

Downshall Primary School

Meads Lane, Seven Kings, Ilford, Essex IG3 8UG

Inspection dates 5 – 6 March 2015

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.

- Astute governance, leadership and management at all levels have ensured that the good quality of teaching and achievement has been maintained since the previous inspection. This is because leaders make regular checks on learning, teaching and how well pupils are progressing in their work.
- Pupils' behaviour is good across the school, in classrooms and outside. They are eager to learn, and this helps them to make good progress.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and improving, with some outstanding practice. Teachers ask good questions which make pupils think hard and move their progress forward.
- Pupils achieve well throughout the school, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, those from minority ethnic groups and pupils who speak English as an additional language. This is because staff pay close attention to supporting individual pupils.
- Pupils attain standards at the end of Key Stage 2 that are at least the same, and often better than other 11 year olds in the country.
- The most able achieve well by the end of Year 6. This is because they receive teaching from subject experts, who inspire them and help them understand where they make errors. By the end of Key Stage 2, a high proportion of pupils attain the highest levels in tests in mathematics.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils have a good understanding of British values and are well prepared for life in modern Britain by the time they leave Year 6.
- Provision in the early years is good. As a result, the youngest children make good progress by the end of Reception.
- Pupils feel safe in school and say they are well looked after. Pupils from a diverse range of backgrounds get on well together.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A few pupils, but more than the average, are persistently absent from school, which limits their achievement.
- The school's engagement with a minority of parents and families is not always effective.
- Occasionally, teachers do not spot when work is too hard, too easy, or already understood, and therefore do not move pupils on quickly enough.
- In some instances, teachers' marking does not lead to prompt improvements in pupils' work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team looked at learning in all classes and year groups. On a number of occasions this was alongside the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior teachers. Inspectors also observed sessions with small groups of pupils, an assembly and break times. In addition, inspectors scrutinised work in pupils’ books in a range of subjects. Inspectors also listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors held meetings and discussions with pupils, school leaders, teachers, two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 47 responses from parents to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the outcomes from parent surveys that the school conducted. They also spoke to parents informally in the playground. The inspection team considered formal parental correspondence received during the inspection and followed-up the issues that were raised.
- Inspectors considered the 42 questionnaire responses received from staff.
- The inspection team also examined a range of documentation, including those related to safeguarding, the school’s self-evaluation and development plan, the minutes of governing body meetings, information about pupils’ progress and attainment, records of behaviour and attendance and records relating to the management of staff performance. The school’s website was also scrutinised.

Inspection team

David Thomas Hatchett, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Clementina Olufunke Aina, Team inspector	Additional Inspector
Barnaby Geen, Team inspector	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much larger than most primary schools in the country with over 600 pupils on roll. Children in the early years Nursery class attend school part time. They attend full time in the Reception classes.
- Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic groups. This is a much higher proportion than average. The largest groups are pupils from Asian or Asian British Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian backgrounds. Most pupils, also a higher proportion than average, speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is similar to the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average. A small number of pupils with emotional and behavioural needs are educated at alternative provision each morning and attend the school in the afternoon.
- More pupils than average leave or join the school at other than the usual times.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of changes to the staffing of the school, and a change in the Chair of the Governing Body. During the summer term 2014 the school was without a deputy headteacher and the headteacher was on extended leave due to sickness. A deputy headteacher took up post on an interim basis in September 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement and the overall quality of teaching to outstanding by:
 - ensuring that the quality of marking across the school matches the best, and that marking leads to prompt improvements in pupils' work
 - making sure that teachers and other adults reshape tasks and activities throughout lessons, when pupils find tasks too easy or too hard.
- Enhance leadership and management further by:
 - improving the effectiveness of the school's work with the small number of families whose children do not attend school regularly
 - improving the school's engagement and communication with parents, and raising awareness of the school's strengths.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders have overseen improvements since the previous inspection and sustained the good quality of education evident then. Leadership in the early years has improved. Leaders have high expectations and ensure that all staff foster positive relationships, promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination. This can be seen, for example, in the good, harmonious relationships between pupils from a range of backgrounds, brought about in part by the school's strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision.
 - Leaders at all levels, together with governors, have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Judgements on the quality of the school's work are accurate, including in the early years. Subject and phase leaders provide good leadership and regularly check on pupils' learning.
 - The school's improvement plans identify the right actions to help it improve to the next level.
 - The curriculum is exciting, practical and enables pupils to learn well and make good progress as they move through the school. Clear threads to the curriculum are the core skills of literacy, numeracy, computing, problem-solving, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the promotion of British values. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of concepts such as liberty, freedom of speech, democracy and why there are laws in place. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
 - The school makes good use of the pupil premium to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve well. For example, leaders have invested the extra funding in employing an additional teacher and assistants, small group work, after-school sessions and appropriate staff training. As a result of wise spending decisions, gaps are closing quickly throughout the school and disadvantaged pupils often achieve as well as or better than other pupils nationally.
 - The school has made effective use of the additional primary sports funding to increase girls' and boys' participation in a wide range of sporting activities during and outside of school hours. This funding has also been used to employ a professional sports coach and for staff training.
 - Leaders, governors and staff consider pupils' safety to be their primary concern. All staff are trained regularly in child protection. Vulnerable pupils are well cared for and record keeping is organised, detailed and stored confidentially. The school's safeguarding procedures meet minimum statutory requirements.
 - School leaders monitor the attendance, behaviour and achievement of pupils attending alternative provision in a rigorous way, ensuring that they are safe and making good progress.
 - The school manages staff performance well. Teachers and additional adults are given targets which are linked to how well they teach the pupils in their classes or groups and how well they progress. Alongside governors, leaders ensure that only the best teaching is rewarded financially through salary progression.
 - New approaches to assessment to support the new primary curriculum have been introduced in the relevant year groups. This is helping teachers to identify the skills pupils have mastered and what they need to do next. The school is working with the local authority to make sure that assessments are accurate and checked.
 - The local authority has provided significant support to the school. It successfully brokered interim leadership arrangements for the school during an extended period when the headteacher was absent from school, and while the school was without a deputy headteacher last year. This ensured no interruptions to the improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement. The local authority's adviser visits the school termly, and a recent review and records of visits correctly judge the school's effectiveness to be good.
 - Leaders have addressed almost all of the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. In particular, pupils' attainment, including in mathematics, has risen and the early years provision is now good. The impact of leaders' work to improve attendance levels has resulted in improvements in overall attendance. In the current academic year, attendance is close to the national average. However, persistent absence has not reduced quickly enough and is still above average.
 - The school's work, engagement and communication with parents require some improvement. Over one in five parents would not recommend the school to others. A few parents feel that the school does not listen to or act on their comments and concerns. Inspectors judge that the school is good but that communication is not always prompt and sufficient. Sometimes, the school does not raise parents' awareness of its strengths effectively.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governance is effective. The Chair of the Governing Body is both committed to, and ambitious for the school. She has successfully overseen a very recent reconstitution of the governing body, which has reduced the size of the membership but improved the effectiveness and attendance of governors and

