

# Derwent Community School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112782
<b>Local Authority</b>	City of Derby LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	357187
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Andrew Stafford

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	209
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Freda Benneyworth
<b>Headteacher</b>	Frances Glaze
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	St Mark's Road Derby DE21 6AL
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons, and observed breaks and lunchtime. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils and took account of views expressed through pupil and staff surveys. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' work, data on progress, monitoring reports, policies, planning and 46 parent and carer questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

Whether there has been any rise in standards in writing and increase in progress, especially for the more able pupils, during the last year.

- The use of assessment for ensuring an increase in progress, and pupils' involvement in the process.
- The impact of measures to improve teaching and learning.
- Trends in attendance.

## Information about the school

Derwent Community is average in size for a primary school. Pupils come from a wide mix of backgrounds and ethnic groups. The majority of pupils are White British with an increasing proportion of pupils from Eastern Europe. Pupils from Black African and Pakistani origins are the next largest group. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. At the last full inspection Her Majesty's Chief Inspector was of the opinion that the school no longer required significant improvement. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in January 2008 and several teachers have been appointed in the last three years. The school provides a breakfast club for pupils, parents and carers.

**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: how good is the school?****3****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****2**

## Main findings

Derwent Community is a satisfactory school which is improving rapidly. The school has a welcoming atmosphere and attractive interior where pupils thrive and enjoy their learning. Significant changes have ensured that pupils now make better progress. Those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do particularly well in response to good support that is sharply focused on their needs. When children join the school in Nursery their skills are below those expected for their age. Those leaving Year 6 reach broadly average levels in English and mathematics but standards remain too low for the more able pupils. Pupils do not reach the expected levels in writing. Nevertheless, good teaching is now leading to better progress in most year groups, which means that standards are rising. By the end of Reception and Year 2, attainment is now in line with that found nationally. Pupils' achievement and longer-term progress are therefore satisfactory.

Excellent care and guidance mean that pupils feel very safe. The school gains the support of parents and carers, and supports them through links to outside agencies, leading to caring and productive relationships between children and all adults in school. Behaviour in all classes is now good and there is little disruption to learning. Pupils want to succeed and show responsible attitudes to working hard and doing their best. Attendance is satisfactory. The majority of pupils attend regularly but a few do not and this has a negative impact on their achievement. The school recognises that it does not communicate this forcefully so that parents realise the impact on children's future prospects.

The headteacher, along with senior leaders, has a strong vision for the future and high expectations of what all pupils can achieve. Together they have put robust, effective systems into place for evaluating the work of the school and making all staff accountable for outcomes. They have an accurate view of the strengths of the school and what needs to be improved. This has resulted in rapid, effective change, especially in improved teaching and learning and in improved performance in all subjects, but particularly in mathematics. Subject leaders are closely involved in monitoring outcomes for pupils and leading innovation. The capacity to improve further is good.

Lessons are lively, engaging and enjoyable in a wide range of subjects. Although the majority of lessons are good and some are outstanding, a small minority are not of this high quality. Subject leaders do not monitor teaching regularly but the school recognises this as the next step in tackling inconsistencies in the quality of learning. Teachers' subject knowledge and skills in writing vary and this has an impact on the progress pupils make. Accurate assessment means that teachers know pupils' levels of attainment well. Pupils have broad targets in English and mathematics, which are helping them make accelerated progress in key areas. However, pupils do not have individual targets that are specific to their learning needs. Pupils are therefore not always clear about what they are aiming for

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or how to improve their work. As a result, some lessons lack challenge for the more able pupils and this holds back their progress.

The satisfactory curriculum involves pupils well in deciding what they would like to learn and has strong links between subjects which are effective in supporting key skills in all lessons. Senior leaders recognise that provision to extend the learning of more able pupils is insufficiently developed. With good social skills, a positive attitude to work and improving basic skills, pupils are suitably prepared for their next schools and future lives.

