

Doxey Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124200
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	359603
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Mike Thompson

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Charles Soutar
Headteacher	Jonathan Dreher
Date of previous school inspection	28 April 2008
School address	Marsland Road Doxey, Stafford ST16 1EG
Telephone number	01785 356100
Fax number	01785 356100
Email address	office@doxey.staffs.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2011
Inspection number	359603

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed nine teachers and visited 14 lessons. They held meetings with the headteacher, senior managers and some of the teaching staff, members of the governing body and pupils. They looked at a range of information, including data showing the progress made by pupils and samples of pupils' work, and analysed questionnaires returned by 27 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- To what extent is the school able to demonstrate that the sharp decline in attainment seen over the past two years has been halted and that pupils now make at least satisfactory progress?
- How effective has the school been in responding to its previous inspection report by ensuring that teaching provides pace and challenge in developing pupils' learning?
- How effective is the school in ensuring seamless progression in learning from year-to-year within mixed-age classes, particularly in literacy and numeracy?
- How skilled are leaders and managers at all levels in monitoring and evaluating their areas of responsibility?

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. Most of its pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. Most of these pupils have general learning difficulties, including speech, language and communication, and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Nursery, which children attend each morning, and a Reception class.

The school has a range of awards and accreditations including Healthy School status, Eco-Schools bronze and International School.

The Doxey Pre-School, which provides on-site childcare is not managed by the governing body and was inspected separately.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement. The school is ineffective because attainment in English and mathematics is too low and pupils' learning and progress in these subjects are inadequate.

Children join the Nursery class with skills and capabilities that are broadly at the levels expected nationally for three year-olds, although they are weaker in communication, language and literacy. They make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and are working at average levels by the time they transfer from Reception to Key Stage 1. However, weaknesses remain in children's writing. Over the past two years, there has been a sharp decline in attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. The local authority has recently stepped in to provide support, but its intervention has yet to halt this deterioration.

Although there is some good teaching, pupils' learning is inadequate because teachers' expectations are too low. In many lessons, the tasks set by teachers are essentially the same for all groups. This is particularly the case in writing, where there are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length and to practise and extend their writing skills. In mathematics, the system of grouping all pupils from Years 3 to 6 according to ability, irrespective of age, counts against continuity and progression in learning. Combined with inadequate monitoring, this means that some pupils unnecessarily repeat work while others develop gaps in their skills and knowledge. In both English and mathematics, pupils have few opportunities to work independently and are too reliant on teachers for help when attempting to complete the tasks set for them in lessons. Excessive use of photocopied worksheets limits the scope of pupils' answers. In far too many instances, teachers' marking of pupils' work is ineffective. The comments made in pupils' books have no impact on their learning because they do not set out clear 'next steps' for pupils to achieve. Teachers rarely use corrections as a tool for improvement.

The school's rigorous procedures for ensuring that pupils feel safe and are well cared for are appreciated by pupils and their parents or carers. Pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do in order to live healthily. The headteacher has ensured that pupils contribute well to the day-to-day life of the school and have a positive impact on the local community. Relationships are good and behaviour is satisfactory.

In all other respects, leadership and management at all levels are inadequate. School self-evaluation is weak, and so the headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body have failed to identify clearly, or address, the weaknesses that have resulted in pupils' underachievement over the past few years. None of the areas for improvement resulting

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

from the previous inspection has been tackled effectively. Consequently, the school demonstrates inadequate capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase rates of pupils' learning and progress so that attainment in English and mathematics are at least in line with national averages at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, by:
 - developing pupils' skills as independent learners
 - focusing closely on the development of pupils' skills as writers from an early age and ensuring that pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 have regular opportunities to write at length in all subjects
 - reviewing arrangements for the grouping of pupils in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 and ensuring effective systems for monitoring coverage of the curriculum.
- Raise the quality of teaching and learning so that by March 2012, the majority of lessons are good or better, by:
 - ensuring that teachers set clear, challenging targets for pupils of different levels of ability to achieve, based on the skills to be developed
 - providing more challenging, open-ended activities in place of limited photocopied worksheets, to promote pupils' thinking skills
 - ensuring that teachers' marking of pupils' work provides clear targets to be achieved, and that teachers check on pupils' response to their marking.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management on pupils' achievement by:
 - sharpening the skills of leaders and managers in self-evaluation
 - providing greater rigour in the way leaders and managers monitor the school's performance, so that actions taken will bring about sustainable improvements in the quality of provision.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

