

Downderry Primary School

Downderry Road, Downham, Bromley Kent BR1 5QL

Inspection dates

17–18 May 2016

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The determination of the headteacher to make sure that all pupils believe in themselves and achieve success is shared by all staff. This contributes to a culture of high aspirations for both staff and pupils. Courteous behaviour is evident throughout the school and pupils behave in an exemplary manner.
- Teaching, learning and assessment have been transformed through a highly successful method of ensuring that leadership is developed at all levels. Very robust performance management systems enable staff to take responsibility for supporting pupils' and their own learning extremely well.
- School leaders complete rigorous checks on the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make. This has been instrumental in the school's journey from good to outstanding since the last inspection.
- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers plan carefully, using their deep subject knowledge and understanding of what pupils already know and can do across the whole curriculum. Consequently, pupils learn very effectively.
- Governors, school leaders and staff are fully committed to ensuring that every pupil is seen as an individual and gets the best education the school can provide. The curriculum underpins these high expectations; it strongly supports and enriches pupils' learning, helping them to learn rapidly.
- Pupils enjoy many memorable experiences. Workshops, trips and visitors and a wide range of after-school events extend pupils' knowledge and understanding in artistic, creative and sporting activities. Therefore, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well, encouraging pupils' self-confidence.
- The early years provision is outstanding. Children make exceptional progress from starting points that are below those typical for their age, and leave the early years ready for Year 1. They are well supported and grow in confidence quickly. The children are remarkably motivated to learn both inside and out as a result of the many activities on offer.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that pupils are encouraged to develop fluent handwriting.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- Leaders and governors have ensured that the school's mottos, 'trying your best equals success' and 'if you believe you will achieve' are embedded into the routines and expectations throughout the school. Leaders tackle discrimination and promote equality of opportunity exceptionally well. As a result, pupils make rapid progress from low starting points to achieve outcomes that are in line with or above national expectations for their age.
- The headteacher, together with governors, has successfully built a skilled leadership team, wholly focused on improving the outcomes of all pupils. This has resulted in many improvements since the last inspection. Moreover, the staff team has demonstrated the capacity to continually drive improvement. Consequently, leaders have been able to share their skills, supporting other schools, while ensuring ongoing school development continues.
- Leaders have thought carefully about how to reduce staff turnover. Exceptional teachers are given a chance to take on greater responsibility within the school, for example, by leading on learning and assessment. The roles and responsibilities of post-holders are clear, with everyone working together to ensure that initiatives are successful. Inspection evidence confirms that staff morale is high; staff are proud to be members of the school community.
- Leaders have established highly effective systems to assess the impact of planning, teaching and assessment practices on pupils' outcomes. For example, the use of filming to review teaching is used creatively by staff to identify what works well and what could be refined or developed further. Staff diligently track each pupil's individual progress and achievement to identify clearly which pupils may be at risk of not fulfilling their potential. Senior leaders analyse this information to define areas of strength and potential areas for future focus. This detailed tracking and review of interventions has been instrumental in supporting the planning of individual teachers for high-quality teaching, learning and assessment. This is accelerating the progress made by current pupils at the school.
- The curriculum is rich and varied. It inspires pupils to engage in a wide range of activities and events. All pupils learn French, exceeding the current national curriculum requirement. After-school clubs provide opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding, for example in coding at the computing club, and in growing their own produce at the gardening club. Throughout the curriculum a deep emphasis is placed on developing pupils' understanding of what it means to be British. Pupils have a strong awareness of, and value, democracy. This has been influenced by meeting their mayor and a local MP. Pupils say that they value the many opportunities provided by engaging with the school council, voting on initiatives to make positive changes to their school. Members of the school council spoke enthusiastically to inspectors about holding their own Downerry general election and placing votes into a ballot box to choose from three political parties. The school council is particularly proud of its role in the life of the school.
- Programmes of support are carefully evaluated to ensure that the use of pupil premium funding impacts well on pupils' achievement and well-being. The funding is clearly focused on ensuring support in three key areas: raising standards; supporting pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, and enhancing extra-curricular experiences. Consequently, pupils entitled to this funding perform well throughout the school.
- Primary sports funding is well spent on broadening pupils' experiences of a range of sports activities, increasing participation in competitive sport and using expert external coaches to support teachers in delivering the highest quality sporting provision. The school has its own pool, and qualified swimming coaches. As a result, all pupils meet, and many exceed, the national curriculum swimming requirement by the time they leave Year 6.
- The local authority rightly affirms that it has every confidence in the outstanding leadership of the school, and consequently provides very light-touch support.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Highly effective governance ensures that all governors know very clearly how teachers' performance is managed. Governors keep up to date with their statutory responsibilities. They have the same high aspirations for the school as the leadership team, resulting in a unified approach to providing the best possible education. Governors are acutely aware of what is done to reward high-quality teaching and of how leaders maintain the highest standards in teaching.

