

# Dollis Infant School

Pursley Road, Mill Hill, London, NW7 2BU

**Inspection dates** 16–17 December 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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

- This good and improving school is well led by the headteacher, leadership team and governing body. Together, they ensure good teaching and achievement.
- Governors are rigorous in holding the school to account for its performance.
- Pupils show positive attitudes to their learning. They behave well, and are friendly and polite. They get on well together and with adults.
- The measures the school takes to keep pupils safe are outstanding. Parents and pupils are rightly confident in the excellent care provided for all.
- Decisive action has led to a big improvement in attendance, which has risen to be above the national average.
- Teaching makes learning interesting and is enjoyed by all pupils. Pupils are given helpful advice by teachers about how to improve their work. Teaching assistants are effective in supporting pupils' learning.
- Pupils make good progress and their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has risen over the last three years.
- Children enjoy well-planned activities in the Nursery and Reception classes. They get off to a good start to school, make good progress and are well prepared for Key Stage 1.
- The school successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It prepares them well from a young age for life in modern British democratic society.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Work does not always fully challenge the most-able pupils to attain the highest levels.
- Newly appointed subject leaders lack opportunities to check and develop the quality of teaching and achievement in their subjects.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes and visited 18 lessons, eight of them jointly with members of the school’s leadership team.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, the headteacher, and senior and subject leaders. Inspectors spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors held meetings with three groups of pupils. They talked informally with pupils at breaks and lunchtimes. They listened to pupils read.
- The 23 responses from parents to the online survey (Parent View) were taken into account. Inspectors spoke with parents and account was taken of the findings of a recent school survey of the views of 241 parents and pupils. Inspectors also noted the 24 responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors looked at several documents including: the school’s evaluation of its own performance; plans for improvement; and policies and records of pupils’ behaviour and attendance. Safeguarding documents were reviewed.

## Inspection team

Robert Ridout, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
James Waite	Additional inspector
Christine Bulmer	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- About one third of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium. This proportion is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Around one in 10 pupils have special educational needs or are disabled. This proportion is well above the national average.
- Pupils have a wide range of ethnic heritages. They are equally spread across: Asian, Black, White British, other White backgrounds; or other ethnic groups. Nearly three quarters of all pupils in the school speak English as an additional language, a higher-than-average proportion of pupils nationally.
- Provision is part time for children in the Nursery. Provision in Reception is full time.
- The subject leaders for literacy and numeracy are recent appointments.
- The school subscribes to the local schools sports partnership.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding so that more pupils attain the highest levels by ensuring:
  - the most-able pupils are always fully challenged
  - subject leaders are given opportunities to develop their skills in checking the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects so that they can help other teachers to improve their skills.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has high expectations of all pupils and staff. She is ably supported by a skilled deputy headteacher and leadership team. Leaders give the school a strong sense of purpose. They create an inclusive and caring culture which is reflected in good teaching, achievement and behaviour.
  - Staff are very committed to the school. They support the drive to raise achievement further while maintaining excellent care and support to pupils. As a result, pupils behave well and make good progress in their learning.
  - The school is developing a team of subject leaders to work more closely with senior staff in their work to improve teaching and learning. Newly appointed subject leaders have lacked opportunities to observe their colleagues in lessons and contribute more directly to better teaching and learning. New arrangements to enable subject leaders to have more impact in their subjects are being applied. It is too early to evaluate the full impact of these changes. However, early indications are that this is beginning to promote better learning.
  - The coordinator of special educational needs is effective in ensuring that pupils receive well-targeted support. Consequently, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress.
  - The new National Curriculum and assessment arrangements are being carefully and systematically introduced into the school. An interesting and exciting range of subject activities give additional support to pupils' practice of their skills in English and mathematics, enabling them to achieve well in these subjects.
  - The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It draws on and celebrates pupils' cultural diversity. Consequently, pupils enjoy exploring cultural differences and the things they have in common. For example, projects celebrating art, dance and music from Africa, China and Europe bring the school community closer together. As a result, the school is a harmonious, tolerant community which grows stronger from pupils' understanding of each other.
  - Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Learning relates to the diverse backgrounds of the pupils and local community. Consequently, pupils gain an understanding of fairness, tolerance and respect for others because these key values are effectively promoted by the good work of the school. Staff work hard to maintain good relationships.
  - The school ensures equality of opportunity for all. Discrimination is never tolerated and the school is an inclusive community. Pupils from all backgrounds celebrate festivals from all cultures. For example, inspectors observed all pupils playing a part in a production of the Christmas story. Parents, pupils and staff came together as one to celebrate the strength of their community.
  - The school is committed to promoting pupils' physical well-being. Leaders spend the funding from the primary sport premium to good effect. Provision is made to train staff and buy new equipment, resulting in a wider range of sports available, including cricket. Pupils' engagement in physical activities and their awareness of healthy lifestyles have increased as a result of the additional provision.
  - The pupil premium is well targeted to provide strong support for disadvantaged pupils. The impact of this support is carefully tracked and is effective in narrowing gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and that of others.
  - The local authority is rightly confident in the good leadership of the school and provides limited support.
  - The school makes pupils' safety a high priority. Procedures are followed meticulously. Arrangements for ensuring that pupils are safe meet statutory requirements. Consequently, pupils are confident to come to school and learn in its exceptionally secure environment.
  - Parents are strongly supportive of the school. Most would happily recommend it to other parents.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governors share the headteacher's high expectations for what staff and pupils can achieve. Governors work effectively with staff to ensure that pupils receive a good education.
  - The governing body makes sure it is well informed about teaching, attainment and progress. Governors are able to interpret pupil attainment and progress information and compare this with other schools nationally.
  - Governors use the information available to hold leaders to account for the school's performance. They are competent to ask leaders challenging questions and work with them to bring about improvement in any weaker areas.
  - Governors know what the quality of teaching is. They know what targets are set for teachers and make

