

Diggle School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105665
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	377274
Inspection dates	29 February 2012–1 March 2012
Lead inspector	Angela Westington HMI

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	191
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Rea
Headteacher	Angela Covey
Date of previous school inspection	18 November 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

Angela Westington
Peter Mather

Her Majesty's Inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 17 lessons or part lessons including some which were jointly observed with the headteacher. Eight teachers were observed teaching. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They scrutinised the school's self-evaluation, its systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and its records on the progress made by pupils. They examined pupils' books, heard several pupils read and scrutinised in depth the school's management and teaching of reading and writing. They examined the school's records for the safe recruitment and vetting of staff and its procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils. The inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, 66 completed parental questionnaires and those completed by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

Diggle is smaller than the average-sized primary school serving a rural community in Oldham. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than in most schools. The proportion of pupils who have a disability or a special educational need is also lower than average, although the proportion having a statement of special educational needs is average. The school holds the Eco-School Bronze and Activemark awards.

The school meets the current floor standard: that is, the proportion of pupils gaining the expected level, Level 4, in both English and mathematics; the school therefore meets the government's current threshold.

A separately managed pre-school shares the school's site and is subject to a separate inspection. Its most recent inspection report can be found on the Ofsted website at www.ofsted.gov.uk. The school also organises a before- and after-school club for the pupils in school.

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	3
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school because pupils make satisfactory, rather than good, progress in reading, writing and mathematics. It is a happy, safe and welcoming school which is well supported by, and supports, its community.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Currently, standards are above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. Standards, including of reading, are average at the end of Key Stage 2. In general, boys attain less well than girls. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory. There is good teaching of reading and writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2. Too often, teachers do not use the information about pupils' progress that is available to them to best effect. The school's curriculum meets all requirements and benefits from a wide range of additional and specialist provision but teaching time is not used as well as it could be to maximise the progress made by pupils.
- Behaviour and safety are satisfactory. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the work of the school and are happy with pupils' behaviour and their safety. Pupils too are happy and feel very safe at school. However, a number of them feel that behaviour has not been good enough in the past but that it has improved considerably since the headteacher's appointment.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides good, clear direction for the school and has the full support of the staff and the governing body for the changes she is bringing about. The governing body is highly committed to the school but has recognised that, in the past, it has not been as robust in fulfilling its role as critical friend as it might have been. The headteacher monitors the quality of teaching regularly and has instigated

improvements to the quality of teaching. The formal performance management cycle is carried out as required.

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?

- Raise standards in Key Stage 2 so that more pupils gain the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - increasing the rates of progress pupils make across Key Stage 2
 - improving the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 so that it is all good or better
 - ensuring that the teaching in Key Stage 2 makes best use of the assessment data available to challenge and support all groups of pupils, especially boys.
- As part of the school's intended revision of the curriculum, review the class timetables to maximise the use and impact of teaching time.
- Improve leadership and management by developing the role of the governing body as a critical friend.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Historically, the school has attained above-average results in the national tests for English although they dipped in the last two years to broadly average. The above average attainment in English has been driven by the better performance of girls: the gap between the attainment of boys and girls is evident from the Early Years Foundation Stage upwards. Work in pupils' writing books shows that this gap is now closing. Most of the pupils receiving additional support for special educational needs are boys and this group is making satisfactory progress too. The school's recent introduction of a specific programme to teach letter sounds (phonics) is having a positive impact on boys' reading and writing skills. In the Early Years Foundation Stage pupils are making good progress in acquiring early reading and writing skills and, in 2011, a much higher proportion of children than is usual entered Year 1 with the expected skill levels or better.

Given their starting points, more pupils could achieve higher standards by the end of Key Stage 2 in both English and mathematics. Lesson observations show that, in too many lessons, pupils spend too little time engaged in intellectually demanding work and too much time listening to teachers talking. In some lessons pupils repeat work they have already learnt and do not move forward. In other lessons time is not used to best effect to maximise pupils' progress. For example, the school allocates half an hour each day for reading, which equates to over 10% of the timetable, and those pupils who do not read with the teacher or teaching assistant during this time read

freely. However, the range, breadth, challenge and quality of the texts that pupils read during this time are not monitored. Most pupils enter Key Stage 2 as good or 'free readers'.

The standards of reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 are above average. Year 3 pupils write factual reports and stories using joined script, a good range of punctuation and paragraphs. Their work is neatly presented and lively. In upper Key Stage 2 pupils write at length too infrequently and some of the work in their books is untidy and poorly presented. In mathematics lessons pupils' lack of understanding and misconceptions are not always picked up and corrected. For example, some upper Key Stage 2 pupils do not understand the meaning of the 2 in '27' or in '276' and are unable to use this information to compute quickly.

Parents and carers feel that their children are achieving well. This view is not completely accurate as pupils are making satisfactory, not good, progress over time.

