

Dawley Church of England Primary School with Nursery

Inspection report

Unique reference number	123544
Local authority	Telford and Wrekin
Inspection number	380684
Inspection dates	31 January–1 February 2012
Lead inspector	Doris Bell

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marilyn Peters
Headteacher	Elaine Almond
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 February 2009
School address	Doseley Road North Dawley Telford TF4 3AL
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Doris Bell

Additional inspector

Sandra Ewing

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspection team observed 8 members of staff during 15 lessons, covering approximately 6 hours of teaching. As well as observing full or part lessons, inspectors spent time observing sessions where pupils were learning letters and sounds. They also heard pupils read, watched them being taught in small groups and individually, analysed their work, and discussed their learning and school life with them. Meetings were held with senior and middle managers, and representatives of the governing body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaires (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including: information relating to the attainment and achievement of all groups of pupils; the school improvement plan; governing body minutes; and evidence of monitoring and evaluation. They also spoke to parents and carers, and analysed 62 parental questionnaire responses, together with the responses to the questionnaires returned by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized school with more boys than girls. It has a well above average proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and an above average proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Most needs relate to moderate learning difficulties or and behaviour, emotional and social difficulties. The school has a small number of pupils from minority ethnic or mixed ethnic backgrounds. The management team has completely changed since the previous inspection. A new headteacher took up post in September 2010 and a new deputy headteacher started in September 2011. The school recently renewed its Healthy Schools status. The school meets the current floor standard, whereby the government sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The school runs a breakfast club for its pupils each school day.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. The headteacher has moved quickly to identify and tackle underachievement and the reasons for it. Staff are held to account for their pupils' progress, and the governing body has increased its understanding of how to question and challenge the school. Leaders at different levels have responded well to the greater responsibility they have and are fully behind the headteacher in her drive for improvement.
- The school's accurate self-evaluation leads to the correct identification of what needs to be improved. However, the improvement plan itself, and the systems for monitoring teaching and learning, currently lack the sharpness associated with improving outcomes as well as provision.
- Achievement is satisfactory but progress in writing is good. Attainment is broadly average in English and mathematics. Girls do less well than boys in mathematics and there are too few opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills to solve real life mathematical problems.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is improving because planning and the procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress have been tightened. Marking is variable and differences in the use of assessment information mean that tasks are not always matched well enough to pupils' different ability levels. This sometimes slows progress in lessons, particularly for more-able pupils. Opportunities for pupils to take their own learning forward in different ways, although increasing, are still relatively limited.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils feel very safe, and say the school looks after them well. Their parents and carers agree. They and the pupils praise the 'very caring' atmosphere in the school. Parents and carers report that 'each child is treated individually'. They and their children accept that some pupils' behaviour has the potential to disrupt learning but say that 'teachers quickly resolve the situation.'

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Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate achievement in mathematics, especially for girls, by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills in real life problem-solving situations
 - ensuring that girls have equal opportunities with boys to respond to questions and explain working out.

- Spread good practice in teaching and assessment throughout the school by:
 - ensuring that learning is equally well matched to pupils' different levels of ability in all lessons, with particular attention to more-able pupils
 - bringing all marking up to the standard of the best so that pupils are always clear about how to improve their work
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to become more independent in their learning.

- As the new leadership team becomes more embedded, ensure that:
 - priorities in the school improvement plan are clearer and more sharply focused on improving outcomes for pupils as well as on provision
 - the monitoring of teaching and learning becomes more focused on evaluating the impact of teaching on learning for all groups of pupils.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

All parents and carers feel their children make good progress. The inspection team found that progress is satisfactory. Children start school with skills that are below those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress in Nursery and Reception but attainment is still below average when they enter Year 1.

Standards in reading are broadly average in Year 2 and Year 6. The school's systematic approach to teaching letters and sounds is improving pupils' ability to speak more clearly and to read, write and spell with greater accuracy. The school is developing in pupils a love of books that is increasing their understanding of different types and styles of writing. Pupils' writing is often imaginative and engaging. This was evident in Year 1 as pupils started to create their own versions of a story they had read; in Year 5 as pupils explored how to create deeper meaning in a text; and in the Year 6 pupils' writing about a local pit disaster. Pupils use their writing skills well in different subjects. While attainment is broadly average, pupils reach higher standards in English than in mathematics.

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In mathematics, progress varies in different year groups. Pupils in Years 4 and 6 do not always set calculations out correctly and therefore become confused about their working out. In Year 6, boys tend to dominate mental mathematics' activities, and girls lack the confidence to show what they can or cannot do. Their misconceptions are not always picked up quickly enough, and they do not make as much progress as boys. In contrast, boys and girls progressed equally well in a Year 5 lesson because all were drawn into the lesson and work was carefully matched to their different levels of ability. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to work independently on practical, problem-solving activities that require them to use their mathematical skills in different ways.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Their progress is improving because they receive good support from well-briefed teaching assistants, who are now involved in planning, and who understand the pupils' individual needs. More-able pupils do not consistently make the faster progress of which they are capable because their work is not always challenging enough. The few pupils from minority ethnic groups make the same satisfactory progress as all other pupils.

