

Dunstone Community Primary School

Shortwood Crescent, Plymstock, Plymouth, PL9 8TQ

Inspection dates 22–23 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils achieve well in both their academic and personal development because the school places the pupils' learning and personal development at the centre of all it does.
- The school's leadership has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and has a clear vision for the future. It has coped well with a period of change and disruption to the staffing structure.
- The headteacher, staff and governors have worked effectively to improve the quality of teaching since the last inspection and ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good although a little stronger in the older age groups.
- Parents are pleased with the school and the progress the pupils are making. All the parents who spoke to the inspectors, or who completed the on-line Parent View survey said their children are happy and are taught well.
- There is a strong sense of community in the school. The pupils behave well, feel safe and show genuine respect for their teachers and for each other.
- Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and very effective support is put in place to ensure that they make at least good progress.
- Children settle quickly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress.

It is not yet an outstanding because

- Attainment in mathematics is not as high as it could be because the level of challenge in some lessons is not high enough. Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to develop their skills through problem solving in mathematics.
- Pupils' reading skills are broadly average; however, their writing is not as strong. Pupils do not have enough chances to write extensively outside English lessons.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with half a day’s notice.
- All staff were observed teaching and a total of 17 lessons were seen. These included two joint observations carried out with the headteacher.
- The inspectors heard individual pupils from Years 1, 3 and 6 read and observed a number of guided reading sessions and lessons on the teaching of phonics (pupils learning letter patterns and the sounds they represent).
- Meetings were held with the senior leadership, representatives from the governing body, the school’s local authority representative, the pupil council, subject leaders, the parent support adviser and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The inspection evaluated a range of evidence which included the school’s improvement plan and self-evaluation, the school’s data for tracking pupil progress, behaviour logs and pupils’ work.
- The inspectors met with parents informally at the beginning and end of the school day and took into account parents’ responses to the school’s own parent and pupil surveys as well as the 35 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour, both inside and outside of the classroom, and scrutinised the school’s safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Mark Anderson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Richard Chalkley	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Dunstone is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school in an urban setting near to the centre of Plymstock.
- The school has one class in each year group. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are combined in two mixed year classes.
- The great majority of pupils (90%) come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium (33%), which provides additional government funding, is significantly above the national average. A large number of service children (24%) attend the school.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs supported at school action, school action plus or with statements of special educational need (29%), is significantly above the national average.
- The school has met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A new Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body have been appointed very recently.
- There is an above average number of pupils joining and leaving the school. This is largely as a result of the large number of service children on roll.
- A significant number of staff has recently been on maternity leave which has resulted in some disruption to the staffing structure.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club on the school site.
- A children's centre and nursery are also located on the school site but were not part of this inspection. No alternative provision is used by the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- Continue to further increase levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 by:
 - ensuring pupils have more opportunities to write at length in across subjects
 - providing more challenging work in mathematics for pupils, especially the more able, and developing the independent learning skills of all pupils, particularly in problem solving.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and understanding that are slightly below age-related expectations and make good progress during their Reception Year. This trend is continued in Key Stages 1 and 2 because teaching caters well for individual needs and the curriculum is vibrant and child orientated.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with national averages. This was clear from pupils' work, records of their progress and from the school's detailed systems to track the progress of individual pupils in English and mathematics. However, writing is not as strong as reading because pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length in other subjects.
- Attainment in reading is good because the teaching of phonics is consistent and effective, particularly in Reception and Years 1 and 2.
- Although pupils achieve well in mathematics, they do not always have sufficient opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills to problem solving. Occasionally more-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged by the tasks set.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those known to be eligible for the pupil premium make at least similar progress to all other pupils because they receive a high level of support.
- The parents and carers who completed the on-line survey Parent View are of the opinion that their children are making at least expected progress and, in many cases, better than expected progress.
- Pupils make good progress in subjects other than English and mathematics. The quality of the creative work, especially in art, is of a high standard.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching, including in English and mathematics, is good overall. This is confirmed by observations of teaching during the inspection and internal monitoring during the last academic year, as well as by observations by the local authority.
- Some teaching is outstanding and there are examples of best practice. However, there is not yet enough of this excellent teaching to raise achievement to outstanding.
- Teachers display good subject knowledge and in general have high expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving. The pupils are strongly encouraged by staff to believe in their ability to succeed and master new skills.
- The majority of lessons are well paced, challenging for all levels of ability and designed to stimulate pupils' interests. The enthusiasm for learning was particularly evident in information and communication technology lessons for pupils in Years 4 and 5 when they were compiling their own PowerPoint presentations on Roman soldiers and Ancient Egypt.
- In all classes the positive relationships between staff and pupils are a key factor in creating a positive climate for learning. Pupils feel confident about asking for help if they having difficulties in their learning.
- On the few occasions where there are minor weaknesses in teaching, relating to planning for different groups or of teachers not checking that learning is secure during lessons, progress is not as rapid as it could be.
- The enthusiasm of the teachers and their varied teaching styles and strategies are fundamental in engaging the pupils in their learning. This was noted in an English lesson which combined history, English and drama as the pupils enacted various scenes from Ancient Egypt to cement their understanding of the past, present and future.
- The school has established a strong focus on the development of the children's literacy skills. This was highlighted in a Year 6 English lesson which gave the pupils the opportunity to develop

