

# Donnington Wood Infant School and Nursery Centre

Baldwin Webb Avenue, Donnington, Telford, Shropshire TF2 8EP

## Inspection dates

24–25 January 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Recently, pupils' progress in writing and mathematics across key stage 1 has slowed.
- Currently, in key stage 1, lower-ability pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are not making the progress in writing and mathematics that they could.
- Some teaching does not build carefully enough on pupils' current level of understanding. At times, teachers' expectations of what lower-ability pupils can achieve are too low.
- Leaders have not kept a sharp enough focus on the progress of those pupils who are behind others in their learning.
- School leaders' and governors' plans for school improvement do not draw on all the available information. Consequently, actions to drive improvement are not tightly focused and staff are not sure where improvements are needed.
- A small number of pupils miss too much school or arrive late for no good reason.

### The school has the following strengths

- The early years provision is effective. Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception Years.
- Pupils' behaviour is managed well. Pupils respond positively to the school's consistent and constructive approach.
- Many of the middle- and higher-ability pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The teaching of phonics and reading is successful.
- Staff are very attentive to welfare and safety matters. Safeguarding procedures are efficient and any concerns are followed up swiftly.
- Work to support families and engage parents in their children's learning is a notable feature of the school's work. One hundred per cent of respondents to Parent View would recommend the school.

## Full report

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

- Boost progress in writing and mathematics for the lower-attaining pupils in key stage 1 by making sure that:
  - teaching builds securely and progressively on pupils’ earlier learning
  - the extra support that is given to some pupils outside of lessons is effective and ties in with classroom learning
  - expectations of what pupils can achieve are high enough and that teaching offers suitable challenge as well as encouragement
  - staff expertise is used to best effect to ensure that effective practice is shared.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management on teaching and learning by making sure that:
  - leaders keep a close watch on the progress made by pupils who enter Year 1 behind their peers
  - planning for school improvement is tightly focused and informed by all the available information
  - leaders have a well-informed and clear understanding of how well the support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is working
  - leaders continue to challenge poor punctuality and unnecessary absence so that pupils do not miss learning time without good reason.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- In recent times, leaders have not maintained a sharp enough focus on pupils' progress, especially the progress made in key stage 1 by lower-ability pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Consequently, some shortcomings in provision have gone unchecked and school improvement planning and actions have not honed in on ways to boost progress in writing and mathematics.
- The headteacher is a highly visible presence in school. Staff, parents, governors and pupils trust her judgement and value her advice and she brings many strengths to the school. Under her leadership, the school has developed an effective early years provision, which continues to improve. Her insistence on ensuring that all staff provide attentive, constructive and very necessary attention to pastoral matters and pupils' behaviour has also brought about many worthwhile and successful developments. When, in the past, aspects of teaching caused concern, she and other leaders took appropriate action to improve the situation. Nonetheless, more recently, leaders' attention to lower-ability pupils' progress across Years 1 and 2 has slipped.
- In response to the national changes to the school curriculum and assessment measures, leaders introduced a coherent and efficient way to gather and record information about pupils' progress. The system makes sense. However, it is not being used to best effect to inform school development. Currently, different staff have different views about key priorities for improvement. It is clear that the information the school collects about pupils' progress is not feeding into a shared staff vision. Furthermore, while external monitoring, brokered through the local teaching school, has quite rightly highlighted the need to improve planning for progression in pupils' writing, this is not yet evident in practice.
- On top of this, the leadership of special educational needs is at an early stage of development. This responsibility has recently been reallocated and the current leader is not yet up to full speed with the role. Training and development is in hand but there is more to do to make sure this group of pupils gets the best possible deal. Support for these pupils is in place, often assisted by specialist help, but leaders are not doing enough to check on its effectiveness.
- The school curriculum includes a suitably broad range of subjects and provides pupils with a range of enriching experiences, including trips to places of interest. Just recently, for instance, pupils took part in performing arts workshops and two classes visited a local zoological centre. Leaders have also introduced a whole-school programme to help pupils develop important life skills. Through this carefully planned approach, pupils are helped to understand and appreciate the value of considerate behaviour and self-respect. They also learn to take a healthy interest in the lives and beliefs of others and how to create and maintain positive relationships.
- Pupils receive regular physical education (PE) lessons and take part in various sports, both during and after the school day. The primary school sport funding has been used to increase resources and transport pupils to local sports facilities and events. Specialist teachers are brought into school to train staff and improve pupils' skills and interest in