- The chair of governors, through regular visits to the school, has a strong appreciation of what is working well and a clear awareness of how initiatives aimed at improving the school are being implemented. Governors have successfully developed strong partnerships within the community, for example, through parental workshops on internet safety, new pupil assessment systems, links with the local church and support for local schools. They are rightly proud of the recently filmed governor interviews, which highlight the role of governors to the wider school community. These were recorded by pupils in the school's own radio studio, complete with green-screen technology, a facility that members of the school council excitedly talked about when meeting with the inspectors.
- Governors execute their duties conscientiously and scrutinise information about the rigour with which staff safeguard and protect children. As a result, policies and practices to keep pupils safe are robust and rigorously implemented.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are exceptionally well trained and informed of potential risks and recent legislation, including radicalisation and the 'Prevent' duty. They quickly identify any pupils at risk of harm. Parents say that they are confident in the school's work to keep pupils safe from harm.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

- Teaching, learning and assessment have been transformed through regular, high-quality checking by leaders throughout the school. Staff take responsibility for supporting pupils' learning. Staff continually review their own professional development and reflect on how their teaching helps pupils to learn better. Frequent monitoring secures a consistent approach to teaching, learning and assessment and ensures rapid progress for pupils. High levels of pupil engagement are evident in all classes, in pupils' work books and in the work on display. Displays are creative, colourful and vibrant, showing teachers' and pupils' shared high expectations of what can be achieved.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding. This is because teachers' planning is rooted in their understanding of what pupils already know and can do across the whole curriculum. The quality of provision for the most able is particularly strong. Learning in mathematics books shows that the most-able pupils are set challenges that enable them to practise and consolidate skills learned, and develop mathematical mastery. Many opportunities exist for pupils to practise and use their mathematical and literacy skills across the curriculum.
- Pupils take care with their work. As a result, their books and displays in school are well presented and their work is neat and tidy. However, a few pupils lack fluency in their handwriting.
- Teachers assess work consistently in line with the school's policy, giving helpful feedback, both written and oral, which contributes to the rapid gains made by pupils in their learning across all subjects. Assessment is particularly effective in ensuring challenge for the most able. The high standard of work in pupils' books reflects the positive impact of teacher assessment and feedback. The school's own tracking information confirms that the most able pupils are making significant progress.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is excellent. They use this, and their awareness of what pupils can do, to continually adjust their questioning in response to pupils' level of understanding. For example, in reading sessions, teachers encourage pupils to make links between previous and current learning and continually probe pupils' thinking. In a mathematics lesson, a teacher skilfully used pupils' misconceptions around angles identified in a recent assessment, and challenged them to demonstrate their reasoning. Discussions around their prior learning further tested pupils' understanding. As a result of their resilience and diligent application to a difficult task, pupils were able to demonstrate how their fluency in mathematical reasoning had improved.
- The highly successful teaching of reading is leading to rapid gains across the school. Teachers ensure that reading is promoted throughout the curriculum. They use high-quality themed texts in lessons as well as electronic texts. Consequently pupils make rapid progress, particularly in understanding complex texts and making deductions. Teachers skilfully plan meaningful and engaging activities. As a result, pupils enthusiastically share their enjoyment of reading. They are clear about their targets and the skills required to help them make swift improvements.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are mature, confident and resilient learners. They are eager to talk to visitors about their experiences at school and are rightly proud of their achievements. Pupils talk assuredly about their role in making the school a better place, for example as a school councillor, resilience ambassador, playground buddy or prefect.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and safe. Scooter safety workshops have helped them to know how to use their scooters responsibly when travelling to and from school and the importance of exercise. Pupils in Year 1 were keen to tell an inspector about healthy foods and their plan for a healthy dinner.
- Pupils value the school's 'listening ear', confident that there is an adult they can talk to who will listen. Pupils show a very good understanding of what bullying is and the difference between teasing and bullying; they say that bullying incidents are rare and the school's behaviour logs confirm this.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. The school's values are well supported through the rich curriculum and planned community events, such as fund-raising for charities or visits into London to take part in festivals promoting peace and harmony. As a result, pupils are thoughtful about their work and in their behaviour towards each other.
- The school environment is bright, well maintained and a pleasant place to be. High-quality, creative displays showcase pupils' academic, creative and artistic achievements, celebrating London's multicultural community and pride in being British. During the school assembly, pupils proudly joined in singing the national anthem. Across the school they were keen to take part in activities celebrating the Queen's 90th birthday and in showing the crowns they had made at home. Even in the early years, children demonstrated a good understanding of current events, explaining clearly to inspectors that they were celebrating the Queen's birthday and that she lived in London at Buckingham Palace.
- Pupils' attendance has improved across the school. The attendance of key pupil groups is now at least in line with the national figure for 2015. For example, current school information shows improvements in the attendance of pupils who are eligible for free school meals and for those who have special educational needs or disability. This represents a significant improvement. This is because leaders have made sure an effective team is in place. This team makes home visits to check on pupils' whereabouts. Recent competitions, with high-value prizes, have encouraged families to support their child's attendance. As a result, the school's persistent absence rate is now below the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

