

Dean Valley Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111147
Local Authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	367391
Inspection dates	7–8 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Clare Henderson

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	183
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jane Scott
Headteacher	Mrs Jenny Thorpe
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2011
School address	Albert Road Bollington, Macclesfield Cheshire SK10 5HS
Telephone number	01625 572767
Fax number	01625 574522
Email address	head@deanvalley.cheshire.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 11 lessons taught by seven teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents relating to safeguarding, pupils' progress and attainment, the curriculum, the school development plan and the way in which the school evaluates its performance. Inspectors scrutinised the responses to the inspection questionnaires returned by 104 parents and carers and also those returned by staff and pupils.

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

- Whether all groups of pupils achieve their full potential, particularly in mathematics.
- How effectively teachers and leaders have narrowed the attainment gap between English and mathematics, particularly for more-able pupils.
- The quality of pupils' behaviour, safe practices and the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The capacity of leaders and managers to improve the school further.

Information about the school

This school is smaller in size compared with other primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. Most pupils are White British. A few pupils are from minority ethnic heritages. The school has gained the Artsmark, Inclusion Quality Mark, Dyslexia Friendly Quality Mark and Healthy School status.

A privately run nursery and before- and after-school clubs are situated within the school grounds. These provisions were subject to separate inspections and reports about their quality can be found on the Ofsted website.

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

3

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 significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to ensuring all safeguarding regulations are met.

Despite significant shortcomings in following through safeguarding procedures, there are strengths within the school. It is a happy and welcoming place, and most pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe. Pupils' behaviour is good and they have high rates of attendance. Children make a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage and, from starting points which are broadly in-line for their age, they make good progress. Consequently, they begin Key Stage 1 with skills which are above those expected for their age. By the end of Key Stage 2, their attainment in English and mathematics is above average overall though generally better in English. The progress all pupils make in their learning throughout the school is at least satisfactory.

In lessons, relationships are good and pupils are encouraged to think and cooperate well with each other. However, teachers do not consistently use assessment information to set tasks which help pupils, particularly the more-able, to achieve their full potential in English and mathematics. Furthermore, marking is not consistent in helping pupils know how to improve their work. Targets are not always challenging enough and pupils are not fully involved in setting and reviewing them. The school engages well with parents and carers, and most are happy with the quality of education and care provided. They particularly praise the wide range of enrichment opportunities provided to promote pupils' talents and enjoyment of school. Pupils have good opportunities to take on responsibilities in school and the wider community. However, the care, guidance and support they receive are inadequate because of breaches to safeguarding procedures. Community cohesion is good. Pupils work and play happily together. They have a wide range of contact with other communities beyond their immediate locality and from the wider world.

Currently, self-evaluation and planning show that leaders and managers have a clear awareness of the ways needed to take the school forward and there are satisfactory features within the quality of leadership and management. For instance, new initiatives such as improved tracking and monitoring systems are beginning to embed. The rate of pupils' progress is improving and the gap in attainment between English and mathematics is beginning to narrow. Senior leaders check how well teaching and learning plans and policies are implemented, though not enough rigour is applied to ensure that pupils consistently achieve their best. The governing body is highly supportive of the school. However, governance is inadequate overall because it has not ensured safeguarding

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procedures have been met. Taking all these factors into account the school shows a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure, as a matter of urgency, that all safeguarding regulations and duties are fully met.
- Raise attainment and accelerate progress across the school in English and mathematics by ensuring that:
 - - teachers consistently use assessment information to set tasks which help pupils and particularly the more-able achieve their full potential
 - - marking is consistent in helping pupils know how to improve their work
 - - targets are sufficiently challenging and pupils are fully involved in setting and reviewing them.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that leaders and the governing body rigorously check how well plans and policies relating to the quality of teaching and learning and school improvement are implemented.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In lessons, most pupils are keen to join in discussions. They are well behaved and engaged in their learning. The work seen in lessons and in pupils' books shows that progress is satisfactory overall, although generally good in English. Good levels of progress are evident when pupils are fully challenged, know their targets and receive clear direction in how they can improve their work. However, this is not consistent in all year groups and especially for the more-able. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those from minority ethnic groups make similar progress to that of their peers. The work they do with support staff and in small groups develops their confidence effectively and has a positive impact on their learning.

Behaviour is good and pupils say that on the rare occasions when pupils misbehave this is quickly sorted out. Pupils are confident that they can speak to any member of staff if they have a problem. They say they feel safe in school and have a good awareness of how to stay healthy. They eat the healthy meals provided by the school and benefit from the good range of physical exercise activities on offer. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are keen to take on roles and responsibilities within the school and wider community. Pupils learn from and meet a good range of other pupils from religious and cultural backgrounds which are different from their own. They acquire good personal skills and their high attendance and effective development of skills such as teamwork and cooperation prepares them well for the next stage in their education.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

Good humour, skilful questioning to encourage teamwork and independent thinking are characteristics of most lessons. However, the rate of progress that pupils make in English and mathematics is not consistently good in all year groups. This is because assessment information is not used to best effect to challenge pupils, particularly the more-able. Teachers and other adults, who support learning and pupils' personal development, use resources imaginatively. They employ for example, information and communication technology (ICT) effectively to inspire and motivate pupils. The quality of teaching is satisfactory rather than good. This is because staff do not always set sufficiently challenging individual learning targets for pupils and marking is not used consistently well to guide pupils in how to improve their work. Consequently pupils' learning and progress are satisfactory.

