

Dilhorne Endowed CofE (VA) Primary School

Godley Lane, Dilhorne, Stoke-on-Trent, ST10 2PF

Inspection dates 25–26 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school's leaders have successfully improved teaching and learning since the previous inspection, despite staff changes and changes in the school's situation.
- Good use of expertise and resources from the other schools in the collaboration has enabled this small school to improve on all fronts.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points because staff know them well and tailor their learning to their individual needs.
- Standards have risen steadily in recent years, despite the very small numbers in each year group and each year group's different make-up.
- Writing has improved because strong emphasis is placed on developing literacy skills, including grammar, spelling and punctuation, in different subjects.
- Pupils enjoy school, feel safe and well cared for, and know how to keep themselves safe. They behave well.
- The headteacher manages the performance of staff well.
- The governing body supports and challenges the school well. Governors check that spending decisions are having the intended impact of improving pupils' learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in mathematics is not as good as in English because pupils' understanding of number and their ability to recall number facts quickly are not secure enough.
- Teachers' marking does not always show pupils how to improve their work. Pupils do not have a clear enough understanding of how to mark their own and each other's work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in 9 lessons. These included one that was observed jointly with the headteacher. The inspector also observed play and lunchtimes.
- Discussions were held with pupils, governors, staff, and a representative of the local authority.
- Not enough parents responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) for the result to be analysed. However, account was taken of parents' views gained through informal discussions with parents at the start of the school day and the outcomes of the school's own parent questionnaire, carried out in March 2013.
- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of documents, including information about pupils' progress and attendance, the school improvement plan, the school's self-evaluation document and records and policies about safeguarding.
- With the headteacher, the inspector examined the work in pupils' books and sampled four sessions where pupils were learning how to link letters and sound (phonics). She also listened to children read.

Inspection team

Doris Bell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils of all ages are taught in a single class that breaks up into groups for specific learning activities.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional funding, known as the pupil premium, is below average. This funding is for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and children with a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is average.
- Although average in most years, the proportion of pupils leaving or joining the school has been above average in the past twelve months.
- There are considerable variations in the composition of each year group because of the small numbers of pupils involved.
- The school is one of three that have worked together in a 'collaboration' since 2010. The collaboration is set to become a hard federation in September 2013. An executive headteacher, referred to in this report as 'the headteacher', is the headteacher all three schools.
- Apart from the headteacher, the school had a complete change of staff in September 2012. It has its own breakfast and after-school clubs.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in mathematics by increasing pupils' understanding of number facts and how to use them, and sharpening their mental mathematics skills.
- Improve the quality and impact of teachers' marking to ensure pupils improve their skills in each subject by:
 - achieving consistently good marking in all subjects so that pupils are always clear about how to improve their learning
 - teaching pupils, when they mark their own and other pupils' work, to identify what needs to be improved as well as what has been done well.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The small numbers in each year group mean comparisons with national averages are not reliable. Judgements have, therefore, been reached by evaluating the progress of each pupil in the school, from year to year and over time.
- The skills of the small number of children who start school in the Reception year vary greatly from year to year, but are usually broadly typical for their age. The children learn and develop well, become increasingly confident in speaking, listening, reading and writing, and develop basic mathematical skills. They also learn about fractions, as was evident when they made a fruit salad and staff used the opportunity to teach them about halves and quarters.
- Attainment has risen in Year 2 and Year 6 in recent years, despite an increasing number of pupils joining the school and changing the make-up of their year groups. Overall attainment is at least average, and pupils of all ages and abilities achieve well from their different starting points.
- Pupils read well and they enjoy reading. They use their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) well to help them read new words. Pupils in Year 1 did well in the recent national phonics screening. Pupils structure their writing well, and know how to alter it to suit its audience and purpose.
- Pupils use their writing skills well in different subjects, and search for alternative words to make their writing more interesting. They are also beginning to use their mathematical skills well in thematic work, for example, as they interpret rainfall and temperature charts for different parts around the world.
- On average, pupils make less progress in mathematics than in English. This is because they do not have a secure enough understanding of number, or a rapid enough recall of number facts to help them solve problems quickly. The school recognises this and is using expertise from across the collaboration to tackle the issue.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Their individual learning targets are kept under constant review, and they receive good support from all adults with whom they work.
- The proportion of pupils supported through pupil premium funding has increased this year. The school provides good support for these pupils, and ensures that they make the good progress necessary to close gaps in their learning. There are no differences between their progress and attainment and that of other pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- A key feature of the good teaching in this school is the detailed and effective planning that arises from the in-depth knowledge staff have of every pupil. Staff have a good understanding of how to meet the individual learning needs of pupils of different ages and stages of learning.
- Staff have high expectations of the pupils. Right from the Reception year, a focus on practical activities, indoors and out, engages pupils' interest and makes them want to learn. Pupils are really pleased when they succeed, as was evident when they carried out a scientific investigation based on dissolving a cube of jelly. Here, they discovered that 'dissolve' and 'disappear' were not

synonymous because jelly particles could still be seen in the water.