different sports. In all these respects, the funding is being used with success and pupils are taking part in more physical activity than before.

- Another specific fund, the pupil premium, is being used with partial success. Initiatives to lift disadvantaged pupils' achievement in reading are working well. In writing and mathematics, however, there is more of a mixed picture with some disadvantaged pupils doing considerably better than others.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors have a good understanding of their role and are able to distinguish between the operational duties of school staff and their duty to set and monitor strategy. They receive regular and detailed information from the headteacher and meet with staff. Records from governors' meetings show that discussions have an appropriate focus on actions to drive improvement. The same records also show that governors ask plenty of questions to check that they understand the information presented. That said, some of the headline information they get about the quality of teaching and learning is a touch 'rose-tinted' at times.
- Nevertheless, governance is reflective, objective and generally well informed about current educational matters. Governors understand, for instance, that there is 'room for improvement' at the school, especially in the standard of pupils' writing.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. In fact, the school's procedures are top notch. Staff understand their duty of care and their responsibility to act swiftly and appropriately if a concern about a child arises. All such concerns are recorded and followed up properly so that the right information is shared with the right people in the right way. During this inspection, an instance of this happening was observed and school records show that staff are vigilant at putting pupils' safety and welfare first. Governors, too, are well informed about safeguarding matters; they are alert to local risks and their duty to protect pupils from harm and extreme views.
- All the proper checks on staff, volunteers and visitors are carried and these are noted and stored securely. Suitable first-aid treatment is readily available when required and any medicines in school are managed with care. The school site is kept secure and pupils are taught about everyday risks, such as crossing the road or using the internet, and how to report worries and concerns if they have any.
- The school shares important safety messages with pupils and their parents. The family support workers and school administrative staff are always available to help and advise parents, and do so regularly.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching in key stage 1 varies in its effectiveness. Some teaching is well organised and tuned into pupils' different learning needs, but some does not build carefully enough on previous learning.
- In several instances seen in books and in classrooms, teaching is not suitably alert to pupils' current level of understanding and does not pick up on mistakes or misunderstandings in a timely manner. In mathematics, for example, work jumps quickly, and sometimes illogically, from one concept to another whether or not pupils have understood. Similarly, in written work, pupils do not practise and consolidate skills in a sequential and progressive way. This limits their progress and adults' expectations for what pupils should achieve.
- This somewhat erratic approach to the progression of skills affects the lower-ability pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities more than other pupils. These pupils find it hard to keep up, are quick to lose focus and become confused or drift off task. The most able pupils and many of the middle-ability pupils get a better deal, manage to keep up and, more often than not, understand what they are learning and rise to the challenges set for them.
- The teaching of reading, however, is well organised, systematic and effective. In fact, a very positive, productive and focused atmosphere pervades the daily reading sessions and other reading activities. Pupils of all abilities are given good-quality material to read, practise their comprehension skills in meaningful ways, and apply their phonic knowledge with increasing confidence as they move up through the school. The school's work to promote reading beyond school and to engage parents in supporting reading at home is also to be commended.
- In all classes, teachers have good subject knowledge and, together with teaching assistants, act as good role models. The school's behaviour policy is applied with consistency and pupils are managed well by staff who offer kind encouragement while also making expectations for classroom behaviour very clear. The importance of respectful speaking and listening is emphasised and adults model language well.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. This is a significant strength of the school's work. Whether pupils struggle to cope with school routines or take to school life with keen enthusiasm, staff are equally successful at making all feel valued. Pupils are taught to understand the importance of supportive and cooperative behaviours and are helped to grow in confidence.
- A number of pupils arrive during the school year, often with little knowledge of the English language or, in some cases, no previous school experience. In all cases, staff make pupils feel welcome and safe at school. Pupils who require extra help because of

difficult experiences in their lives get specialist support arranged through the school. All pupils benefit from kind understanding, firm consistent guidance, and praise and rewards when deserved.

