

# Donisthorpe Primary School

Ashby Road, Donisthorpe, Swadlincote, DE12 7QF

**Inspection dates** 21–22 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 make good progress because teaching is good.
- Children in Reception make outstanding progress because teaching is excellent and children are exceptionally well cared for.
- Pupils enjoy school and like learning because they say lessons are interesting and fun.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe. They say bullying happens occasionally, but that it is dealt with well.
- Leaders provide good training opportunities to ensure teaching continues to get better.
- The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She works well with the governing body and other leaders to raise standards and identify areas for improvement and, together, they take swift action to address them.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally in mathematics, the work for some pupils and particularly the more able, is not demanding enough.
- Teachers' marking, usually in mathematics, does not always give clear guidance on how pupils should improve their work, or make sure they follow guidance when it is given.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed seven teachers in 14 lessons or parts of lessons. Four of these were paired observations with senior leaders to check how accurately they evaluate teaching. Inspectors also listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with staff and pupils, and with members of the governing body. Inspectors also spoke to parents bringing their children to school and to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined documents about the school’s work, including information about the achievement of pupils, development planning and the school’s self evaluation.
- They took account of 50 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire, a small number of letters from parents and carers, and the school’s own survey of parents’ and carers’ views.

## Inspection team

Edward Wheatley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Stephen Howland

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most primary schools. Numbers are falling because pupils who previously joined the school at the start of Year 3 from another village now attend their own local school.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and none are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding for children looked after by the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent in the armed forces.
- All pupils are educated on site. The school has some additional counselling provision for some pupils and this sometimes leads to a small number of pupils being educated off site for occasional days.
- A privately managed nursery and a 'before and after school' club share the school site. These are separately inspected.
- The headteacher took up her appointment in June 2010, after a period of time in which the school had had a temporary headteacher.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding by making sure that, in mathematics in particular:
  - work is always sufficiently difficult to make all pupils, particularly the most able, really think
  - teachers give clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their work, and make sure that pupils follow the advice they are given.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards are broadly average. They are above average in English, average in mathematics and rising in both. In English, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level 5 or better is rising. While there has also been clear improvement in mathematics, a small proportion of pupils do not do as well as they should.
- Pupils make good progress from broadly average levels on entry in Year 1. Some pupils make excellent progress, and the pace of progress is improving.
- Progress in all years is now good overall and improving. The comparatively slower progress made by some pupils in the past, which has held some older pupils' standards back slightly, has been reduced significantly.
- Children in Reception make outstanding progress. They start with lower than expected skills, and some with poor personal, social and emotional skills, and literacy and numeracy skills. Most achieve the skills expected of their age by the time they join Year 1, especially in their personal, social and emotional development.
- By Year 6 pupils' reading skills are above average. Pupils link sounds and letters together well to read unfamiliar words. While the poorest readers sometimes hesitate over words they do not know, they slowly, carefully and successfully sound out the parts of the words in the way they have been taught.
- Standards of writing are above average. Pupils have a wide vocabulary which they use well in both speaking and writing. They write in a wide range of styles and produce extended pieces of writing which explain their ideas and understanding well.
- Pupils generally complete mathematical tasks, both on paper and mentally, accurately and confidently. Most can add, subtract, multiply and divide quickly and competently. However, a small number of pupils are not always accurate or confident when completing these kinds of calculations for themselves without help.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. This is because teachers and classroom assistants provide accurate guidance and instruction, but also because they encourage pupils to work by themselves in order to gain confidence in their own ability.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding make good progress. Funding is used effectively to provide extra staff for individual and small group support. These pupils start school more than one year behind their classmates but, by Year 6, this gap has narrowed and, increasingly, these pupils perform at similar levels to other pupils and make equally good progress.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good. Some is outstanding and sets a high standard that all teachers aspire to. In most lessons teachers make sure work is closely matched to pupils' abilities and based on accurate assessments of pupils' progress. In nearly all English lessons, for example, there are extension activities to help the most able pupils produce sophisticated writing, and guided activities to help those pupils who do not write so fluently.