- Teachers' questioning is open-ended, adjusted for individual pupils, and used effectively to deepen their thinking. Pupils listen to and learn from each other as well as from adults. They are successfully encouraged to talk to each other to clarify their thinking before answering a question.
- Highly-skilled support staff help pupils of all ages and abilities to participate fully in all parts of a lesson, and contribute effectively to their progress. All staff manage pupils' behaviour well. The calm but firm approach taken ensures that any potential disruption, especially by pupils with behavioural difficulties, is kept to an absolute minimum.
- Reading, including phonics, is taught well, and pupils have many opportunities to read and write as they work in different subjects. Their writing about life in a Victorian workhouse showed considerable empathy with the characters they had learned about because effective teaching had ensured they had the skills and vocabulary to complete the tasks.
- Pupils have challenging targets for literacy and numeracy. Except in numeracy, where guidance on how to improve their skills is good, marking does not often enough show them the small steps that they need to take to reach their targets, although it usually praises them for what they do well. Similarly, when pupils mark their own and each other's work, they do not identify how it can be improved.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- From the moment they start school, children learn to listen attentively, concentrate and persevere with their tasks. They relate well to each other and adults. Children in the Reception year showed good levels of maturity as they welcomed the new intake for the coming September. They were proud to show them their well-established routines, which they themselves follow well.
- Pupils are proud of their school and what they do there. Anxious to show their progress, they confidently brought completed work to show the inspector what they had done after she had left their lesson. Pupils new to the school feel well supported and able to settle quickly. All pupils praised the staff and felt they were taught really well.
- Pupils have many opportunities to mix with pupils of their own age because of the close working partnership between the three schools in the collaboration. This enables them to form teams for competitive sport and to meet pupils going to the same secondary schools, as does the joint residential visit.
- Behaviour is mostly good in lessons and around the school. Pupils voiced some concerns about over-boisterous play, particularly by older boys at lunchtime, which the inspector also noted. Staff dealt with it quickly but the pupils were slower to respond than they should have been.
- Pupils state confidently that they know of no bullying, and should there ever be any, the staff, whom they trust implicitly, would quickly sort it. They know the different forms that bullying can take, and the difference between bullying and falling out. They also know the dangers associated with different forms of technology, and how to keep themselves safe when using them.
- Attendance is average. Although good for the majority of pupils, it is held down by the small

number that do not attend regularly, despite the school's best efforts. The breakfast club gives pupils who attend it a good start to their day.

- Comments from parents and carers during the inspection, and the responses to the school's own questionnaires, show a high degree of parental satisfaction with the school, including in relation to behaviour and safety.

The leadership and management are good

- The school leaders' clear, strategic thinking arises out of a strong determination to improve outcomes for the pupils. It is supported by accurate self-evaluation and a school improvement plan with well-considered priorities that lead to ambitious targets for staff and pupils. Staff understand how all of this fits together to benefit the pupils.
- The teamwork between teaching and support staff is outstanding. It has a marked effect on pupils' learning and personal development, as does the way in which different subjects are taught. Pupils have a say in the themes that bring different subjects together. However, except for literacy and numeracy, the school does not check the development of skills in each subject.
- Good use is made of expertise across the three schools in the collaboration to improve different aspects pupils' learning. This includes, for example, sharing the leadership of mathematics and of the provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Both are managed well, as is the provision for Reception children.
- The local authority provides 'light touch' support for the school, which it considers to be good and improving. Improvement since previous inspection and the pupils' continuing good progress all show that the school has capacity for further improvement.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well. It teaches pupils the importance of avoiding discriminatory behaviour or language, and about different faiths, cultures and ways of life at home and abroad. As a result, pupils understand right from wrong, work and play well together most of the time, and are reflective and caring.
- Safeguarding procedures, including those for child protection, meet the government's current requirements, and all training is up to date.

The governance of the school:

- The governing body knows the school well. It understands how to interpret data about pupils' performance and regularly checks that its decisions are improving teaching and learning. Governors gain their information from visits to classes and from discussions with staff, parents and pupils, and use it to challenge and support the school. Governors assist the headteacher in making decisions about recruitment and pay increases, ensuring that they are only awarded for good performance. They have drawn up plans to ensure the pupil premium funding due to the school will be used to close gaps in learning and personal development for the eligible pupils. They attend relevant training to ensure they fulfil their roles well.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	124336
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	400124

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	23
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kay Hulse
Headteacher	Jared Eccles
Date of previous school inspection	22 March 2011
Telephone number	01538 753168
Fax number	01538 753168
Email address	office@dilhorne.staffs.sch.uk

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



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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

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

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

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

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

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

