

Ham Dingle Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	103808
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	376970
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2012
Lead inspector	Helen Morrison

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	373
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Pycraft
Headteacher	Gary Mander
Date of previous school inspection	29 November 2006
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Introduction

Inspection team

Helen Morrison Additional inspector

Enid Korn Additional inspector

Joseph Skivington Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 27 lessons taught by 17 teachers, spending 13 hours directly observing pupils' learning in class. They heard pupils read and looked at their work in books and on display. Meetings were held with pupils, staff, representatives from the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work and looked at: curriculum planning; data on pupils' achievement, including their current progress; evidence relating to the care and protection of pupils; plans for improvement and records of the school's monitoring of its performance. They also analysed 147 questionnaires that were returned by parents and carers, together with 99 from pupils and 38 from staff.

Information about the school

Ham Dingle is a larger than average-sized primary school where most pupils are from White British backgrounds and few are learning English as an additional language. Few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.

Since the last inspection, there have been several changes of staff, including the headteacher. The current senior leadership and management team is newly formed with two phase leaders in place on a temporary basis pending a re-structuring of staff roles and responsibilities. The post of literacy leader is currently vacant and one teacher was absent through illness during the inspection.

The school meets the current government floor standard. It has gained the Sportsmark award and has Healthy School Status.

The school runs a daily breakfast club which is managed by the governing body.

An independently managed after-school club for pupils from the school operates each day. This is subject to a separate inspection and report.

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

Key findings

- Ham Dingle Primary is a good school. The curriculum is particularly rich and exciting and provides memorable learning experiences. As a result, pupils are confident and enthusiastic learners. School leaders recognise that further improvement to some teaching and better engagement with parents is needed for the school to be judged as outstanding.
- Pupils make good progress across the school to reach standards that are above those expected for their age by the end of Year 6. Although standards in Key Stage 1 have been satisfactory for some years, inspection evidence shows that good teaching has accelerated pupils' progress so they are now achieving well.
- Teaching is good overall. Pupils are taught well and teachers have high expectations and ensure that learning takes place at a brisk pace. Occasionally lessons are satisfactory and work is insufficiently challenging for more-able pupils, and some activities limit the extent to which pupils can take the initiative to explore and investigate.
- Pupils are polite to visitors and courteous to each other and to adults. They have very positive attitudes to learning and attendance is above average. All adults consistently expect high standards of behaviour to which pupils respond well.
- Leadership and management are good. The resolve and determination of the headteacher, senior leaders and governors, and their concerted approach to school improvement, has contributed significantly to improved teaching and learning, particularly in Key Stage 1; however, the role of middle leaders in monitoring pupils' achievement is under-developed. The engagement of parents and carers in their children's learning is not developed as well as it might be. A small minority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires commented that they would like more opportunities to influence whole-school initiatives together with better information about how any concerns are addressed and what they can do to support their children's learning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning from good to outstanding by:

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- ensuring that teachers fully challenge more-able pupils in every lesson so that they reach the high standards of which they are capable
 - providing more opportunities for pupil-led investigative work to enable pupils to develop their independence and research skills in lessons
 - ensuring that middle leaders keep a careful check on pupils' achievement and progress in their areas of responsibility.
- Involve parents and carers more in the life and work of the school by:
- improving the ways in which their ideas, suggestions and concerns are gathered and responded to
 - providing information more frequently to help them support their children's learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

All groups of pupils achieve well; the curriculum is inspiring and exciting and consequently pupils thoroughly enjoy learning. Most parents and carers rightly say their children are making good progress. Children start in the Reception class with knowledge and skills above those expected nationally, and leave at the end of Year 6 with attainment which is above the levels expected for their age in writing and well-above in reading and mathematics. This represents good progress across the school, although occasionally the pace of learning slows in some lessons when more-able pupils find the work too easy.

In the Reception class, well-planned activities, particularly to develop children's knowledge of phonics (the sounds that letters make), ensure that all children make good progress and enter Year 1 with skills above those expected nationally. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has been in line with the national average for the last two years but current pupils' work shows their progress has accelerated and they are now reaching standards above those expected for seven-year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics. For example, Year 2 pupils met their teacher's high expectations when writing information sheets about cold climates; they confidently set out their work using headings and sub-headings.

In Key Stage 2, pupils' learning and progress are good; they are fully engaged, have excellent attitudes and maintain their concentration well. For example, pupils in Year 6 worked together well and used their good skills in persuasive writing to prepare 'Dragons Den' presentations promoting 'fair trade' activities.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they have carefully targeted teaching which supports their small, manageable steps in learning. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are given focused teaching so their English vocabulary increases quickly and consequently they make similar progress to their peers.

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Pupils read well and show understanding that is generally accurate. Most pupils in Years 1 and 2 use their knowledge of the sounds made by individual letters to decode words effectively, although some are less confident in identifying words with irregular spelling. Pupils in Year 6 read with expression and evident enjoyment. They talk confidently about authors whose work they enjoy.

Quality of teaching

Teachers have high expectations of all pupils; in the best lessons, they use their good subject knowledge to plan exciting activities, matched carefully to pupils' learning needs, which enthuse all pupils and capture their interest and imagination. For example, in a geography lesson in Year 6, the teacher carefully planned a practical activity which helped pupils to understand the implications of deforestation; pupils concentrated well and responded thoughtfully to subsequent questioning about sustainability. However in some satisfactory lessons teachers plan work that is too tightly structured and insufficiently challenging. These lessons limit the more-able pupils' capacities to investigate for themselves and to explore more deeply topics which particularly interest them.

Teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural well through the themes and topics taught. They provide good opportunities for pupils to listen to each other and work effectively in pairs and groups; they encourage pupils to be creative and imaginative. For example, pupils in Year 5 spoke with considerable empathy about conditions for children in Victorian times, illustrating their views by reference to the life-sized model of a coal mine shaft they had built in their class room.

Pupils say they enjoy lessons and are confident that they will be given help should they need it. Relationships are positive and there is a calm, purposeful atmosphere in lessons. Teachers make clear the purpose and expected outcomes of their lessons and have precise targets for pupils' next steps in learning. Teachers mark work frequently, using constructive comments, to support pupils' understanding; they also encourage pupils to evaluate their own learning. Teachers provide regular homework, particularly reading, reinforcement of phonic knowledge and research activities, to develop the skills pupils need to learn and consolidate for themselves.

Most parents and carers say their children are making good progress and are taught well. Inspection evidence supports these views.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite, kind and considerate towards one another and encourage each other to do well. Pupils show exemplary attitudes to learning and are genuinely motivated in lessons. Adults are good role models and use consistent behaviour management strategies based on the school's high expectations. Pupils with social and emotional difficulties are supported well so that they are able to play a full part in lessons. Good levels of pastoral care

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ensure that there is sensitive support for pupils and families whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Pupils who attend the breakfast club enjoy stimulating activities and their needs are well met.

Pupils have a good understanding for their ages of different types of bullying, such as persistent name-calling relating to gender, race, disability or special educational need or cyber-bullying, although they say bullying is rare. In response to the pupils' questionnaire, most pupils say behaviour is good in school and in lessons and that any instances of bullying are dealt with very well. As a result, they feel safe in school. The school's behaviour records also show that behaviour seen during the inspection is typical of that seen every day.

Pupils have a good understanding about how to be safe and to look after themselves, particularly with regard to road safety and when using the internet.

Parents and carers hold positive views about the behaviour and safety of pupils. Most parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire say their children are well looked after and feel safe, and there is a good standard of behaviour at school. A large majority of parents and carers agree with the statement 'the school deals well with bullying'.

Attendance is above average and almost all pupils are consistently punctual.

Leadership and management

The drive and ambition of senior leaders and the governing body, together with the high expectations of all staff, underpins the school's good capacity for sustained improvement. Accurate school self-evaluation is linked effectively to professional development for teachers. The monitoring of teaching by senior leaders is very rigorous though staffing changes have resulted in a more limited role for middle leaders. Leaders and managers carefully and thoroughly evaluate the impact of initiatives, such as the introduction of termly meetings to discuss the progress of different groups of pupils. These strategies have brought about strong improvements since the last inspection. The school is committed to equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. Staff fully meet the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs so they achieve well.

The curriculum is outstanding because it is carefully planned around exciting themes and tailored to meet pupils' needs very well. Work in pupils' 'learning journeys' is often of a very high quality and clearly reflects their interests in, and enthusiasm for, the topics they explore. The school organises and enriches the curriculum with memorable visitors and visits that widen pupils' life experiences and make a very positive contribution to their personal development. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils learn about different cultures and beliefs in lessons and through first-hand experiences. For example, in a religious education lesson in Year 2, pupils explored the differences between festivals and celebrations. The school organises visits to places of worship to help to develop

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pupils' good understanding of, and respect for, lifestyles that may be different from their own. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and this is reflected in their good behaviour. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum provides a very good balance of adult-led activities and those the children choose for themselves.

Parents and carers are mostly supportive of the school, with a very large majority saying their children's needs are met. A few parents and carers commented that they felt the school could do more to recognise their views and wanted more prompt information to help them support their children's learning.

Members of the governing body hold the school to account very well. They visit the school regularly to gain first-hand information, and work well with senior leaders to monitor strategic planning. Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and are regularly evaluated. These, together with regularly updated training for all staff and teaching about safety, ensure that pupils are safe in school.

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.



26 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ham Dingle Primary School, Stourbridge, DY9 0UN

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and showing us what you are learning. We really enjoyed talking with you, sharing your lessons and reading your questionnaires. We were impressed by how friendly and polite you are.

We agree with you that yours is a good school. Here are some of the reasons why.

- You told us you enjoy school, and your parents and carers, rightly, say that you are happy and feel safe there.
- You behave well around school and get on well together.
- You make good progress and by the end of Year 6 you reach standards in English and mathematics which are higher than those of most eleven-year-olds.
- Your teachers make lessons exciting and interesting and the teaching in most lessons is good and sometimes better.
- You enjoy exciting school visits and learning from visitors to your school.

So that you make even faster progress, I have asked Mr Mander, your teachers and the governing body to:

- ensure that those of you who are capable of reaching high standards always have challenging work to do
- provide more opportunities for you to explore and investigate topics that particularly interest you
- ask teachers who are middle leaders to keep a close check on how well you are learning
- find more ways to learn what your parents and carers think about school so they can help decide the things you do there and help you to learn even more quickly.

All the adults in your school want you to do well. You can all help by continuing to try your best at everything you do.

Yours sincerely

Helen Morrison
Lead inspector

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