of pupils are confident in using ICT as a way to record their work or to use as a research tool.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but there is inconsistency in practice across the school. Not all teachers make it clear how well pupils have achieved and what they need to do to improve. Pupils are not

always given opportunities to respond to teachers' comments and this result in the same mistakes being repeated.

- Teaching assistants play a key role and are well deployed to support individuals and groups of pupils with specific needs. Support for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and the disadvantaged is good across the school. This is one of the reasons why different groups of pupils make equally good progress.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- All groups of pupils make good progress from their starting points and their overall attainment is at least above that expected by the time they leave Year 4.
- The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in Year 1 phonics reading checks (the sounds letters make) is consistently higher than the national average for all pupil groups including those with disabilities, those with special educational needs and those receiving pupil premium funding.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, the proportions of pupils reaching the expected standards for their age in reading, writing and mathematics are generally well above that seen nationally. While the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels at the end of Year 2 dipped slightly in 2014, this continues to represent good progress from their starting points.
- By the time pupils leave the school in Year 4, achievement continues to be good in mathematics and outstanding in reading and writing. School-based data indicates that the vast majority of pupils made expected progress in reading and writing, with more than a third of pupils achieving more than expected progress. In mathematics most pupils made expected progress with about a fifth making more than expected progress.
- As in Key Stage 1, the achievement of the most able pupils in Key Stage 2 continues to be good with the majority of most able Year 4 pupils achieving above that expected for their age. Their achievement reflects the very strong teaching of older pupils which continually challenges them to try hard.
- Most pupils read accurately with good expression. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have good strategies for reading unfamiliar words because they have a secure knowledge of letter sounds to read words successfully. Older pupils make good progress in their reading comprehension and are skilled in using skills of deduction and inference to get meaning from a text.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress because of the early identification from their starting points as a result of good teaching and effective support and intervention work that meet individual needs.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress. The school has been successful in reducing the gap in attainment between these pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils both in school and nationally. In 2013, at the end of Key Stage 1, these pupils attained better than similar groups nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. School data indicates the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils continues to narrow.
- Pupils are engaged and enthusiastic about physical education and sport. Additional sports funding is used well to employ a specialist physical education teacher to promote the subject. Pupils reach good standards in the subject. Children in Reception demonstrated good progress in balancing, holding a shape and using different parts of their body to support themselves. Older pupils are enthusiastic about opportunities to develop their individual skills in football, athletics and small-sided team games. Pupils' experience in physical education and sport makes a strong contribution to the development of their social skills, health and well-being.

The early years provision

is good

- Many children start either in Nursery or Reception classes, with knowledge and skills that are typical for their age. Children make good progress in the early years and are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.
- The quality of teaching in early years is good. Teachers and teaching assistants create a positive atmosphere for learning. Staff quickly identify the needs of all children and this gives parents' confidence in the care their children receive when they first start school. Good use is made of learning journals to support the transition from home to school and between the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Adults regularly assess children's skills and make good use of information gained to adapt and reshape

learning activities to meet individual needs and interests.

- Significant improvements have been made to the outdoor learning environment since the last inspection. This has dramatically improved opportunities for learning. Both the indoor and outdoor areas now provide a rich and vibrant learning environment. Resources are readily accessible to children and are carefully chosen to stimulate interest and curiosity. Planned activities contribute well to children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; this includes encouraging imagination and creativity in role-play areas.
- A good balance of adult-led activities and opportunities for children to explore for themselves means they can practise the skills they have learnt as they play. At all times children are encouraged to be independent and take responsibility for their own learning. As a result, children are resilient and able to stay on-task and complete activities confidently.
- In both whole-class teaching and small group work, teaching is effective. This includes the teaching of phonics (linking sounds and letters) and the development of early writing skills. Some of the youngest Nursery-age children are confidently recording recognisable letters to represent their names after a relatively short time in school.
- Children behave very well because they are interested and excited by their learning. Adults help children to learn important social skills, such as taking turns and being kind to one another, sensitively. As a result, children feel secure and are confident about asking adults for help.
- Effective leadership and management ensure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those for whom the school receives additional funding are well supported to make similar progress to their classmates.
- The early years leader provides clear and purposeful leadership and this has resulted in improvements to the quality of provision since the last inspection. She recognises significant improvements have been made but has developed action plans to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that children make even more rapid progress.

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	108437
Local authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	448351

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

Type of school	First
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	166
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Caroline Cogden
Headteacher	Allyson Farrar
Date of previous school inspection	25 November 2009
Telephone number	01661 822457
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Email address	admin@dinnington.newcastle.sch.uk

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