

# Dilhorne Endowed CofE (VA) Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124336
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	363347
<b>Inspection date</b>	22 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Glynn Storer

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	24
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kay Hulse
<b>Headteacher</b>	Louise Pickard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 October 2009
<b>School address</b>	Godley Lane Dilhorne, Stoke-on-Trent ST10 2PF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01538 753168
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector observed three lessons and made short visits to other teaching sessions. In doing so, he saw all of the school's three teachers. The inspector held meetings with pupils, governors and staff, and spoke with parents and carers at the end of the school day. He observed the school's work, and looked at pupil performance data, curriculum planning and safeguarding documentation.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well do teachers use assessment information to accelerate pupils' progress and improve the quality of their learning?
- How effective is the new curriculum in reinforcing key skills across different subjects and in engaging pupils and motivating them to learn?
- Do children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have enough meaningful indoor and outdoor experiences to promote effective learning and development?
- To what degree do school leaders and managers use tracking and target setting systems effectively to hold staff to account for the progress that pupils make?
- Do members of the governing body have the necessary knowledge and understanding to support and challenge the work of the school, for example in meeting the requirement to promote community cohesion?

## Information about the school

Almost all of the pupils who attend this extremely small rural school are from White British backgrounds, and none speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also below average. Over half of the pupils regularly attend the breakfast club that has been introduced since the previous inspection. The headteacher took up post four weeks before the previous inspection, which made the school subject to special measures.

The school currently holds the Activemark award and the Financial Management Standard in Schools.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. Under the highly effective leadership of the headteacher, the whole school community has united to acknowledge, tackle and ultimately eradicate areas of weakness and underperformance. In the five terms since the previous inspection, the school has improved substantially. Dilhorne Endowed Church of England Primary is now a good school. As a result, standards in Key Stage 2 are now above average and pupils throughout the school are making good progress.

The quality of pupils' learning has improved because the leadership and management of teaching and learning are outstanding. The headteacher has introduced rigorous procedures for monitoring standards and quality, and has been robust in holding staff to account for the progress that their pupils make. The headteacher also teaches in both classes, so provides a model of good practice and an inspiration to others that has served to embed ambition and to raise expectations considerably. Consequently, teaching is consistently good. An important element of this good teaching is the effective use of assessment to support learning. Teachers use everything that they know about the pupils to personalise learning and, in doing so, meet widely differing needs in the two mixed-age classes. This has been a key factor in the drive to raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Some other subjects are beginning to benefit from a similar approach as assessment practice becomes embedded, but the school has yet to implement the systematic assessment of pupils' performance across the curriculum as a whole.

The school has launched a completely new curriculum, and although the fine-tuning is not yet complete the initial impact is good. Pupils enjoy their lessons, levels of engagement are good and they are well motivated to succeed. The design of the curriculum ensures a strong focus on the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills and a systematic approach to the application and reinforcement of those skills through cross-curricular topics. Another major strength of the curriculum is the extent to which it promotes good outcomes in pupils' personal development.

A pupil described the school as 'one big happy family'. This and the school's well-established values lie at the heart of the good quality care, guidance and support that it provides. Good levels of engagement with parents and carers complement this provision and ensure that the school is sensitive in its support for pupils and in breaking down barriers to learning.

The governing body is actively involved in all aspects of the school's work. It ensures that statutory requirements, including those relating to safeguarding and to the promoting of community cohesion, are met. It has initiated a programme of monitoring visits, which give governors the first-hand information they need to support and challenge the school.

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This work is currently carried out by only a few governors, which constrains its impact. Nevertheless, good governance, allied to the drive and ambition of the headteacher, the positive response of staff, the strong approval of parents and carers and the record of success to date mean that the school has a good capacity to sustain improvement in the future.

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

- Consolidate and build on pupils' good learning and progress by:
  - extending the good practice in assessing pupils' performance in key skills to all other subject areas
  - introducing opportunities for outdoor learning into all topics
  - strengthening provision for gifted or talented pupils.
- Extend the monitoring of the school's performance to more members of the governing body.

