

Dunsford Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113199
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	378664
Inspection dates	19–20 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Laurie Lewin

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	76
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rosie Cook
Acting Headteacher	Ruth Alphey
Date of previous school inspection	28–29 April 2009
School address	Dunsford Devon EX6 7DD
Telephone number	01647 252548
Fax number	01647 252548
Email address	admin@dunsford-primary.devon.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors, who observed teaching and learning in 10 lessons, taught by four different teachers. The inspectors met with pupils, staff, parents and carers and members of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation including teachers' planning, assessment information and safeguarding policies; they also scrutinised samples of pupils' work. The inspectors analysed 50 questionnaires from parents and carers, 12 questionnaires from staff and 34 questionnaires from pupils.

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

- How well do pupils progress with writing?
- How effectively do teachers analyse performance data to inform their planning?
- How effectively does the school evaluate its own performance?
- How well does the school promote community cohesion?

Information about the school

This is a small school. It serves the local area, but with some pupils coming from further afield. The overall proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, as is the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. Nearly all of the pupils are White British, with a very small number coming from a mixture of other ethnic backgrounds.

The school runs four classes with four teachers in the morning and three classes with three teachers in the afternoon sessions. This is set up in the following way: the Early Years Foundation Stage children work in a class with Year 1 pupils throughout the day; the Year 2 pupils work as a separate class for literacy and numeracy in the morning as do the Year 3 and 4 pupils, in the afternoon sessions pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 combine as one class; pupils in Years 5 and 6 work as one class throughout the day.

The school runs a 'Breakfast Club'. In addition, working jointly with other local schools it runs an 'After School Club'. The school rents out some of its accommodation to the Pre-School Group.

The school has an acting headteacher, who was initially appointed to cover the long-term sickness of the substantive headteacher. This interim measure has been sustained by the governing body to cover the current phase in which they are seeking federation with two other 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

This is a good school. Parents and carers are very pleased with the provision. Typical of the comments from them were, 'It's safe, enjoyable and interesting for the children... extremely supportive... you can trust the teachers 100%.'

Children have an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where outstanding provision helps them make very good progress. As a result of good teaching throughout the school, pupils achieve well and attain above-average levels by the end of Year 6. Their attainment in writing, while above average, is not as good as in reading, mathematics and science.

Staff and pupils get on well together. All pupils are thoroughly encouraged to do their best. As a result, all groups of pupils, including those who are more able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, become confident and enthusiastic learners. Lessons are interesting as well as challenging and based on a well-planned curriculum. The school makes the most of its beautiful outdoor woodland and 'wild garden' setting so that pupils gain a good range of outdoor practical experiences. The very good links established with other local schools mean that the pupils benefit from participating in lots of festivals and sports tournaments. Pupils are very healthy and fit and have an excellent knowledge about how to stay this way.

The school council is extremely active and ensures that all pupils have a strong voice in school affairs; for example, the pupils' involvement in designing the play equipment installed on the field. Through this kind of activity, along with their charity fundraising involvement and participation in local village events, pupils make an outstanding impact on the community. Through activities such as links with and a residential visit made to a school in Leicester, pupils gain an outstanding awareness about how people from other backgrounds live. Typical of the comments made by pupils relating their experiences were, 'It doesn't matter about your skin colour, your religion or what your name is... you're still part of our country.'

Excellent provision for care, guidance and support ensures that all pupils feel completely safe. They very much enjoy their time at school and their attendance is above average. Pupils behave well and sometimes show exemplary behaviour. They show a very good level of moral and social awareness. The very strong support provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as for those with social and emotional difficulties ensures the individuals concerned make

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excellent progress.

Since taking up her post the acting headteacher has done an outstanding job. She has worked hard with staff and governors to ensure that all aspects of school improvement planning move forward at a good pace. As a result, teaching and pupils' achievement have improved since the school's previous inspection. Subject coordinators work well and have a clear understanding about how well pupils are progressing. However, their overview of the quality of teaching is limited because they do not have enough chances to monitor and evaluate lessons. Excellent communication ensures that parents and carers are fully informed about and involved in supporting their children's learning. The governing body works very well. It has robust systems for monitoring the school's performance, very effectively supports staff as well as holding them to account and ensures that high quality safeguarding procedures are maintained. Accurate self-evaluation, good progress made since the previous inspection, excellent teamwork established amongst staff and clear plans to guide future improvement mean the school has a good capacity to progress well in the future.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment of all pupils in writing to match that in reading by July 2012 through improving pupils' spelling skills and broadening the range of vocabulary they use in all written work.
- By July 2012, provide subject coordinators with sufficient and regular opportunities to monitor and evaluate lessons across the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In nearly all of the lessons observed, pupils made good progress. They are well prepared for progressing in the future. Pupils show a good ability to work quickly and accurately when handling numbers in mathematics. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, pupils showed a confident knowledge of their multiplication tables and rapidly worked through the assignments provided. More-able pupils were also well challenged by the higher-level work provided. In all work, pupils across the school develop much confidence in articulating their ideas fully and clearly. Pupils acquire good reading and comprehension skills. They develop confidence and become enthusiastic readers using the firm grasp of letter sounds that they acquire as they progress through the school. While pupils complete much good quality written work, attainment in this area is not as good as in reading and mathematics. Pupils produce a good range of extended pieces of writing and show much imagination in developing story ideas. The 'talk for writing' strategy used by teachers is making a good impact here. For example, Year 2 pupils enthusiastically carried out some role play which helped them confidently express and expand their ideas prior to putting them down on paper. However, pupils do not always use a wide enough range of vocabulary and are sometimes hampered by weaknesses in their spelling.