sure only the best teaching is rewarded. Staff pay and promotion are only justified by pupils' progress and achievement. Governors are aware of where support is provided to improve teaching and support the headteacher in tackling any underperformance.

- Governors oversee the management of staff performance and make sure it is effective.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. There is mutual respect between pupils and adults. The behaviour policy is consistently well applied by all staff, and pupils understand what is expected of them. They get on very well with each other regardless of social or ethnic background.
- Pupils are polite and considerate to each other and all adults. They are friendly and well mannered, and go out of their way to help others.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They take trouble to keep their uniform smart. Displays around the school celebrate the care and effort pupils give to their work. Pupils do not drop litter in or outside the school and they keep the school very clean and tidy.
- Pupils are happy to attend and enjoy their learning. Work is well presented and shows pupils take pride in their achievements. They have positive attitudes to learning, which contribute well to their good progress.
- The equipment and range of activities in the playground are extensive and pupils are keen on physical activities. They play well together at playtimes and lunchtimes under the careful supervision of adults. Pupils return to lessons ready to learn after their active and energetic play.
- Pupils concentrate well in class and tackle activities with enthusiasm. Occasionally, when teaching is less effective, they fidget and chat with each other when they have finished because they are not sure what they are expected to do next.
- Punctuality to school and lessons is good. Pupils' attendance has risen rapidly and is, currently, ahead of the latest national average. Absence is immediately noted and followed up. The support of parents has strongly contributed to the improvements gained.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The school does everything it can to make certain pupils are safe. Staff are meticulously checked prior to appointment and access to the building is rigorously controlled.
- Procedures in school to ensure pupils' safety are exemplary. Routines for movement about the building and for pupils' conduct are closely applied by vigilant staff. Pupils appreciate the high level of care they receive.
- Exemplary support for vulnerable pupils is evidenced in case studies about individuals. Work with external teams is exceptionally well coordinated. As a result, vulnerable pupils remain safe and make good progress despite the challenges they experience outside school.
- Pupils can describe the types of bullying they might encounter and what they should do in the event of any bullying taking place. Such incidents are very rare. Records show that the school acts decisively to address any bullying should it occur.
- The school's work with families is very strong. Staff work tirelessly with individual parents and, if necessary, with a range of agencies, to support pupils who may be experiencing personal or learning difficulties. One consequence is that attendance has improved because parents are persuaded of the importance of their children attending school.
- All pupils spoken to say they feel safe in the school. Staff and parents confirm the inspectors' very positive findings on safety. Parents are convinced the school makes sure that pupils behave well. Parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and to the school's own survey are all convinced that their children are safe in school.