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

**2**

The impact of the school's drive to improve outcomes is evident in current standards and the rates at which pupils are progressing. In Year 6, performance at the above average Level 5 is now the norm because of pupils' accelerating progress. Similarly, half of the current pupils in Year 5 are already working at levels normally expected in Year 6. Standards have also improved in Key Stage 1. All pupils are already at or close to the expected standard for the end of Year 2. All groups of pupils, from the most able to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making good progress.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school and they have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe, for example from strangers or when using the internet. Pupils know what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and willingly act on this understanding. During the inspection, 70% of pupils elected to have a healthy school lunch and the majority of those who brought a packed meal included fruit and other healthy snacks. Similarly, the take-up of health promoting activities is good: virtually all Key Stage 2 pupils participate voluntarily in competitive cross-country running events. They make a good contribution to the school as a community by acting as school councillors or play leaders. They also contribute effectively to the wider community, for example by mounting a successful campaign to have the speed limit outside the school reduced. Pupils are well prepared for the future. They attain good standards in literacy and numeracy, and most have positive attitudes to learning. They behave well in class and almost all are self-regulating when away from the supervision of adults. Attendance is consistently above average and there is no evidence of persistent absenteeism. The school's values, along with recent curriculum initiatives, result in good levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
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>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<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?

All teaching seen during the inspection was good. Teachers use assessment information effectively in the planning and delivery of literacy and numeracy lessons. They have an accurate understanding of the levels at which pupils are working and of their short-term and long-term targets. This improved understanding enables them to get the pitch of lessons right. Lessons feature challenging but well-structured activities. The flexible grouping of pupils across the age and ability range ensures that all succeed and make good progress. In a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson, older, more-able pupils worked independently, using a challenging computer program to hone their mental mathematics skills, while the teacher taught the rest of the class. When the teacher set the main task for this group, it involved solving demanding problems and working with decimal numbers. However, the teacher judged the levels of challenge well and so pupils were not daunted, rather motivated to succeed, so their progress was good. At present, this effective use of assessment does not extend far beyond the core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics. Consequently, lessons in the wider curriculum are not matched as closely to pupils' needs. An examination of pupils' books indicates that staff have achieved a good level of consistency in marking, target setting and advice to pupils. In discussion, pupils demonstrated that they understood their current targets and how to attain them. Pupils' books also showed that teachers have been successful in embedding higher expectations relating to the quality and quantity of written work.

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The new curriculum has had an immediate impact in terms of systematic teaching and embedding of key skills, balanced delivery of other subjects and an equal emphasis on aspects of pupils' personal development. Creative approaches to teaching, such as making then cutting up pizzas as a means of learning about fractions, or making and marketing chocolate bars in order to learn to follow instructions and understand the mathematics of budgets, profit and loss, result in heightened levels of enjoyment. These lessons clearly made a mark on pupils and their learning was secure. Other important features of the new curriculum include:

- planned activities that move the focus from local issues through regional and national to global themes, and broaden pupils' horizons and promote community cohesion effectively
- enterprise-based activities as part of every topic
- an educational visit or event in school to give every topic the 'wow' factor
- the extensive use of information and communication technology as an aid to both teaching and learning
- a good range of extra-curricular health-promoting and cultural activities.

The school has already identified that extending outdoor learning for all pupils will enrich their learning further, and that activities are not yet specifically tailored to the needs of pupils who have particular gifts or talents.

Pupils say feel safe and well cared for in school. They are untroubled by bullying and have confidence in adults to help them in times of need. Pupils and their parents and carers benefit from the strong family ethos that pervades the school. 'We all care for one another,' said one pupil, and inspection evidence bears this out. The school has good formal arrangements for ensuring the safety and welfare of pupils but it is the sensitive, personal touch that most benefits pupils and their families. Breakfast club provision has added to the care that the school provides to pupils and their families. It ensures that pupils have a healthy and settled start to the school day and has been influential in maintaining attendance at above average levels, despite the practical difficulties that some families encounter.