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Pupils are polite and very friendly and support each other well. They carry out responsibilities conscientiously, such as being members of the school council. Pupils' safety awareness is heightened through the excellent chances they are given to express their views to staff and their involvement in activities such as national 'Anti-bullying week' and 'E-safety day'. Through the opportunities provided for reflection in assemblies and outstanding opportunities provided for them to engage with people from different backgrounds to their own, pupils gain a deep and mature insight into the world around them. Their involvement in a wide range of sports activities ensures they keep very fit and healthy.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers use a good range of strategies to accelerate pupils' learning. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are given a rota of regular, sharp, morning start-up tasks, including spelling, multiplication tables, reading and computer tasks. This brisk start to the day means they rapidly tune into good independent learning habits that set them up well for the day ahead. Teachers use assessment information well to inform their lesson planning so that tasks match well with individual needs. This was noted with the work of Year 1 pupils, whose letters and sounds work challenged them at exactly the right level and led them towards writing good quality short sentences. Teachers use the interactive whiteboards very well to help focus pupils carefully and to enliven the presentations of new ideas. For example, the clear presentation of ideas in this way helped the teacher of the Year 2 class to rapidly review and check the areas covered in a writing lesson.

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

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Teachers and teaching assistants work well together and maximise the small school/small class situation. They know the pupils well and cater precisely for their individual needs. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are carefully monitored and the support provided ensures the individuals concerned progress rapidly with their work. Teachers set clear targets, which pupils work hard to achieve. They mark pupils' work very carefully and provide clear information in the marking to show pupils how they can improve. Very occasionally, teaching is less effective when the pupils are kept too long working together as a whole class rather than moving to group or individual activities. At these times, pupils become restless and struggle to concentrate. The curriculum is well enriched through a wide range of trips, visitors and extra-curricular activities. The 'Breakfast' and 'After School' clubs run efficiently and are fully enjoyed by the individuals who attend. The residential trips provide a particularly good boost for pupils' personal development. Good planning across the curriculum ensures that good links are established between subjects to promote learning.

Staff have an excellent understanding of pupils' pastoral needs and cater for these sensitively. They are highly vigilant in ensuring pupils' safety. Wherever needed, full use is made of a wide range of external expertise to support pupils' needs. Staff are very good at engaging with the parents and carers to keep them informed about and involved in their children's progress. Very good quality advice and guidance is given to all pupils and, where needed, their parents and carers.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher works very effectively to ensure staff sustain a clear focus on setting high expectations for all pupils. Staff are fully involved in evaluating how well the school is performing. Subject coordinators carry out their roles well and provide clear action plans. They have a good overall understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject areas for which they are responsible. However, the limited opportunities they have to monitor lessons across the school mean that their knowledge about how teachers can build on current good practice is not as sharply defined as it could be. The school has made significant upgrades to its buildings, grounds and facilities since the previous inspection. In particular, the improved outdoor learning area for the Early Years Foundation Stage, the refurbishment of toilet facilities and the remodelling of classrooms to provide extra teaching spaces

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have done much to boost the facilities and improve learning for pupils. Also, robust procedures have been implemented to aid staff in checking pupils' progress. Good use of this information by staff means they have a clear view about how well pupils are progressing and are alert to spotting any individual who may be slipping behind. This approach ensures that all pupils are fully supported, have all the chances they need to become successful and that no discrimination occurs.

Staff and the governing body work closely together. They work hard to maintain excellent relationships with parents and carers. For example, regular newsletters, and very well-organised meetings are provided to keep them informed. As a result, parents and carers feel confident to approach staff to talk about any aspects of their children's development. The fullest possible use is made of all partner organisations to boost the work of the school. For example, the school benefits greatly from its close links to other schools in the local 'Learning Community' to boost its programme of activities.