are outstanding

- Inspection analysis of performance information and book scrutiny confirm that all groups of pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, the disadvantaged and the most able, all make very rapid progress from their starting points. This is consistent in reading, writing, mathematics and in other subjects across the curriculum, including the study of French. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Sustained and focused tracking of the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils are making has secured significant improvements in outcomes, particularly in writing. This has been instrumental in the school's journey from good to outstanding since the last inspection. For the last three years, attainment has been at or above national averages by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils excel in their learning and make outstanding progress. The proportion of pupils making more than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national figures in 2015. Overall, expected progress was not as strong in reading as it was in mathematics and writing. However, school information and first-hand observations confirm that current pupils are making rapid progress in this subject as a result of highly effective teaching.
- Book scrutiny and assessment information for current pupils confirm that a range of targeted intervention and support is ensuring that pupils who have special educational needs or disability make similar rapid progress to their peers.

- Effective teaching and rapid progress are ensuring that by the end of Year 6, disadvantaged pupils' achievement is broadly in line with that of other non-disadvantaged pupils nationally and other pupils at the school. The proportion of pupils making better than expected progress is higher than that of other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most able pupils are provided with learning that extends and challenges them. They confidently record their approach to solving complex problems in their mathematics books, deepening their understanding further. Pupils' writing across all subjects shows that they are able to use a wide range of vocabulary with competence. As a result, a high proportion of most-able pupils in all year groups make better than expected progress.
- Children make rapid progress in the Nursery Year and Reception Year. The proportion of children who leave the early years with a good level of development has been above the national average for the last three years. As a result, they are very well prepared when they start Year 1.
- As a result of the strong teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent), the proportion of Year 1 pupils that achieved the expected standard in the phonics check has improved significantly since 2013. In 2014 and 2015, the proportion of Year 1 pupils that met the expected standard in phonics was above the national figure.
- Attainment in 2015 was above average at the end of key stage 1, with significant proportions of pupils achieving the higher levels, demonstrating the rapid gains made by pupils across this key stage.

Early years provision

is outstanding

- Highly effective leadership and a well-established teaching team are ensuring that, year on year, children's achievement in the early years is now outstanding. Strong working partnerships enable children to progress very well in their literacy and numeracy skills when moving from the early years into Year 1 and beyond. The school's phonics programme, which starts in the early years, is developing both writing and reading skills. As a result, children are very well prepared to start Year 1.
- Home visits prior to entry and the many themed link days built into the curriculum foster strong parental engagement. Transitions from home into the early years and then Year 1 are seamless and well managed. Consequently, children arrive with very positive attitudes to starting school. Their personal, social and emotional development is excellent. They listen well and take turns.
- Children feel safe in a bright and inspiring, well-ordered environment. This is because they are supervised very well. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. For example, teachers expect children to use equipment correctly. Staff skilfully nurture their confidence from the moment they begin school. The many outdoor learning experiences on offer, including Forest School learning, actively encourage children to take well-considered risks. For example, they were seen independently and confidently using the large, fixed outdoor play equipment, balancing and swinging with enjoyment on the parallel wires. Equally, children's literacy and numeracy skills deepen as they explore with adults, or sometimes alone, the extensive range of exciting activities that are continually available to them both inside and outdoors.
- The children are exceptionally well motivated, and show good concentration and perseverance in their tasks. This is evident when they use their knowledge of letters and sounds to write on sticky labels, labelling the resources and equipment in the setting, or when using the water chutes to explore how fast a ball would travel.
- Adults' recording of assessment information is detailed and of high quality. Learning profiles contain strong evidence of progress because adults knowledgeably plan experiences which develop children's curiosity and interest. For the past three years, as a result of the outstanding provision, more children reached average standards at the end of the Reception Year compared with the national average.

School details

Unique reference number	100679
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	10010963

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	515
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Harrington
Headteacher	Tracey Lewis
Telephone number	020 8698 5768
Website	www.downderryprimaryschool.com
Email address	admin@downderry.lewisham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	29–30 March 2011

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support through the pupil premium funding is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding given to schools for disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for free school meals or are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is just below national averages.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club, which is managed by the governing body.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 23 lessons or parts of lessons in all year groups. Members of the school's leadership team joined a number of these visits to lessons. As well as looking at pupils' work during lessons, a selection of pupils' work books was scrutinised. Inspectors also observed an assembly.
- Inspectors spoke to two groups of pupils, including representatives from the school council. They also observed pupils during playtime and lunchtime, and spoke to pupils informally throughout the two days. They listened to pupils read.
- A number of meetings were held with senior staff, middle leaders and teachers in the early stages of their teaching career. Meetings were held with a representative from the local authority and representatives from the governing body.
- The inspection team reviewed a range of documentation provided by the school, including the school development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, documents relating to safeguarding, performance management, behaviour and attendance logs, and information about pupils' attainment and progress. The school's website was also reviewed.
- The 28 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own pupil questionnaires were taken into account, as were the 12 replies to the staff questionnaire. The views of parents were also collected at the beginning of the day.

Inspection team

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Christopher Birtles	Ofsted Inspector
Melanie Jackson	Ofsted Inspector
Martina Martin	Ofsted Inspector

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