- Pupils are taught how to stay safe and to treat others with respect. Bullying has happened occasionally but it is sorted out quickly and followed up properly so as to minimise recurrence. Importantly, pupils are taught the difference between bullying and disagreement and know that an adult at school will always help them with any problems. Some pupils take responsibilities as playground buddies and help out with playground games. They are easy to spot because of the yellow caps they wear so pupils who need assistance can find them quickly.
- In the main school corridor, there is a 'wishes and worries well' where pupils can share their concerns, if needs be. In addition, in class and around the school there are numerous reminders about rights and responsibilities. All of this reflects the caring responsible attitudes that the school promotes and lives by.
- Donnington Wood Infants is a Makaton-friendly school and during this inspection staff and pupils were seen using signing in an accomplished and inclusive way. In a whole-school singing practice, for example, everyone was able to join in with signing-out the worthy lyrics to a song about the school's values. A sense of team spirit shone out as all joined in.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Most of the time, pupils behave well in lessons and on the playground. Any problems that do arise are sorted out quickly and without fuss.
- There is a well-thought-out range of rewards which pupils understand and enjoy. Leaders, teachers, support and lunchtime staff all have a role to play in this, which helps to ensure a consistent approach. Each day, for example, lunchtime supervisors reward helpful behaviour by choosing a group of pupils to eat lunch on the silver table-clothed 'top table' in the dining hall. Weekly 'best effort' assemblies identify and reward those who have persevered. The school council, too, has a say in deciding how to reward good behaviour and has introduced a 'remote-control car' area on the playground to be used as a special treat. Underpinning this positive culture, the sanctions for those who misbehave are fair and proportionate. Pupils agree that the school rules help everyone to enjoy school and feel safe.
- Overall attendance rates have risen over time and are now close to national figures. There is no doubt that key factors in driving this improvement have been the work of the family support team and the frequent reminders to parents about the importance of regular school attendance. Good attendance is noticed and rewarded and poor attendance is investigated and challenged when necessary. All pupils are given a healthy snack if they arrive at school between 8.45 and 8.55. This 'early birds' initiative has helped to improve pupils' punctuality and reduce any hunger pangs at the start of the day. Even so, a few pupils are regularly absent from school or arrive late for no good reason. This means that they miss learning time and get into bad habits that will not serve them well in the future. School leaders are quite right to challenge this when it happens.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Recently, pupils' progress in writing and mathematics across key stage 1 has slowed and in 2016 standards at the end of Year 2 dropped.
- Assessment arrangements changed in 2016 and the new measures are not directly comparable with results from previous years. Nevertheless, by any measure, it is clear that standards dropped in 2016. It is also clear that this particular cohort of pupils had a bumpy ride through Year 1 when, for a number of reasons, there were several changes of staff which unsettled routines and disrupted their learning. Consequently, they entered Year 2 some way behind in their learning and were unable to make up all the lost ground during their final year. Prior to 2016, academic standards had risen steadily and pupils had left the school well prepared for learning at junior school.
- Understandably, this inspection focused closely on how well the school was recovering from last year's drop in standards. Work in current pupils' books and the school's own assessment information shows that a significant group of pupils are not making sufficient progress in writing and mathematics across key stage 1. In the main, these are the pupils who entered Year 1 already behind their peers. A number of these pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities or have been identified as needing an extra boost to help them catch up or get closer to age-related expectations. The support and teaching they receive is not suitably fine-tuned to their needs or linked with previous learning. These pupils make progress, but not as much as they should.
- On the other hand, many of the middle- and higher-ability pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do well. Key stage 1 teaching helps these pupils to build successfully on the foundations laid in the early years. Indeed, current work shows that they are on track to reach or exceed age-related expectations. Given the low starting points of many pupils when they first start school, this is a notable achievement.
- Another success story is the progress that almost all pupils make in reading. Even when standards dropped in 2016, reading remained ahead of writing and mathematics. For current pupils, too, their progress in reading and ability to apply their knowledge of letters and sounds to tackle new words present as strengths.
- Similarly, pupils get the opportunity to experience feelings of success in a range of subjects, including art, music, sport and PE.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils follows much the same pattern as already described. On the whole, they reach higher standards in reading than in writing and mathematics.