- However, occasionally in mathematics lessons work is not demanding enough, and pupils' progress slows, particularly in the case of the more able.
- Teachers' questioning is searching. It makes pupils think about their answers and discuss their ideas with other pupils before they speak or write. This means that they explain their understanding as well in their writing as they do in their speech.
- Teachers encourage pupils to collaborate over their work and this builds their confidence to express their own opinions effectively. Most lessons include opportunities for pupils to work in small groups, and this promotes their moral, social and cultural development well.
- Computer based equipment is used well to encourage pupils to record their thoughts and to plan and edit their writing. It is used especially well to help pupils compose stories, or plan a set of step-by-step instructions.
- Teachers' marking is particularly good in helping improve pupils' progress in English. It gives accurate information about how well pupils are doing. It indicates what the next steps in learning are and gives valuable guidance on how pupils can improve their work. As a rule, pupils follow the guidance given. Marking is not so consistently good in mathematics. Sometimes marking is not clear about how pupils should improve their work, and teachers do not always make sure pupils follow guidance when it is given. This means pupils are sometimes unsure how to calculate accurately and this slows their progress.
- There are good links between subjects. These help pupils to be enthusiastic about learning, and to develop and practise their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, a visit to a safari park was used well to engage pupils in Years 1 and 2 in writing activities, where they created their own detailed and imaginative stories about animals.
- Teaching in the Reception class is outstanding. Children are encouraged to make choices from a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities. Activities are carefully planned to provide opportunities for children to develop basic skills, and especially their social skills. Reading, writing and number work activities are well planned and ensure children have to think for themselves, and children are encouraged to talk to and listen to each other. Activities are often linked to a theme. For example, 'The Gruffalo' was used well to encourage imaginative play, writing invitations and stories, counting and adding, reading and learning about a large number of animals. Some children were so involved they did not want to stop at lunchtime!

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils enjoy learning and being at school. They concentrate well and readily take part in the wide range of activities planned to help them learn.
- They behave well and have a very good understanding of how they should and are expected to behave. Relationships are good. Pupils treat each other and adults with respect and consideration. They are polite to adults and helpful to visitors.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying. They say bullying happens occasionally, but that it is dealt with well. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe, and are strongly aware of the risks associated with using the internet, mobile telephones and other communication devices.

- Pupils say they feel safe in school. Some pupils feel that behaviour is better in lessons and around school than it is at lunchtimes, though they were quick to add that pupils are safe at all times. Inspectors' observations support pupils' views. The school is already tackling this and is providing training and support for lunchtime staff.
- Pupils take on responsibilities readily. For example, 'school ambassadors' look after some visitors, and collect pupils' views on how the school could improve. Others help in the dining hall at lunchtimes and look after younger pupils.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly average, and has risen. The school has worked effectively to reduce persistent absence.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher provides excellent direction for the school's work. Staff work well together and have a shared aim to make sure the school improves. Some recent changes in leadership are helping accelerate the speed with which the school deals with the weaknesses it has accurately identified.
- The school has dealt well with the problems caused by inadequate teaching in the past. Teaching is now consistently good and some is outstanding. Teachers have targets to help them improve their work, and these are closely linked to the school's priorities for improvement and pupils' progress.
- The local authority provides good support for the school, and has been effective in helping deal with staffing reduction issues, and improving teaching. The school has established valuable informal links with other schools locally, and these are being used effectively to further promote teachers' professional development.
- The school organises the subjects it teaches effectively, making sure that subjects link together well to maintain pupils' interest in learning. A wide range of trips and visitors support learning. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about a visitor who told pupils about how dinosaurs lived and the sizes they grew to. Assemblies, cultural weeks where pupils find out about life in other countries, and the personal, social and health education programme, contribute effectively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school works effectively to make sure all pupils make equally good progress. It does not accept any form of discrimination and works hard to ensure all pupils behave in the same way to each other. Pupils' progress is good and becoming better, and, teaching and attendance are improving. The school is already working to improve pupils' performance, and teachers' marking, in mathematics. The school's capacity for further improvement is strong.
- Parents and carers are pleased with the school, and the school's survey of their views confirms this. Those spoken to during the inspection spoke highly of the changes the headteacher has introduced since joining the school. Links with homes are good, and parents and carers are keen to learn about how the school teaches reading and mathematics.

### **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body supports the school well. Members are well trained and have a good

grasp of how well pupils perform compared with other pupils nationally. Governors ask searching questions to make sure all pupils make good progress, and to determine how funds, for example, pupil premium funds, are spent and that they are used effectively to raise standards. Governors check the school uses effective procedures to evaluate how well teachers teach, and that their progress on salary scales is linked to their personal and school targets and to pupil achievement. The governing body makes sure checks are made on all staff appointed to work in the school, and ensures safeguarding procedures are fully met.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119944
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	405895

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	187
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Helen Gravett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sylvie Newman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 June 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01530 270371
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