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

- Raise attainment, particularly in writing and for the more able pupils, by:
  - strengthening the subject knowledge and skills of all teachers in English
  - making sure there is sufficient challenge for the more able pupils in all lessons
  - developing the curriculum for the more able pupils.
- Ensure that teaching and learning are more consistently good by:
  - providing more sharply focused individual targets for pupils and helping them monitor their own progress in each lesson more closely
  - involving subject leaders more in monitoring and supporting lessons.
- Increase attendance by:
  - working closely with parents and carers to communicate the impact on their children's future prospects.
- Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

3

Pupils' good enjoyment of learning is evident in the keen attention they pay to teachers and the enthusiastic way they work together to solve problems and search for information. They especially enjoy physical education and art. Attainment by the time pupils leave the school is improving strongly for all ages and abilities because successful strategies, introduced by senior leaders, have improved teaching so that it is now good. As a result, pupils' progress is satisfactory but is accelerating. Attainment is highest in mathematics and science and lowest in writing. However, attainment in writing has risen from well below to below national averages in just under two years. Good progress was observed in lessons during the inspection in the very large majority of age groups, which is an improvement since the last inspection. This means that attainment has risen and is now broadly average in Years 2 and 6. It is encouraging to see all pupils answer questions confidently and work hard to achieve their class targets. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those from different ethnic groups do equally well, but while improving, not enough of the more able pupils reach the higher levels. Behaviour in lessons is good and pupils' motivation is high. A few pupils expressed concern about behaviour, but most agree that it is much improved. As one commented, 'We are all friends here.' The school has accurately analysed the needs of those pupils who may not reach the expected levels of attainment and introduced effective strategies to tackle this.

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For example, the deployment of skilled support staff to ensure that these pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do well and take pride in new learning. Similarly the use of appropriate additional resources, such as a specialist literacy computer program which supports this group to make good progress.

Pupils behave safely, with little unkind or difficult behaviour. The school recognises that for a small minority of pupils, attendance is not high enough to ensure good progress. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lives with many commenting upon the way they eat more fruit and vegetables and less 'junk food'. Pupils' good contribution to the community includes participating in the school council, who asked for the climbing wall to be installed, and walking to school to help the environment. Pupils have a particularly respectful and positive attitude to people who are different from themselves and are well aware of the different cultures and beliefs in their society.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

**How effective is the provision?**

Teaching has improved significantly and is good overall, particularly in mathematics. This is contributing to pupils' accelerating progress but its impact has not yet resulted in consistently good progress across the school. Strengths include good behaviour management and warm supportive relationships between pupils and with staff. One pupil typically commented, 'When you are not sure, they help you and really cheer you up.' Varied, active lessons keep pupils engaged and they work productively in pairs and

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independently. Accurate assessment supports planning in matching work to the needs of different ability groups but not consistently so. However, the way pupils' individual targets are set is not specific enough to meet their needs in every lesson. A small minority of pupils are unsure of how well they are doing or what to do to improve. This is evident in a minority of writing lessons, where work is not sufficiently challenging and teachers lack the subject skills to take learning forward quickly enough. There is an increasing proportion of outstanding lessons, where learning is very rapid and teachers adapt quickly to different learning needs.

The curriculum is rapidly improving. A focus on writing across a range of subjects has raised attainment in English. Good, well-focused support for those pupils felt to be vulnerable and, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, has raised attainment for these groups. The thematic curriculum, where pupils choose topics and work is planned around events and people from the past, has proven to be particularly successful. It is especially effective in developing key skills in all lessons. The school recognises the weakness of provision to support the more able and gifted pupils in developing their special skills. Pupils have good access to computers, although the use of information and communication technology (ICT) across different subjects is not monitored sufficiently to ensure that pupils regularly consolidate their ICT skills. The curriculum is enriched by a number of trips and visits, including residential ones, and there are productive links with other local schools.

Pupils are very well cared for in this safe and outstandingly supportive environment. Procedures to keep pupils safe are extremely robust. Working very closely with external agencies, pupils who have specific social or educational needs receive excellent support. Information is passed carefully between year groups and pupils' books move with them, providing a straightforward way of ensuring continuity of learning. Good links with local secondary schools ensure a smooth transition. The learning mentor works effectively to improve attendance for some individuals, but has identified that further steps should be taken by the school to alert parents and carers to the impact of reduced attendance. The breakfast club is of good quality. , The 'learning zone' takes place three times a week after school and is aimed at pupils needing additional help doing their homework, in order to reach their targets in literacy and numeracy, as well as keeping children safe.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher has led significant change with skill and determination and together with the leadership team, has succeeded in improving almost every aspect of the school in a

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remarkably short space of time. There is still much to do, but staff work closely as a team and morale is high. The physical environment has been upgraded to increase pupils' feeling of well-being. The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory. Governors are beginning to play a more significant role in school improvement, although many of them are new this term and are developing the relevant skills. They already have good procedures in place to make the school accountable for outcomes, including safeguarding. The focus on collecting accurate data and monitoring regularly has been successful in enabling senior leaders to tackle shortcomings in the most important areas. As a result, attainment and progress have risen significantly, and the quality of teaching, has and continues, to improve rapidly. Subject leaders have achieved a great deal in improving practice and outcomes and recognise that monitoring lessons will give them a more detailed view to ensure a more consistent quality of teaching.