## Early years provision

## Good

- Since the previous inspection, the early years provision has developed and strengthened considerably because of effective leadership. The quality of teaching is good, children's behaviour is managed in positive and constructive ways and all are kept safe. In addition, staff work hard to keep parents informed and involved with their children's education.

- The vast majority of children start in the early years with levels of knowledge and skills below those typical for their age. Many have limited speaking, listening and self-care skills. In other instances, children have no experience of spoken English because they have recently arrived from another country. In response to this situation, school leaders decided to take in two-year-olds and have done so in a well-thought-through and carefully managed way. The current provision for two-year-olds is well resourced, staff have suitable training, and the early years leader oversees it with care and attention. Adults model good-quality language and help children to acquire helpful habits that assist their learning. Already, this is making a difference. Children in the older part of the Nursery who have been through the 'talking twos' provision are further ahead with their language development than previous intakes. This helps them to make even better progress across the Nursery phase. Their behaviour, too, is much improved.
- Practice in the Reception classes builds further on children's earlier Nursery experiences and, again, teaching is effective. Consistent routines help to reinforce expectations and children receive lots of encouragement. This helps them to feel secure and confident and behave well at school. Furthermore, group sessions led by family support staff, help children to understand and express their emotions in positive ways.
- As the early years provision has strengthened, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development before the start of Year 1 has also risen. From just 8% in 2013, this figure has now risen to above 50%, with little difference between the achievement of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children. This is still below national figures, but represents some considerable progress given children's starting points. Other inspection evidence found that those children who leave the early years ready for the key stage 1 curriculum go on to make good progress in both Years 1 and 2.
- As in the rest of the school, children's special educational needs are identified quickly but the support provided varies in its effectiveness.



## School details

Unique reference number	123364
Local authority	Telford and Wrekin
Inspection number	10000809

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	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Amanda Hall
Headteacher	Caroline Boddy
Telephone number	01952 386640
Website	<a href="http://www.donnington.schooljotter2.com">www.donnington.schooljotter2.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:a2041@telford.gov.uk">a2041@telford.gov.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	13–14 March 2012

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website. At the beginning of the inspection, a small number of website documents were out of date. More recent documents were readily available in school and leaders updated the website before the inspection ended.
- Donnington Wood Infant School and Nursery Centre is similar in size to the average-sized primary school. The number of pupils on roll has increased since the previous inspection.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils at the school is above the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The school offers early years provision for Nursery- and Reception-age children.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups. The inspectors also examined pupils' work in books, and considered school test and assessment information.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour, and the school's procedures, at the beginning and end of the school day, at lunch and breaktimes, and when pupils were moving about the school site and taking part in a singing practice.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, school leaders, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- By the end of the inspection, there were 29 recent responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) and eight responses to the staff questionnaire. The inspectors noted these and also spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day.
- A number of school documents were examined. These included information about pupils' achievement, evaluations of the school's performance and numerous policy statements. Records relating to governance, staff performance management, training, the quality of teaching, external support, behaviour, admissions, attendance, safety and safeguarding were also scrutinised. The school's website was also checked.

## Inspection team

Martin Pye, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jane Edgerton	Ofsted Inspector
Derek Barnes	Ofsted Inspector

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