The school's tracking data show that the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make inadequate progress. This was confirmed through a close scrutiny of samples of pupils' work. These included numerous examples of writing which demonstrated a lack of understanding of basic rules of grammar and punctuation, and poor skills in spelling. In mathematics, there are basic weaknesses in calculation. In many cases, work is untidy and poorly presented. In many of the lessons observed, pupils showed too little confidence and independence as learners and relied heavily on teachers for guidance and reassurance. This culture of 'learned helplessness' adversely affects pupils' progress as they sit quietly, with hand raised, waiting for the teacher to check their work and to tell them what to do next. In other instances, groups of pupils lacked clear direction because the teachers did not outline their expectations in sufficient detail. For example, when photocopied worksheets were used, the teachers focused on the tasks outlined in the worksheets instead of setting out clear expectations of the skills that they expected the pupils to develop. Pupils with special educational needs

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

and/or disabilities have their needs carefully assessed and are provided with clear individual education plans, but these plans make too little impact on teachers' lesson planning. Inadequacies in teaching affect these pupils just as much as their classmates.

Pupils' strong commitment to being healthy is evident in the good attendance at extra-curricular activities, such as football, tag-rugby and multi-skills. Pupils are keen to take on responsibility. The school council meets regularly and played an important role in gaining the school's Eco award. It is currently helping to manage a grant of £1500 for extending the school's provision and is canvassing pupils' views on where the money needs to be spent. Pupils are developing good skills as future citizens, for example, by helping to look after their school and reporting out-of-hours instances of trespass and criminal damage. Pupils' good impact on the local community is evident in a number of initiatives, such as their involvement in a consultation with the council about the development of a local park. Most pupils attend regularly and are punctual. A clear moral code within the school ensures that pupils know right from wrong. Pupils' developing global perspective is celebrated through the International School award.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ 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?

Some good examples of teaching and learning were observed, mostly in the Early Years Foundation Stage classes. Teachers in all key stages display some good technical skills.

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

These include the effective management and organisation of their lessons, based on well-established routines. In all classes, relationships between pupils and teachers are good. However, inadequacies in teaching were evident in a small minority of the lessons observed and in much of the pupils' work scrutinised. Too often, teachers direct pupils' work too closely and provide too little opportunity for independence in learning. Information from assessment is not used well enough to adapt planning in order to meet the needs of all pupils. Much of the marking of pupils' work is perfunctory and there is very little dialogue between teachers and pupils to help move learning forward.

The way in which the curriculum is planned has an adverse impact on pupils' progress because it fails to build systematically on pupils' prior learning in English and particularly in mathematics. The strengths of the curriculum lie in the good range of enrichment activities provided through visits, visitors and themed days, which help add interest and enjoyment to pupils' learning. There is a good range of extra-curricular clubs. The curriculum also makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' personal and social skills. However, work on developing the curriculum to focus on promoting key skills and pupils' creativity has stalled in recent years.

The school is a caring community in which pupils' welfare is given a high priority. The individual needs of every pupil are well understood, and good support is given to pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. There are well-established arrangements to induct pupils into school and to ensure a smooth transition as they move on to the secondary phase of their education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	4
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior leaders do not provide sufficiently clear or ambitious direction for the school. They have relied too much on inaccurate external validation of the school's effectiveness and have not focused sharply enough on improving pupils' learning. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's context but has not challenged its performance robustly enough and has had too little impact on the direction and work of the school.