Tightening up procedures to safeguard pupils has been a priority and policies are now of good quality and effective. Engagement of parents and carers is developing well, with regular events to engage them in their children's learning. The school effectively promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination. Inequalities in learning between groups who may be vulnerable have been effectively targeted. This has resulted, for example, in those pupils eligible for free school meals making equal progress to their peers. The school works well to promote community cohesion, particularly locally, by taking steps to include more parents and carers, and in ensuring that pupils from the many minority ethnic groups form a happy and harmonious community.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

When children join Nursery their skills are below those expected for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy. Good links with parents and carers, and a robust



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and caring approach to establishing good relationships mean that children settle quickly and soon make new friends. Their skills are assessed accurately and built upon systematically, so that by the time they join Year 1 attainment is average. This demonstrates the good progress children make in most areas of learning, with writing being the exception. Excellent leadership has ensured that provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved significantly and is good. Teaching is good, with skilled individual support and kind supportive approaches to make children feel safe and develop confidence. There are occasional inconsistencies in adults' use of questioning when promoting children's speaking and listening skills. The curriculum is broad and appropriate, with a wide range of resources including computers. Opportunities for children to explore their surroundings and find out things for themselves are frequent and contrast well with sessions where the teacher leads events. The excellent outside environment has been beautifully designed and recently enhanced, in consultation with the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The children decide how to use the equipment with, for example, a team of boys making a house in the construction area which is one of their favourite places for learning. In one session these boys were talking about and laying laminate flooring before making a ground plan of the dwelling. There is a good flow of learning between inside and outdoors and it is delightful to see children chatting excitedly, while directing traffic in the 'town' and giving snacks to the teacher from their 'lunch boxes', counting utensils as they do so. Children quickly become more independent and show considerable support and consideration for each other in this safe and caring environment.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

**Views of parents and carers**

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about most aspects of the school, although the questionnaires returned contained very few comments. They appreciate the improvements that have been made. They particularly like the way their children enjoy school, the way staff are so approachable and the support given to help children lead healthy lives. A very small minority expressed concerns about behaviour, although the team found behaviour to be good overall. Also, a very few expressed concerns about the school not taking account of suggestions and concerns, although those parents and carers spoken to during the inspection said that any matters raised had been dealt with effectively.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Derwent Community School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 46 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 209 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	25	54	20	43	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	50	23	50	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	19	41	25	54	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	43	23	50	2	4	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	14	30	30	65	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	33	29	63	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	28	31	67	1	2	1	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	17	37	28	61	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	41	20	43	5	11	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	22	26	57	9	20	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	26	24	52	7	15	3	7
The school is led and managed effectively	10	22	30	65	2	4	4	9
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	39	27	59	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.

**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.**



15 September 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Derwent Community School, Derby, DE21 6AL**

On behalf of the team, thank you for being so welcoming when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed meeting you and seeing some of your lessons. Your school is a satisfactory and rapidly improving school with many interesting things going on, just as you described. Your headteacher and senior staff work hard to keep developing the school, and for this reason your work is getting better each year. However, a few of you do not attend often enough and we have asked the school to look at ways of helping you to attend more often.

Skilful teaching helps you to make good progress in your lessons and standards are rising. As a result, you do well particularly in mathematics. We like the way you really enjoy your lessons and always try to do your best. We have asked your school to raise attainment, especially in writing and for those of you who learn quickly. You told us that your teachers make lessons fun and interesting and we can see that they help you to do well. We would, though, like to see that all lessons are of the same good quality as the majority. To help this happen we would like teachers to make your targets more detailed and involve you more in knowing how to improve. We are sure that you will discuss this with your teachers and help them by working hard and sharing your ideas.

A good range of activities provide many opportunities for you to contribute well to school life and the community. The responsibilities that you take on are heartening, for example the school council, and the way you help decide what topics to study. You were keen to tell us that the school keeps you safe and looks after you very well. It is therefore very pleasing to see that you are helping yourselves by taking plenty of exercise and eating a healthy diet. Your behaviour is good, especially in the way you value learning. You show good respect and understanding towards others, including those who have different beliefs and ways of living, which helps make your school a happy and welcoming community.

We think that this, alongside your mature attitudes to working with others, helps you to be suitably prepared for your next school and future lives.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Stafford

Lead inspector

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