Quality of teaching

Teaching and the curriculum support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. All parents and carers say their children are taught well. The inspection team found that while teaching has been satisfactory over time, some is solidly good, and there are several good elements in satisfactory lessons. All of the pupils to whom inspectors spoke said they are taught well, and in different ways, although some said that they sometimes have to wait too long to get on with their tasks. They admit that they occasionally get restless because of this.

Pupils' behaviour is managed well, and they are successfully encouraged to work together in lessons. They are increasingly being encouraged to reflect on their learning, and to be involved in improving it. They have not been used to doing this, but the step-by-step approach taken, for example in Year 4, is improving their understanding of how to assess their learning against their targets and against the lesson's objectives. Where marking is really effective, for example in Year 5, it leaves pupils very clear about what they need to do to improve. Their responses to the guidance given are used effectively to plan the next steps in their learning, and to accelerate it. This good practice is not consistent throughout the school.

Teaching is based on the revised curriculum, which provides good guidance on how to assess pupils' learning in different subjects. The thematic approach, which links different subjects together, captures pupils' interests and increases their motivation to learn. A good example of this is the Year 6 local history study and the empathetic writing arising from it.

Improvements in planning have made it more responsive to pupils' different learning

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needs. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs usually have work pitched at the right level to ensure their steady progress. The work for more-able pupils is sometimes more of the same instead of being more challenging, and this slows their progress.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Most parents and carers say that behaviour is typically good, learning is not disrupted by poor behaviour, and the school deals effectively with any untoward behaviour, including bullying. Pupils echo these views, and inspection findings support them. Children in Nursery and Reception quickly settle into school routines, successfully learning the importance of sharing, taking turns and listening to each other and to adults.

Pupils know that there are different kinds of bullying. They acknowledge that some occurs occasionally in school but say it is dealt with quickly and effectively, especially if referred to the headteacher. They trust staff to help them at all times, and say all adults are 'caring and kind'. The school's success with pupils who have behavioural difficulties means that these pupils too develop a good understanding of right and wrong, and of the impact of their actions on others. Attendance is satisfactory, pupils have good attitudes to learning, and they enjoy school. The school works closely with a range of external agencies to support pupils and their families. Parents and carers appreciate this, describing the school as 'friendly and approachable', 'in the heart of the community' with staff who 'help children to reach their potential.' The school's breakfast club is well-subscribed and pupils enjoy a range of activities there.

Pupils take on a range of responsibilities and are proud to do so, for example, as playground friends who support other pupils and help to resolve disputes. School councillors report that pupils' views are valued and acted upon, giving as an example, their request for alterations to the playground. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet or mobile phones. They appreciate the good range of sporting activities that help them to keep fit and healthy, and know why it is important to do so. When they start school, their personal skills are relatively underdeveloped. By the time they leave, they are reflective and caring, engage well with others, and have the skills necessary to begin the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management

The headteacher's determination to improve outcomes for the pupils is evident in the way she is empowering staff to carry out their management roles, and holding them to account for doing so. Staff welcome the help and guidance they receive and they are working together to help each other. Teaching and learning are checked regularly for their impact on pupils' progress. Lesson observations sometimes focus too much on teaching instead of on its impact on learning. However, changes made at the start of this school year are emphasising learning more, with staff having to account for their pupils' progress, explain why any pupil has not improved, and show

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what they are doing to get learning back on track. All of this is helping to narrow the gap in attainment and progress between pupils at this school and pupils nationally.

The headteacher has tightened up the procedures for assessment, providing a clearer overview of progress that is being used to set increasingly challenging targets. The governing body very much appreciates the way the information gained from this is developing their understanding of how to hold the school to account better. Overall, governance is satisfactory. Along with the overall satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection, all of the above demonstrates the school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

The curriculum promotes pupils' academic development satisfactorily, and their personal development well. A good range of well-attended extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors enrich the curriculum. They cater for pupils' different interests, and further develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a developing understanding of democracy, gained through, for example, electing school councillors. They have a satisfactory understanding of cultural diversity at home and abroad.

The school meets current government safeguarding requirements, enabling pupils and staff to work and play in a safe and secure learning environment. The school promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily. While much is done to break down stereotypes and eliminate all forms of discrimination, not enough is in place to ensure all groups of pupils make equally good progress at all times.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	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 2010 to 31 August 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.
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.



2 February 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Dawley Church of England Primary School with Nursery,
Telford TF4 3AL**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school and for talking with us about what you do there. It was good to see that you enjoy learning and want to do well, and that you know the staff care for you. You and your parents and carers are right in saying that behaviour is usually good at your school. You told us there is occasionally some bullying, but that it is dealt with quickly and effectively. We found that you make satisfactory progress overall, but that you have made good progress in writing. Some of your writing was delightful to read, especially in Year 6. Overall, you go to a satisfactory school. In order to help you learn better, we have asked it to do three things. They are:

- accelerate your progress in mathematics by giving you more opportunities to solve problems, and helping girls to catch up with boys
- ensure that those of you who are capable of doing harder work are always given it to do, that your work is always marked well so that you can see how to improve it, and that you get more opportunities to learn and find things out for yourselves
- focus plans for improvement, and the visits the school leaders make to lessons to check teaching, more securely on evaluating what effect they have on your learning.

You can help by trying to find out more and more to help you learn, and by always listening carefully to what you are asked to do. We hope that you will continue to enjoy learning for the rest of your lives, as much as you do now.

Yours sincerely

Doris Bell
Lead inspector

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