their journalistic writing skills when describing both the London Blitz and the visit of 'The Life Education Caravan' to the school. However, this practice of writing at length across all subjects does not happen often enough.

- The good quality support provided by the teaching assistants and support staff plays a vital role in the pupils' good progress. The quality of teamwork in the classroom is a real strength.
- Pupils in all year groups are increasingly being encouraged to take greater responsibility for their learning and many examples of independent learning were noted during the inspection.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils clearly enjoy and value their school and this is reflected in above average attendance.
- The school is a welcoming and safe environment for pupils and the wholly inclusive ethos is apparent to all. The diverse backgrounds of many of the pupils mean that they are understanding and tolerant of individual differences, resulting in a real community in which every child can succeed.
- Behaviour in and around school is good. When a few pupils display potentially challenging behaviour there are clearly understood codes of behaviour which staff apply effectively, so pupils have a clear understanding of what is acceptable. Pupils say that there are very few instances of anti-social behaviour.
- Parents and carers have a positive view of behaviour in school. They appreciate that the school is both caring and approachable and that issues are dealt with promptly and effectively.
- Behaviour in lessons is generally good and the great majority of children demonstrate a positive attitude to their learning.
- Pupils say that bullying is not an issue at this school and understand what constitutes bullying, including cyber bullying.
- The staff have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and are aware of their individual needs. Discussions with pupils indicate that they feel safe in school and are confident that the adults who work in their school would help them if they had a problem or concern.
- The vast majority of the older pupils are good role models for the younger age groups and say that they enjoy the responsibility they are given to look after the younger ones.
- In most cases children make great strides in their personal, social and emotional development. They are taught to make decisions, enjoy playing together and face their fears. Older pupils are ambitious and the school clearly encourages its pupils to aim high.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders have secured some sustained improvements since the last inspection, most notably in teaching and the monitoring of pupil progress on an individual, year group and whole school basis. The senior leadership team has a united vision for the school's future
- Despite the recent temporary staff changes, the morale and dedication of the staff remain strengths of the school and the teachers are united in their commitment to continue to take the school forward. Subject leaders take good responsibility for their areas and are accountable for progress pupils make.
- Improvements in attendance, pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching indicate a secure capacity to sustain improvement.
- Data is used effectively to monitor the school's performance overall and the progress of every individual pupil. This data is used to adapt aspects of the school's work to meet children's needs through intervention strategies.
- The school has developed good links with parents, including those who might find communicating with the school difficult, and uses these well to promote pupils' academic and personal development. The parent support adviser plays a central role in this process.

- The curriculum provides all pupils, regardless of abilities, with a range of good quality learning experiences. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across the curriculum, and the school's close links with a school in Cape Town, South Africa give pupils a fascinating insight into the wider world and different lifestyles.
- All statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are met and there is no evidence of any discrimination. The school's policies regarding inclusion are very strongly embedded and central to the school's ethos.
- Almost every parent and carer is very positive about how successfully the school supports their child's education and would recommend it to others.
- The school's systems for performance management are having a very positive impact upon heightening ambition and making it clear how individual teachers can improve their practice further. Teachers are encouraged to refine and improve their teaching skills and their professional development is closely monitored by the school's leadership.
- Pupil premium funding is used to target underachievement very effectively and individual support on a one-to-one basis is fundamental to ensuring pupils with special educational needs make at least good progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know their school well and are committed to driving forward continued improvement. They understand how well it performs in comparison to other schools. Despite recent changes in personnel, the board of governors offers strong support to the headteacher and is increasingly challenging the senior leadership. Governors play a fundamental role in the performance management of staff and their progression through the pay scales. They attend regular training which is developing all aspects of their role, including their in-depth knowledge of the school's academic profile and comparison with both national and local standards. They have a good understanding of the pupil premium funding and how it is allocated and ensure that the school's finances are managed effectively and spending is appropriately distributed. Governors ensure that statutory requirements are met and that safeguarding arrangements are implemented consistently.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	113312
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	403199

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	185
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Marlton
Headteacher	Julie Jane
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 July 2008
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