The headteacher and staff ensure that this is a welcoming and inclusive school in which discriminatory behaviour has no place. However, pupils do not experience equality of opportunity in educational provision because of inconsistencies in teaching and the way in which the curriculum is planned. The school has close liaison with the special educational needs support service and the parent support worker to provide specialist support for pupils with the most severe learning difficulties. Partnerships with local schools help

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

provide useful enrichment of the curriculum, largely through sport. However, the impact of these partnerships is not satisfactory because too many pupils make inadequate progress. The headteacher is rigorous in ensuring that the premises are secure and that day-to-day procedures to ensure the safety of pupils are followed closely. A strong focus is placed on health and safety. All of the required safeguarding documentation is securely in place. The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. The school knows its own community well and is working to help broaden pupils' horizons. It ensures effective informal contact with parents and carers of hard-to-reach families who do not respond to formal communications.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

In contrast to Key Stages 1 and 2, a particularly good feature of the Early Years Foundation Stage classes is the way in which children develop skills as confident and independent learners. Well-established routines, such as the 'stars' self-registration in the Nursery class or children's selection of materials for role-play activities in the Reception class, help ensure good personal, social and emotional development. However, this is offset by ongoing weaknesses in the development of children's early skills as writers.

Adults have a good understanding of how very young children learn. They are good at improving learning through constant dialogue about the activities being tackled and by developing children's ideas. The system for assessment is not fully developed and, consequently, activities are not always matched closely enough to children's individual learning needs. This is because the assessments on which the monitoring is based are sometimes too descriptive to show precisely how well the children have achieved their tasks, and so too few suggestions are made about the next steps in learning for each individual.

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

The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The staff display a common sense of purpose, and place a strong emphasis on ensuring the welfare and safety of the children. The school makes good use of local authority support and has good links with the Doxey Pre-school, which provides wrap-around care on the school site.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of questionnaires returned was well below the national average for a primary school. On balance, they were generally positive, but also reflected most of the key areas for improvement identified by the inspection team. The area of greatest concern for parents and carers is the management of unacceptable behaviour. However, during the inspection itself inspectors judged that the behaviour of pupils is satisfactorily managed. Where there are incidents of unacceptable behaviour, these are generally caused by pupils with identified emotional and behavioural difficulties. Pupils say these are dealt with well, and are confident that adults would help them should any problem occur. Inspection findings support the concerns expressed about the extent to which pupils are prepared for the next phase of their education, the experiences provided for pupils, and the progress that they are making.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Doxey Primary and Nursery 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 27 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 180 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	13	48	12	44	2	7	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	12	44	13	48	1	4	1	4
My school informs me about my child's progress	7	26	14	52	5	19	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	9	33	14	52	4	15	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	11	41	15	56	1	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	7	26	14	52	5	19	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	6	22	19	70	2	7	0	0
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)	6	22	10	37	6	22	1	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	7	26	14	52	5	19	1	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	5	19	12	44	7	26	1	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	30	13	48	5	19	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	6	22	19	70	2	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	8	30	12	44	6	22	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



7 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Doxey Primary and Nursery School, Stafford, ST16 1EG

I would like to thank all of you for being so welcoming and helpful when the team of inspectors visited your school. We found that your school does some things well, but there is also a lot that needs to be improved. Your school is not providing you with a good enough education because you are not making as much progress as you should be. We have judged that your school needs extra help to improve. This is called 'special measures'.

Here are some of the things that are best about your school.

You say that you feel safe because the adults in school take good care of you.

You know a lot about how to keep healthy.

You do a lot to help in school and the local community.

To help you to make better progress we have asked your teachers to give you more opportunities to improve your writing. We have also have asked them to think again about the way in which you are grouped for your numeracy lessons. We need you to try to think more for yourselves so that you can get on with your work without relying so much on your teachers for help. Your teachers use worksheets too much and that this does not help you to improve either your writing or your mathematics, so we have asked them to reduce this. We have asked your teachers to give you work that is at the right level of difficulty for each one of you. You can all help by telling them if the work is too easy or too difficult. We would like your teachers to change the way they mark your work, and to make sure that they give you clear ideas about how to make it better. I am sure that you are ready for this challenge. Finally, we have asked your headteacher, the senior teachers and the governors to keep a closer check on how well you are getting on.

We hope that you enjoy lots of success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mike Thompson

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.