**The quality of teaching** is good

- Teaching is good across the school. As a result, most pupils, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and disadvantaged pupils, learn and achieve well in literacy, reading and mathematics.
- Teaching is not outstanding because the most-able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. Work set is not consistently demanding enough for the most able, so their abilities in reading, writing and mathematics are not fully stretched to enable them to make more rapid progress and attain the highest levels.
- The school's strong culture for learning is fostered by teachers' and other adults' good relationships with pupils. Pupils respect staff and appreciate the considerable help they are given.
- Teachers know their subjects well. Well-planned learning activities and effective use of resources ensure work captures pupils' interest and engages them in the process.
- Teaching assistants are effective and contribute greatly to pupils' progress in classes, small groups and with individuals. Teaching assistants are well briefed and deployed, and provide teachers with useful feedback on how well pupils understand the work.
- The teaching of mathematics is good and enables pupils to learn and achieve well. Pupils are given opportunities to learn mathematics in a variety of contexts. For example, they make good progress, and apply and record their mathematical learning competently.
- Teachers are skilled at asking questions to make sure that pupils understand their learning activities. Teachers encourage pupils' interest and commitment to learning so they make good progress. Pupils enjoy responding to questions and are keen to contribute to class discussions. The quality of pupils' speaking and listening is good and supports their learning well.
- Teachers give pupils many opportunities to write and make sure their literacy improves. Written work is marked with great care. Errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling are corrected and pupils receive good guidance on how to do better.
- Teachers mark pupils work regularly in all subjects and frequently praise their efforts. Teachers guide pupils well in what they need to do next to improve both their number work and their writing. Pupils are given time to make the improvements called for and the feedback they receive helps them to make better progress.
- The teaching of the sounds letters make (phonics) is good throughout the school. As a result, pupils are quick to apply their knowledge to read and write unfamiliar words accurately. They become confident and enjoy reading.

**The achievement of pupils** is good

- Pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good. Pupils from all social and ethnic backgrounds make consistently good progress from the good teaching they receive. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has risen over the last three years.
- On entry to Nursery, children are often physically underdeveloped, and many have weak language and communication skills compared to what are typical at that age. They make good progress from these starting points and, at the end of Year 2 in 2014, attained results close to the national average in mathematics, reading and writing.
- Most pupils make good progress from their different starting points. This is because school leaders ensure the teaching and resources for learning for reading, writing and mathematics are effective. As a result, pupils gain understanding, and improve their literacy and numeracy skills well.
- From often lower starting points than their peers, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. This is because teachers and teaching assistants give them the support they need to meet their individual learning needs.
- The progress of the many pupils who speak English as an additional language is good. This is because school leaders carefully track their progress and use the information gained to take action to give them the extra help they need to overcome difficulties in learning. Consequently, their skills improve, especially reading, and they are able to manage the full range of learning opportunities available to them alongside other pupils.
- The most-able pupils achieve generally well. The school identifies the most able from their attainment on entry to the Nursery and through regular assessments tracking their progress throughout the school. Although their progress is generally good, not all achieve as well as they can. In 2014, fewer than

expected attained the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. The most able are not always challenged fully to attain their very best in every lesson.

- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well because the additional support they receive is effective in accelerating their progress. At the end of Key Stage 1, the gap between their attainment and that of their peers in school and that of all pupils nationally is closing. However, in 2014, disadvantaged pupils were still about one term behind other pupils in school and about half a term behind pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- School evidence shows that disadvantaged pupils presently in the school are making broadly comparable progress to that of other pupils in developing basic skills. Inspection findings from observations of lessons and of pupils' work endorse the accuracy of the school's data.

### The early years provision

is good

- Children develop their skills quickly and make good progress in the early years.
- Leadership is good. Leaders routinely check to ensure staff know each child's needs and plan for the next steps in each child's learning. As a result, teaching is good and standards are improving.
- Classrooms are bright, colourful, welcoming and well resourced. The outdoor areas encourage imaginative play and make children want to learn.
- The curriculum is well planned across all main areas of knowledge so that children have a wide variety of valuable learning opportunities. For example, excellent teaching and learning of phonics were observed in the Nursery class. The children concentrated hard while looking at and listening attentively to each other as they made the letter sounds.
- Phonics and early reading skills are given extra attention across subjects and learning because some children have limited understanding of English on entry. These children make good progress in speaking English from the help they receive.
- Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and, consequently, their conduct is good. The children understand and follow the well-established daily routines that support their good behaviour and safety. Staff make sure the children are completely safe and secure in all learning environments.
- Children have positive attitudes to learning because activities stimulate their interest and engagement. They develop good social skills and the confidence to do things independently. Their confidence with authorised visitors shows the school is successful in ensuring their good personal development.
- Teaching is purposeful and promotes good learning. 'Learning journals' set out convincing photographic and narrative evidence of children's good progress. The journals keep parents well informed about their children's achievements and progress.
- Staff work well with parents. Parents speak highly of the teaching and express confidence that their children are learning both academically and socially. Some pupils secure good levels of development by the time they start Year 1 and all are well prepared for their next steps in education.

## 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>	101275
<b>Local authority</b>	Barnet
<b>Inspection number</b>	449274

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	327
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Wai Yee Crees
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christine Rayner
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 January 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8959 3995
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