The curriculum includes some good features and links are made within subjects to interest and broaden pupils' experiences. However, the more-able pupils are not always challenged to achieve their best, particularly in mathematics. A good range of visits and visitors enhances pupils' learning. Out-of-class activities cover a wide range of pupils' sporting, musical and creative interests effectively. Adults know the pupils well and the care provided on a daily basis, as most parents and carers say, is generally good. Most pupils say they enjoy school and their high levels of attendance supports this view. However, school staff and leaders have not complied with all the required child protection

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procedures to ensure that pupils are safeguarded. Induction arrangements are good and help pupils to settle into school as smoothly as possible. Good links made with the on-site nursery are an example of this. Arrangements to prepare pupils for secondary school are well planned and help to ensure a smooth transition to their next stage of education. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities includes a strong range of strategies that meets their particular needs. There are also good links with outside agencies provide extra support as needed.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	4

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders have helped to create a happy environment for pupils. Care is taken to ensure that no form of racial discrimination occurs in the school. There is a clear ambition and drive to improve and the school's current self-reviews are generally accurate in identifying strengths and areas for development.

The governing body is supportive of the school and is fully involved, for example, in ensuring that all safeguarding policies and vetting for the suitability of staff are in place. However, they have failed to ensure safeguarding procedures are effectively applied within the school. Community cohesion is good. There are strong community links both within school, locally and in embracing different communities and cultures in the United Kingdom and around the world.

There are good working relationships with parents and carers. The school uses every opportunity, through regular information meetings, to gauge and respond to their views. Partnerships with others are good, particularly in promoting pupils' development and providing opportunities for them to extend their musical and sporting talents effectively. The ethos established in the school is one of promoting equality for all. This is evident in the availability of curricular enrichment for all groups of pupils. However, the more-able pupils do not always achieve as well as they could.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle happily into school routines and quickly grow in confidence and independence as they choose their own resources and activities. They act as register monitors and tidy up after themselves. They make good progress in their learning because teaching is good and there is a varied range of activities covering all areas of learning that engages their interest and develops their speaking and reasoning skills well. Children are well cared for on a daily basis and good emphasis is placed on developing their personal and social skills. As a result, they form trusting relationships with adults, play and collaborate happily together and behave well.

There is a good balance between activities children choose for themselves and those led by an adult. Children show good levels of concentration on their tasks, for example, when making mini beast jewellery, constructing models or using the computer. The outdoor area is used continuously during the day but opportunities and resources to develop children's physical skills and consolidate their knowledge and understanding of number skills are limited.

Leadership is good. Planning and assessment systems are good overall. However, assessment information is not always used well enough to give accurate information on children's starting points or to plan next steps in learning to meet their individual needs. Links with parents and carers are good. They are very supportive of their child's learning both in school and at home, especially through the `Letters and Sounds` and `Wow` books and they are regularly informed of the progress their child is making.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

Over half of the parents and carers replied to the questionnaire. Most of them are content with the quality of education and care provided. Inspection evidence finds that, although outcomes for pupils are satisfactory with some good aspects, because the school is in breach of some essential safeguarding duties, the overall quality of care provided is judged to be inadequate.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dean Valley Community Primary 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 104 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 183 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	78	75	26	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	84	81	19	18	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	63	61	37	36	4	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	56	54	38	37	9	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	70	67	34	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	63	61	32	31	8	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	62	60	37	36	5	5	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)	61	59	35	34	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	64	62	34	33	2	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	60	58	33	32	7	7	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	50	48	40	38	7	7	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	74	71	20	19	4	4	4	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	74	71	27	26	1	1	1	1

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



11 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dean Valley Community Primary School, Macclesfield, SK10 5HS

Thank you for helping us when we inspected your school. We enjoyed seeing you in lessons and at play, talking about your school with you and your teachers, and looking at your work. Now we want to share with you what we found. We judge that your school needs a 'notice to improve'. Although there are some good things about your school, there are some important aspects that need to be improved quickly so that you are always kept safe in school. In the future, inspectors will come to the school to check how well things are going.

You get off to a good start in the Reception class. You told us that you are made welcome in the school, feel safe and enjoy lessons. You especially like the activities that the school provides at the end of the day. You know about the importance of eating and drinking healthily and you play and work happily with each other. Many of you help with the running of the school, for example, by serving on the school council.

We have asked the people who manage the school to look more closely at how they are making sure you are safe in school. We have also asked them to check how well you are progressing with your learning, and to make sure you know how to improve your work. We have asked your headteacher and other staff to help you make the progress of which you are capable in English and mathematics, particularly for those boys and girls who are able to learn quickly. We have also asked the teachers to make sure that you understand what it is you are to learn and to always challenge you to do your best.

There are lots of things you can all do to help including working hard and always doing your best.

Yours sincerely

Clare Henderson

Lead Inspector

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