quoracy of meetings. Through their monitoring and support, governors have overseen improvements in pupils' achievement since the previous inspection.

- Governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have ensured that the school meets statutory expectations for the safeguarding of pupils. They understand how well the school is performing compared to other schools and are now developing their skills in analysing data on pupils' achievement.
- Governors manage and oversee the school's budget closely through an effective finance committee. They ask good questions to check that resources are used well and to best effect. For example when making decisions about funding in relation to the use of the pupil premium, and in ensuring that pay progression is only awarded to teachers whose pupils make good or better progress. Governors visit the school regularly and are now gathering information on the quality of teaching across the school. They know how teaching is checked by school leaders and how underperformance is tackled.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good, including in the early years and those attending alternative provision. Pupils are a credit to the school in terms of their politeness, courtesy, their welcome to visitors and the pride they take in their school environment. The vast majority of parents, pupils and staff agree that pupils' behaviour is good.
- Pupils are eager to learn. This results in good or better progress in lessons and over time. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson about enlargement of shapes, pupils' excellent attitudes and application to their learning enabled them to make rapid gains in their learning and tackle work set at the highest level.
- Pupils' attendance levels to school have improved since the previous inspection in response to a recommendation at that time, but remain slightly below the national average. This is because a small, but higher than average proportion of pupils are persistently absent from school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The majority of parents, pupils and staff agree that the school keeps children safe. Pupils' understanding of how to stay safe and how to deal with potential unsafe situations is also good, including in the early years.
- The school is thorough in checking that pupils who attend alternative provision are kept safe.
- Pupils show a good awareness of e-safety and what they need to do in order to stay safe when using electronic devices, computers and the internet. They have a good awareness of risk, and say they would consult an adult if they were unsure or worried. Pupils know about the different types of bullying which exist, both within school and within society. They learn about name-calling, prejudice-based bullying, cyber-bullying and racism through the school's effective personal, social and health education programme. Pupils believe they would know how to deal with bullying if it occurred.
- The school's risk assessment procedures are fit for purpose, including for outdoor areas and equipment.

The quality of teaching is good

- The good quality of teaching reported at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained and enhanced further, particularly in the early years. Leaders check the quality of teaching regularly by observing learning, looking at books and analysing how well pupils progress. This work has ensured that teaching is typically good, and sometimes better, over time.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is good. Staff are well trained and provide work that is matched to pupils' abilities; they model pronunciation clearly and correctly. Teaching in Year 2 for those who did not meet the required standard in the Year 1 phonics check is strong, and as a result a high proportion meet the standard by the end of Year 2.
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is good throughout the school. Occasionally teaching has a very strong impact on progress over time. For example, in Year 6 mathematics, pupils make rapid progress and some attain the highest levels because they are taught by subject experts and the work they complete is challenging. Teaching in other subjects, for example art and design, is also good.
- The strong features of teaching include the use of additional adults in all parts of the lesson. This ensures that all groups of pupils, including those who are new to the school or at the early stages of learning English, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress. Teachers

also ask good questions of their class, and they usually, but not always, focus questions on individual pupils so that everyone participates in the lesson.

