

The Dingle Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111080
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	378228
Inspection dates	26–27 March 2012
Lead inspector	Denise Shields

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	342
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Griffith
Headteacher	Ben Cox
Date of previous school inspection	3 October 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

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Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 16 teachers teaching 26 lessons or part-lessons. The inspectors listened to pupils from a range of different ages and abilities read. Meetings were held with five groups of pupils, four members of the governing body and school staff, including senior and middle managers. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's strategic development plan, safeguarding documentation and minutes of the governing body meetings. They analysed 151 parental and carers' questionnaires and questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. There are more girls on the school roll than boys and there is a gender imbalance in most year groups. The school meets the current floor standard.

The school has achieved Healthy School status and the Eco-School Silver award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

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

Key Findings

- This is a good school. Its main strengths are: excellent provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage where children achieve exceptionally well; good levels of care so that pupils grow in confidence and self-esteem; a varied curriculum that promotes pupils' enjoyment of learning. It is not yet outstanding because, although teaching is good overall, there are some inconsistencies in its quality. Furthermore, sometimes reading sessions do not have a clear enough focus on enhancing pupils' reading skills.
- Achievement is good. Since the last inspection, attainment has risen steadily and is consistently well above average in English and mathematics. More pupils than average attain the higher levels in these subjects.
- The interesting curriculum promotes pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Teaching is good and has some outstanding elements; consequently pupils make progress that is at least good and sometimes outstanding. Lessons stimulate pupils' imaginations and are pitched correctly to meet everyone's needs. Sometimes, lessons do not have enough time for pupils to consolidate their learning. Occasionally, at the end of the lesson teachers do not establish adequately what pupils have learnt.
- High levels of attendance reflect pupils' good attitudes to learning. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils say they feel safe in the school, a view endorsed by almost all parents and carers.
- Leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, are effective. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have secured improvement at a good rate. Leaders have successfully led improvements in the quality of teaching and manage performance well. They have enhanced the curriculum, including that of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Remove inconsistencies in the quality of teaching so that far more of it is outstanding by ensuring that:
 - the outstanding practice that already exists in the school is shared, for example through supportive coaching
 - teachers always provide enough time for pupils to consolidate their learning independently or in groups
 - the conclusions of lessons are used more effectively to establish what pupils have learnt
 - marking and pupils' learning targets have a more positive impact on pupils' learning in all lessons.
- Ensure that better use is made of guided reading sessions so that there is always a clear emphasis on enhancing pupils' reading skills including comprehension.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Almost all parents and carers state that their children make good progress. This is supported by inspection findings. In the Reception classes, children thoroughly enjoy learning and readily engage in activities so that they achieve exceptionally well. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils are making better progress than all pupils nationally because of the good and sometimes outstanding teaching they receive. By the end of Year 6, attainment is well above average in English and mathematics. The performance of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is nearly always better than that of similar pupils nationally, reflecting the good-quality care and well-targeted guidance they receive.

All groups of pupils make at least good progress in English and mathematics because basic skills are taught well. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of how to use computers. Pupils have lots of opportunities to practise their writing skills and increasing chances to use their numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills because the curriculum is varied. Pupils comment that using these skills, for instance, to complete books on themes such as the Victorians or endangered animals helps them learn a lot. Many boys state that they enjoy writing because tasks capture their interest. Consequently, by the end of Year 6 the gap between the attainment of boys and girls in writing is closing quickly. Almost all pupils comment that they enjoy reading and that they have plenty of interesting books to choose from. Pupils' attainment in reading by the end of Year 2 is broadly above average. By the time they leave Year 6, it is well above average and more pupils than average attain the higher levels.

Throughout the school pupils enjoy learning, most try their best at all times and concentrate well. Almost all work well with a partner or in groups; this is helping them to become independent learners. Many develop good co-operation skills. This was apparent in a lesson for the oldest pupils where, as part of their study of the Amazon rain forest, they were asked to work in groups and identify key facts about the Yanomami tribe. They quickly organised themselves, identified scribes and pooled their ideas and views, also drawing well on previous research which they had undertaken. The task captured their interest; they

worked together successfully to produce well-considered mind maps and their learning and progress was good.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good with some that is outstanding. This judgement reflects the views of the vast majority of parents and carers. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are taught exceptionally well and make excellent progress; this lays a firm foundation for their future learning. An example of this was observed when, as part of the dinosaur theme, children designed posters to alert everyone in the school that 'Stomper the baby dinosaur' was lost. The teacher skilfully promoted children's learning by using clear enunciation and cards showing the sound letters make. Adept questioning encouraged children to consider the feelings Stomper might experience at being lost. Children showed considerable empathy when they discussed the dinosaur's possible sadness and fear. They enjoyed the activity enormously and produced writing of high quality and their progress was rapid.

