

Defford-Cum-Besford CofE School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Unique reference number | 116802 |
| Local authority | Worcestershire |
| Inspection number | 379305 |
| Inspection dates | 6–7 March 2012 |
| Lead inspector | John Cavill |

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

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| Type of school | First |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4–9 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 44 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Rev. Susan Renshaw |
| Headteacher | Janet Brown |
| Date of previous school inspection | 30 January 2007 |
| School address | Hill View Defford Worcester WR8 9BH |
| Telephone number | 01386 750321 |
| Fax number | 01386 750321 |
| Email address | office@defford-cum-besford.worcs.sch.uk |

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Introduction

Inspection team

John Cavill

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited 10 lessons and observed four teachers. He had discussions with members of the governing body, the School Improvement Partner, staff and groups of pupils. The inspector took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plans and priorities for development. He analysed recent evidence on pupils' progress and performance, checked the procedures to safeguard children and analysed 28 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as those completed by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

Defford-Cum-Besford CofE School is a very small rural first school. Almost all of the pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average as is the proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has achieved Green Flag status for its work on ecology for the third time and has Arts Mark Gold. The Defford Under 5's Playgroup uses the school facilities but is managed separately and was not part of this 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 | 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. The quality of teaching is not good enough to move the school to the next grade.
- Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' attainment in Year 4 is broadly average. Pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points in Reception to when they leave school. However, they make better progress in the younger years than in Key Stage 2.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Pupils are grouped according to their ability and are given work that broadly meets their needs; this is securing satisfactory progress. However, pupils are not challenged enough to develop their independent learning skills because success criteria are not sharp enough. In some lessons, the pace of learning is not fast enough and the class spend too much time being directed by the teacher.
- Behaviour and safety are satisfactory. Pupils engage with their learning, particularly where tasks are well chosen and interesting. However, there are a small minority of pupils who are not consistently attentive in lessons. Their progress then slows. Pupils' behaviour and safety around the school is much better and they interact together very well.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a clear vision for the school, morale is high and staff share a common set of values. Sustainable improvements have been secured at the school. Effective performance review and monitoring procedures, supported by appropriate professional development, are leading to improvements in teaching. However, the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is limiting the children's explorative and investigative skills by providing too few opportunities for child-initiated activities.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring

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visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2013, accelerate progress and raise attainment, especially in Key Stage 2, by ensuring that at least 75% of teaching is good or better through:
 - increased challenge in lessons, particularly for the more-able pupils.
 - the use of clear success criteria to raise expectations of what pupils can and should achieve.
 - providing pupils with exciting, engaging and well-paced activities that enhance their independent learning skills.
 - reducing the amount of time spent on whole-class activities.
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - increasing the opportunities for children to explore and investigate through child-initiated activities.
 - making full use of the outdoor environment.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children start at the school in the Reception Year with skills that are broadly similar to those expected for their age, except in their social and emotional development, which is lower. They make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that they join Key Stage 1 with broadly average levels of attainment. Satisfactory progress continues through the rest of the school so that pupils leave at the end of Year 4 with broadly average levels of attainment.

Overall progress in both English and mathematics is broadly average. Attainment in reading is slightly stronger than in writing. However, the gap between them is closing rapidly following the concerted efforts to raise the standards in writing through intervention activities and improved tracking of pupils, resulting in a faster improvement in progress and improving attainment.

Virtually all of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire believe that their children are making good progress. Pupils share this view, although in discussions they said that they learn better when they are working independently and where activities provided practical opportunities to learn. The inspector agreed that learning is more effective when teachers provide pupils with 'active' tasks that enthuse and excite them to learn independently. This was seen in a Year 1 literacy lesson where pupils were working on a range of different tasks. Progress was good because the activities were both stimulating and demanding, requiring pupils to work together to support each other's learning. This was enhanced with some good questioning by the teacher to monitor progress. However, in other lessons the progress was slowed by a focus on whole-class activities and teachers controlling the

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learning too much.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress when measured against their individual starting points. This has been secured with focused support identified in individual education plans and delivered well by teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils' attainment in reading is average, both at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they leave the school, a view confirmed from listening to pupils read and by the school's data.

Quality of teaching

The satisfactory teaching at the school is resulting in pupils' satisfactory progress. Lesson planning is sound and the topic-based curriculum is providing opportunities to develop core skills across all subjects. Activities broadly meet the needs of all, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory, providing the children with a secure start to their education. However, there is not enough emphasis on activities that encourage child-initiated learning to develop their skills of enquiry.

Teachers know their children well. The classes are smaller than average, with pupils from mixed years. Teaching in some lessons is limiting better progress, especially for the more-able pupils. This is due to the teachers and teaching assistants controlling the speed of learning too long with whole-class activities and restricting the pace of learning. This results in some pupils becoming bored and disengaged with their learning, leading to some low-level disruption.