*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	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The extent of school improvement over the last five terms is testimony to the outstanding quality of leadership provided by the headteacher and to her highly effective management

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of teaching and learning. Many aspects of the school's work that were inadequate two years ago are now good and, as a result, outcomes for pupils have improved considerably. The school has effective arrangements for evaluating all aspects of its work. The headteacher, staff and governing body know where they have succeeded and where work remains to be done. Targets for raising attainment are challenging but realistic and school improvement planning builds on what has already been achieved. This ensures that the gains the school has made embed and are sustainable. The school has eliminated underachievement and restored good equality of opportunity. Pupils of all abilities and from all backgrounds succeed and make good progress. Despite past difficulties, the school has never lost the good will and support of parents and carers. The positive engagement of parents and carers and effective partnerships with local authority staff, local schools and community organisations underpin and sustain the school's improvement drive.

Arrangements for safeguarding and for promoting community cohesion are good. Safeguarding procedures and practices such as risk assessments exceed national requirements and work on promoting community cohesion is informed by a thorough audit of need and a Diversity in Dilhorne plan. Importantly, however, the school has used its new curriculum to strengthen both safeguarding and arrangements for promoting community cohesion, so that pupils become increasingly involved and well informed in these important areas. The governing body has implemented procedures for monitoring and holding the school to account for what it achieves. This approach is already adding to the school's capacity for further improvement. However, a recent turnover of governors and the consequent need to recruit and train new governors mean that recent monitoring has been restricted to relatively few experienced governors. As a result, the full impact of this initiative is yet to be felt.

*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>2</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>2</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>2</b>

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## Early Years Foundation Stage

The numbers of children in the Reception Year each year are very small. Nonetheless, children have a personalised programme of work that staff evaluate and modify weekly to ensure that activities are always closely matched to their immediate learning needs. This ensures that children gain experience systematically in all areas of learning and have frequent opportunities to make choices and to grow in independence, for example by having regular access to the improved outdoor learning, which is now fully in use. Recent feedback from a parent was very positive about the induction process, which ensures that children settle quickly and happily. The process of gathering evidence to track progress and assess attainment is exceptionally thorough, and shows that children make good progress across the areas of learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage Leader makes good use of this performance information to evaluate and improve provision.

*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	2

## Views of parents and carers

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

All parents and carers spoken to during the inspection expressed positive views of the school. They feel that their children enjoy school and are happy there. Parents and carers agree that the school had improved in recent times and some put this improvement down to the influence of the headteacher. They value the breakfast club and the good range of extra-curricular activities that the school provides. They feel involved in their children's education and say that communication is good.

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

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

## 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](http://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"><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.**



23 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Dilhorne Endowed CofE (VA) Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST10 2PF**

Thank you for the warm welcome and the courteous way that you treated me when I visited your school. Your school is giving you a good education, and these are some of the things I liked most.

Standards are above average and pupils of all abilities are now making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

The headteacher has taken successful steps to improve your learning and to make sure that you all reach the targets set for you.

Teachers make good use of assessment information to plan lessons that improve your literacy and numeracy skills.

Your good behaviour in lessons helps you to learn and those who are capable of reaching higher levels respond well to the challenging work that teachers set.

The curriculum provides plenty of exciting activities that motivate you to learn.

The headteacher and some of the governors check regularly on how well everyone is doing and take steps to help anyone who is having difficulties.

To help the school improve your learning and progress further, we have asked the school's leaders to do the following.

Extend the good use of assessment to other subjects, so that standards and progress improve there too.

Give you more opportunities to learn outdoors.

Provide additional activities for anyone who has special gifts or talents.

Involve more members of the governing body in checking aspects of the school's work.

You can help by always following the good advice that teachers give you.

Yours sincerely

Glynn Storer

Lead inspector

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