Quality of teaching

The major differences between the satisfactory and good teaching observed are the amount of time pupils spend working and the match of work to pupils' needs and stages of development. In a few lessons the work does not sufficiently meet the needs of all pupils, especially the more able, who are not challenged enough. In addition, pupils sometimes sit listening to the teacher for too long, in some instances for up to two thirds of the time available, leaving only short periods of time for them to work independently. Consequently, they produce limited amounts of work. This use of time impacts adversely on all pupils but especially on the more able. In the better lessons time is used effectively and work is appropriately matched to pupils' abilities. In a good Year 3 lesson pupils were required to write at length, independently, constructing their own stories using the features they had been learning about. All produced a good volume of well written work in the time available. Some managed to write more complex sentences using subordinate clauses. The teaching gave the pupils time to practise their new skills and to improve what they had written. Consequently, they achieved well.

The school's curriculum is broad and enriched with specialist teaching. It engages pupils' interest and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The allocation of time to subjects on class timetables is not always organised to best effect. Pupils particularly enjoy the range of extra-curricular activities on offer. Relationships are good and contribute to pupils' developing confidence. The marking of pupils' work is good and most pupils spoken to knew their targets, although they were not always sure how to make their work better.

All parents and carers who returned questionnaires believe that their children are taught well. This view is accurate in respect of some aspects of the provision but not all of it.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

All pupils spoken to reported feeling very happy at school and feeling safe. The vast majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires also feel that their children are happy and safe and that behaviour is good. A few commented upon the improvements that have taken place since the appointment of the headteacher. A small number of pupils reported that behaviour 'used not to be good' but that it had improved recently. They attributed this to the new headteacher and the changes she has implemented. They also reported that bullying does still occasionally occur but that it is dealt with effectively. The school's logs show that there have been no exclusions in the last two years, although there have been racist remarks and five behaviour incidents recorded. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, especially when using the internet. Pupils are well looked after. The before- and after-school club provides appropriate care and supervision for pupils using the facility.

School attendance is well above average; this reflects pupils' and parents' happiness with the school.

Leadership and management

Since her appointment two years ago the headteacher has identified the declining position in Key Stage 2, initiated action to improve teaching and increase rates of progress there, and implemented a range of professional training for staff. She has the full confidence and support of the governing body and parents, and staff morale is high. The leadership structure she inherited placed a heavy burden on the headteacher. Recent appointments have enabled her to share responsibilities and to develop leadership skills in other staff. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate and its development plans focus on the right priorities. There is a programme of lesson observations in operation and the performance management cycle for teachers is carried out as required. Teachers are held to account for the progress being made by pupils and expectations have been raised about what pupils can achieve. A range of professional development opportunities has been taken up by staff to improve teaching, including training by external consultants. A whole-school tracking system and a new assessment system have been put in place to good effect. In the Early Years Foundation Stage pupils are further on in their acquisition of reading skills than was last year's group at the same point in time; this evidence indicates that the rates of progress made by pupils is increasing. In Key Stage 2 the school's own data suggest that the gap between the performance of boys and girls is narrowing.

Members of the governing body are highly committed to the school but they have recognised that, in the past, the governing body has not been as robust in fulfilling its role as critical friend as it might have been.

The school's curriculum contributes to pupils' achievement and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum meets the needs of learners but there is still more to do to improve teaching in Key Stage 2.

The school promotes equality satisfactorily and the headteacher is aware of the school's duties under the Equalities Act 2010. The governing body fulfils all statutory requirements in respect of safeguarding and ensures that the building is safe and well maintained.

Parents and carers who returned completed questionnaires are very happy with the school's work.

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.
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 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Diggle School, Oldham, OL3 5PU

As you know, I visited your school recently with Mr Mather. Thank you very much for being so friendly and for welcoming us to your school. Thanks especially to those of you who completed the questionnaires and who met us to talk about your school. We could tell that you are proud of your school. Diggle is a satisfactory school. These are just a few of the best things about your school.

- You enjoy school; you are happy here. Your parents and carers are happy with the school. The school keeps you safe and makes sure you know how to keep yourselves safe.
- The teaching is satisfactory overall but there is some good teaching too.
- The school helps you to grow into decent, kind and responsible young people.
- The headteacher, teachers and the governing body are committed to doing their best to make sure that the school keeps getting better.

We have asked your headteacher and the governing body to look again at three important things. First, we think that the pupils in Key Stage 2 could do better in their reading, writing and mathematics. We know that the teachers are already trying to make this better. We have also asked them to think again about how they organise the timetable to make best use of all the time in lessons. And finally, we have asked the governors to ask more challenging questions about whether your lessons are good enough and whether you are all making enough progress, because this is a very important part of their job. We know that all the adults, teachers and governors work very hard on your behalf, so remember to give them a big smile and say thank you!

We are sure that you will continue to work hard for your teachers and to help them to make your school even better. Thank you again for making us so welcome!

Yours sincerely

Angela Westington
Her Majesty's Inspector

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