Learning objectives are used well, and pupils reflect on their targets, but the expectations for what needs to be achieved during the lesson are not always clear. This is not always the case. For example in a Year 3/4 topic lesson on Aboriginal art, pupils worked on producing a piece of temporary art on the paths outside the school, clearly recognising what they had to do, how long they had to complete the task and, ultimately, how long it would last. They made good use of the resources and worked together to assist, offer advice and assess the final products.

Pupils are encouraged to reflect upon a wide range of issues both in assemblies and lessons. They are developing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness across a number of subjects and the link that the school has with a Birmingham school allows pupils to meet and share experiences.

Virtually all parents and carers think that the teaching is effective and is developing pupils' skills in communication, reading and mathematics. Pupils agree. They are able to develop these skills in other subject areas, particularly in the topic-based lessons. Teachers' assess pupils' work regularly; their feedback is precise and provides pupils with effective next step guidance.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

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Around the school, the pupils, including children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are well behaved and courteous, demonstrating their strong moral code. Pupils are keen to take on responsibility and they talk with affection about their involvement in the school council and the 'Eco Club' promoting recycling at the school.

Behaviour in most lessons provides for effective learning. However, in some lessons, where the level of challenge is not sufficiently demanding, a small number of pupils become disengaged in their learning and exhibit some low-level disruption. This is generally managed well by the teachers; pupils fully understand how they should behave and resume their work following instructions. All parents and carers believe that behaviour both in and out of lessons at the school is good. This is a view confirmed by most pupils but they recognise that when pupils are bored, behaviour is not as good.

Pupils report that there is very little bullying of any kind. They are confident that all staff will support them if they feel unsafe and that any incidents are dealt with quickly. Children in the Reception Year are developing their social skills through well-structured activities, showing that an understanding of personal safety. They establish routines quickly.

At play, pupils look after each other, ensuring their personal safety. Parents and carers say that the school is very good at keeping their children safe. Pupils agree. All groups, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, report that they do not feel vulnerable, are fully included in all activities and are well supported within the school.

Attendance is above average and has improved over the last three years. Pupils are generally punctual. The school has secured strong improvements in attendance by engaging with parents and carers and explaining the impact of taking children out of school during term time for holidays.

Leadership and management

All staff have a leadership responsibility in this small school. Along with the governing body, all have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, sharing a common goal to improve the outcomes for pupils. Teaching is monitored regularly by all leaders, including the governing body, resulting in some improvements in teaching, especially the quality of assessment, but lessons generally still lack the pace and challenge to accelerate pupils' progress. The school uses the information collected about the quality of teaching to focus appropriate professional development opportunities through performance management procedures.

The school has been successful in making improvements, most notably in improving the attendance of pupils and developing new assessment systems to improve the accuracy of pupil tracking data. Leaders review the progress of individual pupils regularly to improve the teaching at the school and monitor the teachers' work. This has resulted in all pupils' making satisfactory progress and teachers being able to

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target pupils and identify suitable intervention activities leading to better progress for these pupils.

The curriculum has been revised to develop topic-based work, increasing the opportunities for pupils to develop their core skills across the whole curriculum. The impact is evident in the improvements seen in writing. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum provides stimulating and exciting topics. However, limited use is made of the outdoor environment and there is an imbalance between child- and adult-initiated learning, which is restricting the children's development of their investigative and independent learning skills.

The school ensures that it develops pupils' understanding of other cultures through visits and links with other schools. It tackles discrimination effectively. Leaders and the governing body ensure that all pupils have equal access to everything at the school, which is a very inclusive and cohesive community. Safeguarding procedures are robustly managed. All members of staff are fully trained and protect children well.

The self-evaluation undertaken by the school is accurate, with priorities for development embedded in the school improvement plan. The school's capacity to improve is shown by a trend of steady improvement over the last three years, including successfully tackling the issues for improvement from the last inspection.

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.



8 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Defford-Cum-Besford CofE School, Worcester, WR8 9BH

Thank you for welcoming me to your school recently, talking to me about your work and telling me about your school and what you enjoy about it. I enjoyed talking to you and would especially like to thank those of you who met with me or completed the questionnaire.

I have judged your school to be satisfactory. I found you to be proud of your school and keen to attend regularly. The adults in your school look after you very well and keep you safe, something both you and your parents agree with. However, in some lessons I noticed that you became bored and did not focus on your work as well as you should.

I have identified some areas that need improvement at your school. These have already been recognised by your headteacher and her team and a start has been made to tackle some of them. I have asked your school to make sure that:

- teachers make better use of time in lessons and challenge you to learn more quickly and achieve more.
- what is planned for you in lessons allows you to work and learn independently because the activities are exciting and less time is spent working as a class.
- teachers tell you exactly what they expect you to learn in lessons
- children in Reception are given the chance to choose the activities they want to do more often and learn more often outside.

I enjoyed coming to your school. You can help it get even better by continuing to work hard and concentrating on your work in every lesson.

Yours sincerely

John Cavill
Lead inspector

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