

Dunkirk Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	122416
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	380466
Inspection dates	17–18 May 2012
Lead inspector	Kenneth Thomas

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	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gill Riley
Headteacher	Jane Alford
Date of previous school inspection	8 October 2008
School address	Marlborough Street Dunkirk Nottingham NG7 2LE
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Kenneth Thomas

Additional Inspector

Linda Rowley

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 10 teachers and visited 16 lessons. These included joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made other visits to lessons and also heard pupils reading. The inspectors held meetings with the Chair, the Vice-Chair and two other members of the Governing Body, staff and groups of pupils. They took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including procedures for keeping pupils safe and the minutes of the governing body. The inspectors analysed 70 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as responses from staff and pupils.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school in which a much higher proportion of pupils than usually found are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is high. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average, as is the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is below average. More pupils than average enter or leave the school at other than the normal times. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school has received national recognition for its work in several areas and holds the International School, ECO Silver and Investors in People Silver awards, together with National Healthy School Status. The school is also recognised as a National School of Creativity. The school is in the first stage of a phased expansion to double its size in September 2012 and operate on two sites.

The school accommodates a privately-run before- and after-school club. This was not included in the inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This is an outstanding school. Comments such as, 'I cannot praise this school highly enough...the range of activities and the enthusiasm for teaching shown are fantastic', illustrate parents and carers' very positive views of the school.
- The school has enhanced pupils' outstanding achievement noted in the last inspection report. Pupils achieve extremely well from mostly well below average starting points. By the end of Key Stage 2, their attainment is broadly average and rising. The systematic teaching of letters and sounds ensures that by the end of Year 2 the majority of pupils are confident readers, and that at the end of Year 6 the reading of almost all pupils is at the expected levels, with an increasing proportion exceeding them.
- Teaching is outstanding and makes a significant contribution to pupils' exceptional rates of progress. The staff are very successful in enthusing pupils and raising standards despite the very high turnover of pupils, many of whom speak English as a second language. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace and are interesting and challenging for all groups of pupils.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well and feel very safe in school. They are polite and cooperate well with their classmates and adults. Pupils make rapid progress in their personal and academic development because they are given the self-confidence to set ambitious goals and persevere to achieve them.
- The exceptionally clear direction provided by the headteacher ensures that there is a constant drive to provide the best possible education for all pupils. Senior leaders check the quality of teaching and manage performance rigorously, ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning, and consequently pupils' achievement, are constantly improving. The extent to which middle leaders contribute to this varies, because not all have the monitoring and evaluation skills needed to guide further improvement in their areas of responsibility.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop leadership and management by ensuring that all middle leaders have the skills necessary to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning and guide improvement in their areas of responsibility.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and understanding that are well below those expected, especially in language and communication. They make rapid progress because the exceptionally well-organised provision provides children with security and exciting learning opportunities. As a result children develop confidence as learners and make impressive gains in skills and knowledge, which are closer to age-related expectations on entry to Year 1. As pupils move through the school, they make outstanding progress and almost all reach at least the expected levels for their age in reading, writing and mathematics by Year 6. Pupils apply their reading skills methodically and show considerable enjoyment in their regular reading opportunities.

During the inspection the outstanding learning of the overwhelming majority of pupils in lessons was evident throughout the school. Pupils are keen to do their best, work productively and enjoy the varied learning tasks. For example, in a highly successful Year 3 literacy lesson, pupils were engrossed in role play as they explored the myth of Daedalus and Icarus. Thoughtful questioning led pupils to express their feelings about the characters involved and subsequently to rapid progress in their descriptive writing skills.

The use of assessment, identified as a weakness in the last inspection, is exemplary. Excellent systems for assessing and tracking pupils' academic progress enable underperformance to be identified and tackled at an early stage. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make rapid progress towards their challenging targets because the procedures for identifying their needs and planning their support are very effective. Similarly, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from diverse backgrounds progress exceptionally well because staff are very conscious of pupils' individual needs and work successfully to close any such gaps. For example, the school works very effectively to support pupils who enter the school at different times and the high number who are new to speaking English. Highly effective teaching, together with innovative strategies that secure the active support of almost all parents and carers, ensure that they make similar progress to that of their classmates.

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Quality of teaching

Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire think that teaching is very good. Inspectors agree. Teaching is lively, learning objectives are clearly explained, and tasks are carefully planned to challenge pupils to learn at a swift pace. Pupils make rapid progress in developing their reading skills because the teaching of reading throughout the school is carefully linked to their age and learning needs. Effective use of talking partners, drama, role play and small group work, underpin pupils' rapid progress in speaking, listening and writing skills. These strategies are of particular benefit to those pupils in the early stages of learning English. In an exemplary Year 6 English lesson, for example, the teacher planned challenging activities so that pupils made rapid progress in their writing of persuasive text. They were encouraged to construct arguments for and against annual school tests and played the roles of barristers, witnesses and jurors as they debated their opinions in a mock 'court of law'. Teachers' planning meets the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs exceptionally well. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together to ensure that all pupils are fully included in lessons and helped to overcome any barriers to learning. Where teaching is good rather than outstanding, learning slows because teachers sometimes talk too much and reduce pupils' opportunities for independent learning.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, highly effective teaching feature a very good balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning both indoors and outdoors and a stimulating language learning environment. Adults know children exceptionally well and carefully track their progress to ensure the needs of all children are met.