The governing body is very well organised. It has set a very clear vision for the school's future educational direction. It comprehensively surveys and, where appropriate, acts on the views of parents and carers. For example, a recent consultation/information meeting held in connection with its plans to federate with two other local schools was very much appreciated by the parents and carers. The governing body ensures that excellent provision for safeguarding is underpinned by full risk assessments, a continual review to ensure full site security and training for staff and its own members, including for child protection, that goes beyond the basic requirements. The school has excellent plans to promote community cohesion and continually evaluates the impact of these to see where further improvements can be made. The excellent strategy to link with and visit organisations further afield, which has helped pupils develop a very strong multicultural awareness, is an example of the very strong impact of the school's work in this area.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1

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The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money

2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Outstanding organisation of classroom provision and excellent liaison with parents and carers ensure that children make a strong start when they begin school in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Very close links with the Pre-School in the adjacent building, along with the class teacher making home visits to all of those children about to join the school, ensure that induction of children is a seamless affair. Parents and carers are very pleased with the provision in this part of the school and enjoy the chances to come into the classroom at the beginning of the day to interact with the staff and change reading books. The provision is set up to provide attractive and lively activity areas. The excellent curriculum provision ensures that children are provided with a rich range of interesting resources and activities laid out to engage their interest and inspire an enthusiastic approach to learning. A good example of the lively and interesting work was seen in a lesson where the children made a visit on a 'Bear Hunt' to the school's 'Wild Garden' and wooded area. The children thoroughly enjoyed the work and gained a very good sense of mystery and suspense that encouraged them to become alert and keen to explore new ideas.

The classroom has easy access to a very well-designed outdoor area where children work and play happily and safely. Teaching is very skilfully gauged to ensure children have a very wide range of opportunities to carry out role play and structured play activities. Children have a very wide range of opportunities to explore and investigate individually and to work closely with other children or with adult guidance. For example, children working with craft materials to build a model of the 'Bear Hunt' settings had very good chances to explore the use of a range of different materials and to learn to manipulate these in the right way. They supported each other well, explored and tried things out independently and also received very good guidance where needed. Children are very happy and confident learners who fully enjoy all activities. The outstanding teaching enables children to make rapid progress in all areas of learning. They do very well in their reading, gaining a good command of letter sounds, basic spelling and also developing good handwriting skills. The teacher has high expectations for children's behaviour. As a result, behaviour in the main is excellent. Staff carefully monitor and records all aspects of the children's progress and use assessment information very well to inform planning so that tasks match children's needs precisely. The Early Years Foundation Stage is extremely well led and managed. Self-evaluation is accurate and clear action plans are established to keep provision improving at a very good pace.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

1

Taking into account:

1

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The level of response by parents returning the questionnaires was above average. The very large majority of parents indicated they are happy with the provision and the work of the staff. In addition to the evidence of the questionnaires, all of the parents and carers spoken to had a high regard for the school.

A few parents and carers indicated that they are not completely satisfied with the way in which any unacceptable behaviour is handled. Inspectors looked into this area through observation and discussion with staff and pupils. They judged that in the main pupils behave well and that good provision is in place to handle any cases of unacceptable behaviour. The pupils' views also concurred with this judgement.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dunsford 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 inspectors received 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 76 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	42	27	54	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	36	72	12	24	0	0	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	27	54	18	36	3	6	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	46	22	44	2	4	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	24	48	23	46	1	2	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	52	19	38	3	6	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	40	24	48	3	6	1	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	22	44	25	50	0	0	2	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	42	26	52	1	2	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	40	23	46	4	8	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	56	17	34	3	6	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	29	58	17	34	2	4	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	32	64	15	30	1	2	1	2

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



21 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dunsford Community Primary School, Dunsford, Exeter EX6 7DD

Thank you for making us feel welcome at your school. We have judged that yours is a good school. Through talking to you we know that there are many things that you like about your school.

Here are some of the good things that we found.

- You make an excellent start to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- We can see that you enjoy school a lot and the well-planned curriculum makes sure you get lots of interesting activities.
- You are very fit and healthy and know a lot about how to stay this way.
- Good teaching helps you to do well and your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting and fun.
- Your behaviour is good and you have positive attitudes towards learning.
- You all have an excellent understanding about how to stay safe. The adults in the school do a good job of taking care of you.
- The acting headteacher, staff and governing body have worked very well to improve your school and they work very hard to make sure it keeps improving.

This is what we have asked the school to do now.

- Improve your writing by focusing on helping you to improve your spelling and to expand the range of interesting words you use in your writing.
- Give more chances for teachers who are subject coordinators to observe lessons, to help them find ways of making your lessons even better.

All of you can play an important part in helping the school to improve by continuing to work hard in all lessons.

Yours sincerely

Laurie Lewin
Lead inspector

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