In the very best lessons, teachers explain new concepts exceptionally well and are skilled at consolidating pupils' new learning very quickly, and effectively, through the use of well-chosen activities. The pace is lively and skilful questioning engages pupils' interest and extends their knowledge quickly. In many good lessons, opportunities for pupils to talk in pairs and to share their ideas successfully promote speaking, listening and co-operation. Sometimes the end of lessons is used effectively to establish what pupils have learnt and to swiftly tackle any misconceptions; however, this is not consistent practice in all classes. In a few lessons teachers talk for too long, limiting the time that pupils have to engage in individual and group work and consolidate their learning. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to supporting all pupils but in particular, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and this adds to the quality of learning for all pupils. Pupils comment that discussions with their teachers help to guide improvement in their work. However, marking and learning targets do not always clearly inform pupils of the next steps to take to improve their learning in lessons.

In all classes, basic writing and mathematical skills are taught well, including letters and sounds for the youngest pupils. The teaching of basic reading techniques is good. However, guided reading sessions do not always have a clear enough emphasis on enhancing a range of pupils' reading skills because practice varies between classes. An example of this was observed in two sessions; in one pupils read silently throughout the period, and in another, the session was well-structured, pupils were fully engaged in a range of review, research, comprehension and reading activities and so their skills improved. Curriculum planning often contributes well to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers encourage pupils to listen carefully to the views of their peers; they value pupils' opinions and give them opportunities to take responsibility and learn about environmental and ethical issues.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Children in the Reception classes form strong relationships with adults, and consequently they settle quickly to school routines. They play very happily together and behave well. In Key Stages 1 and 2, almost all pupils help and encourage each other. They understand and accept the need for rules and enjoy the praise they receive from their teachers and other adults. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about bullying and behaviour. The vast

majority, however, is very satisfied with behaviour. The inspection findings show that behaviour is nearly always good in lessons, around the school and during playtime. In discussions with different groups of pupils, it was clear that behaviour over time is almost always good. They are confident that any occasional misbehaviour is managed very effectively and so their progress in lessons is rarely disrupted. The school uses the expertise of a range of external agencies to provide good support for a very few pupils experiencing difficulties that affect their behaviour. For some, this has led to striking improvements in both their self-confidence and behaviour.

In discussions, almost all pupils express the view that they feel safe in school. Pupils report that there is always an adult to turn to if they are troubled or sad. Overwhelmingly, pupils say that everyone is friendly and gets along with each other and instances of any type of bullying are rare. The very few incidents of bullying have been dealt with to the satisfaction of everyone involved.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides strong and determined leadership. He is supported by a very capable deputy and effective senior and middle leaders. Teamwork is strong. Members of the governing body know the school well, monitor its work carefully and are fully involved in determining its strategic direction. Professional development is now closely aligned to school priorities and is benefiting pupils. This is exemplified by the good and sometimes outstanding teaching of letters and sounds as a part of building the reading skills of children and pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. However, opportunities to share outstanding practice in teaching with colleagues across the school, for example through supportive coaching, are not always fully taken. A robust system to monitor and evaluate the work of the school is well-established and used effectively to set key priorities and secure good improvement. This is illustrated by consistently increased performance by pupils at the end of Year 6. The areas for improvement identified at the time of the previous inspection have been tackled successfully. All of these factors mean that the school has good capacity to continue to improve.

The headteacher and whole staff team ensure that a good climate for learning exists. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Pupils benefit from a caring and supportive environment in which everyone is encouraged to succeed. The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and meets pupils' needs. Themed events such as 'friendship days', a good range of clubs after school and educational visits add depth and interest to pupils' learning and contribute greatly to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's procedures for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add up exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



28 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Dingle Primary School, Crewe, CW1 5SD

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave the inspection team when we inspected your school. A particular 'thank you' to those of you who filled in the questionnaires, were keen to talk with us and welcomed us to your lessons. Please thank your parents and carers who also filled in our questionnaires.

The Dingle is a good school. These are the things we found to be strengths. The youngest children get an excellent start to their education in the Reception classes. Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding and helps you to make at least good progress. By the end of Year 6, you attain standards in English and mathematics that are well above average. Many lessons are exciting and you told us how much you like learning. Other activities, such as visits and themed events help to build your self-confidence. All of you benefit from good levels of care which is one reason why your behaviour is good and you all get along with each other. Most of you enjoy coming to school. We are pleased that you feel safe and say that bullying of any kind is very rare. Your parents and carers like the school too and are happy with it. Your headteacher, other staff and the governing body know the school well and they are good at finding ways to make your school even better.

These are some things we think will help your school to improve further. We think that teaching could be even better by sharing the best practice, by always giving you time to practise your skills in lessons and, at the end of lessons, ensuring that teachers carefully check what you have learnt. We have also asked your teachers to ensure that marking and learning targets always show you how to improve your learning. We also think that in all classes you should have plenty of chances to improve your reading skills further.

You can all play your part in helping the school to get even better by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely,

Denise Shields
Lead Inspector

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