The curriculum is exceptionally well-planned so that pupils from all backgrounds achieve outstandingly well in both their academic and personal development. Creativity is fostered particularly well through the arts and the many topics that link the development of literacy and numeracy skills in 'real-life' learning tasks. Contributing to this are the excellent opportunities provided for pupils to learn through the outdoor environment, which is a feature of many lessons. Excellent displays of pupils' work in classrooms and corridors reflect the rich diversity of the curriculum and the significant contribution it makes to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is enhanced by residential trips, frequent cultural and educational visits and regular inputs from specialist arts, drama and sports teachers and coaches.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Very close links with parents and carers ensure that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly into school. They rapidly learn what is expected of them and this establishes the foundation for the excellent learning behaviour observed in the rest of the school. Records, comments from pupils and responses to the questionnaires from staff, pupils, parents and carers show that high standards of behaviour are the norm. Pupils overwhelmingly say they feel exceptionally safe in school. They have a clear

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understanding of what might be seen as bullying, including name-calling, and all were adamant that bullying is extremely rare. This is confirmed by school records of any bullying or racist incidents. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are very well looked after and this ensures that their learning and personal development is comparable to that of their peers. Attendance has been adversely affected by extended visits abroad made by some families. This has been significantly reduced and attendance is now above average because staff have been particularly successful in gaining the support of parents and carers of all backgrounds.

Pupils contribute much to the harmonious and supportive nature of the school community through their excellent attitudes and behaviour. This is a considerable aid to pupils joining the school at different times; they quickly absorb the school values and codes of behaviour.

Leadership and management

Inspirational leadership and the pursuit of excellence are the main reasons why the school has built on the many strengths noted in the last inspection report. This view was recognised in the questionnaire responses of parents and carers. As one said, 'Dunkirk Primary School meets the needs of all its children because of exceptional leadership by the senior management team.' Staff morale is high, and the strong sense of shared vision was clearly illustrated in the highly positive staff response to the inspection questionnaire. High quality professional development has a strong impact on all aspects of the school's work. Strategies for improving the quality of teaching are based on teamwork and trust, and include peer support, coaching and mentoring and the use of performance management. These are helping to ensure consistency in the high quality of teaching. For example, attainment in English is rising rapidly because the deputy headteacher has provided excellent support for staff in the teaching of letter and word sounds and the development of pupils' literacy skills. While some middle leadership is equally effective, such as that of the Early Years Foundation Stage, leaders recognise that not all staff have the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to be fully effective.

Excellent curriculum provision is enhanced by a rich outdoor learning environment. The hard play areas have been imaginatively transformed to include numerous places where pupils can experience the awe and wonder of the natural world and to learn about the natural environment in a practical way. This adds greatly to pupils' enjoyment of school and makes a significant contribution to their excellent academic progress. Pupils have a very clear understanding of lifestyles and customs different from their own, for example through very close links with a school in Pakistan. They understand and adhere to the school's high expectations of behaviour and show an excellent understanding of the spiritual, moral and social values the school promotes.

The governing body provides the school with a high level of commitment and expertise. It plays a key role in ensuring that all safeguarding practices meet

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government requirements. The impact of the school's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity is seen in the equally good progress made by all groups of pupils. Discrimination in any form is not tolerated. This is recognised by parents and carers. Almost all who replied to the inspection questionnaire expressed total satisfaction with their children's experience at the school. Exceptionally strong school leadership, the record of maintaining high achievement, strengthened links with parents, rising attendance, improvements to the learning environment and a continually developing curriculum all demonstrate the clear commitment to continued improvement. The school has an excellent capacity to continue on its upward path.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



21 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dunkirk Primary and Nursery School, Nottingham, NG7 2LE

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. Your views were very helpful and we enjoyed our discussions with those of you we spoke to in lessons, in meetings and around the school. Thank you too, to those of you who completed the questionnaire. Here are some of the really good things we found out about your school.

- The school provides you with an excellent quality of education and you make outstanding progress as you pass through the school. By the time you leave at the end of Year 6, you reach standards in all your subjects that are similar to those expected in other schools across the country, and they are getting better each year.
- Your enjoyment of school is reflected in your attendance, which is above average.
- Your teachers plan very exciting lessons and your excellent behaviour is a considerable help to your teachers because they can concentrate on helping you to learn. This is one of the reasons you are achieving so well.
- You told us how much you enjoy the many opportunities provided to develop and display your creative abilities and we observed how well these opportunities contribute to your excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Your excellent headteacher, all the staff and governors work very hard to provide you with the best education they possibly can. They take great care of you and want to see you all achieve the best that you possibly can. They are all determined to make things even better. To help this we have asked subject coordinators to look more closely at the progress you are making in your lessons.

We know that everyone at Dunkirk will carry on working together to take the school forward, and that you will all want to play your part by continuing to look after each other, attending regularly and working really hard in all of your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Kenneth Thomas
Lead inspector

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