- The quality of marking is mostly good and contributes to good teaching and progress. It often leads to prompt improvements in pupils' work. Marking in mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 2, is strong with helpful comments that enable pupils to improve their work further. However, this quality is not evident across all subjects and year groups, and marking does not always lead to prompt improvements in pupils' work.
- Where teaching results in the fastest progress, teachers adjust the tasks they set throughout the lesson to ensure they are never too hard or too easy. For example, in a lesson observed in Year 6 about enlargement, pupils were challenged to increase the size of a shape by an enlargement factor of two. When the teacher noticed that the pupils were completing this with ease, she immediately increased the challenge by asking pupils to enlarge the shape by a factor of three instead. Pupils made rapid progress as a result.
- Where teaching results in slower progress, pupils are set work that is not always carefully pitched to their needs. Teachers do not intervene or adjust the tasks during the course of the lesson.

The achievement of pupils is good

- When children join the Nursery and Reception classes, their skills are often below that which is typically found and expected for their age. This is particularly the case in communication and language, mathematics and personal development. However, pupils catch up quickly because they enjoy good teaching from the moment they arrive that is just at the right level. As a result, by the time they leave the early years and enter Year 1, their attainment is broadly average.
- Pupils go on to make good progress through Key Stage 1 in all subjects. Pupils enjoy reading and choose books that are at the right level for their vocabulary. As a result, they make good progress and achieve similar results in the Year 1 phonics check to the national average. By the time they leave Year 2, their attainment in national assessments is in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Results in 2014 were the school's best, and inspection evidence suggests attainment remains above the national average.
- Pupils from Asian or Asian British Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian backgrounds achieve well and at least in line with their peers and the national average. This is because teachers cater well for the different groups in their classes. School tracking information shows that pupils who join or leave the school at different times also achieve well because of good use and sharing of assessment information.
- Achievement in art and design and physical education is good because pupils are well taught and additional funding is used well to enhance sports provision.
- Pupils make swift progress throughout Key Stage 2. In 2014, by the time pupils left at the end of Year 6, their attainment was above the national average, and significantly above in writing and in the grammar, punctuation and spelling test. Inspection evidence from books, observations of learning in lessons and school performance data show that pupils' achievement continues to be good. There is a three-year trend of improvement in attainment at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- The achievement of the most able pupils is a significant strength of the school. A higher than average proportion of pupils attain the higher levels in Year 6 in all subjects and a significantly higher than average proportion attained at the highest level in mathematics in 2014. The proportion of Year 6 pupils exceeding expected progress from their Key Stage 1 starting points in reading, writing and mathematics was above national figures.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar good progress to their peers in all year groups and subjects. This is because of well-chosen tasks and work that is suited to their individual areas of need. Pupils educated in alternative provision also make good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well throughout the school and gaps between their achievement and that of their peers are closing rapidly in all year groups, particularly by the end of Key Stage 2. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils were slightly ahead of other pupils in reading, both in the school and nationally. In writing, they attained at a similar level to other pupils in the school and nationally. In mathematics, disadvantaged pupils were just over two terms behind other pupils in the school, and under a term behind other pupils in the country. Inspection evidence shows that this gap in mathematics will be smaller in 2015, reflecting continuing good use of pupil premium funding.

The early years provision**is good**

- The leadership and management of the early years are good. The leader has an accurate understanding of the provision's strengths and areas for development. The leader has overseen improvements in the provision and children's achievement since the previous inspection.
- Children are well cared for in the early years setting and adults supervise activities inside and outside to ensure children feel safe in the environment but also make progress. This is supported through children's good behaviour, which adults promote effectively throughout the setting with high expectations. Children's English, communication and social skills come on quickly because adults set a good example in their use of language and encourage conversation when they work with children. Children enjoy talking about their activities and work, and increasingly take responsibility for their own learning. For example, a number of children in the Nursery classes take pride at showing adults that they can write their name unaided.
- Children settle quickly and progress well throughout their time in the Nursery and Reception classes, so that by the time they enter Year 1, their attainment is similar to other pupils of their age. This is because adults provide a range of exciting activities and experiences for children to engage with. Adults ask probing questions that make children reflect on their previous experiences in school and at home in order to strengthen or develop new learning and skills. This was evident, for example, in a Nursery session where children were learning about words beginning with 'i' and 'm'.
- Adults make use of a wide range of artefacts and hands-on activities which enable all children, but particularly the many who are learning English as an additional language, to develop their vocabulary and understand their environment and what is around them. This was evident in a session where children were learning about the names of different fruits and vegetables.

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 of 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	102800
Local authority	London Borough of Redbridge
Inspection number	449723

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	603
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shabana Shaukat
Headteacher	Ian Bennett
Date of previous school inspection	29 – 30 April 2010
Telephone number	020 8590 2157
Fax number	020 8597 6690
Email address	admin.downshall@redbridge.gov.uk

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125 Kingsway
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