



Dorrington CofE (Aided) Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123545
LEA Shropshire
Inspection number 281502
Inspection dates 20 June 2006 to 21 June 2006
Reporting inspector Rashida Sharif HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Church Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Dorrington
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY5 7JL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01743 718462
Number on roll	70	Fax number	01743 718462
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	8 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs G A Reynolds

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

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Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Dorrington provides a good education for its pupils and good value for money. The school is a welcoming and confident community where the principles of social justice and equality are promoted well. Standards are average by the time the pupils leave the school. This represents good progress for most of its pupils, except for the more able, who are not challenged enough and so make no more than satisfactory progress. In Reception, good provision enables children to make good progress from their low starting points, even though they do not reach average standards by the time they enter Year 1. The curriculum is good, taught well and enriched by a range of extra-curricular activities. These are predominantly sport activities but the school is looking to broaden them to include the arts as a result of consultation with parents and pupils. There are shortcomings in teachers' marking of books, which does not always tell the pupils what they need to do to improve their work. The school continues to work successfully to achieve good attendance. There is good partnership with the local church and a growing support from parents, who feel strongly that the school is a place where their children are happy, safe and well looked after.

The school makes an accurate assessment of how well it is performing and what needs improving. This leads to effective action; for example, the school is focusing its efforts on the relatively weaker aspects of English and mathematics shown up by the data and confirmed by the inspection. Improvements are evident; however, the school does not review the results of its actions closely enough.

One of the school's key strengths is the care of its pupils. Pupils feel safe and enjoy school. A number of pupils interviewed said that they 'enjoy coming to school because of their friends', and that they 'enjoyed coming to school because teachers care for them, are funny and have a good sense of humour'. They also 'enjoy helping other children settle in'. Their behaviour and attitudes to both work and each other are exemplary. The school has made good progress in dealing with issues raised in the previous inspection. It has good capacity to further improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics for all pupils.
- Provide more challenge for the more able pupils.
- Improve marking so that pupils know what they need to do to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement across the school is good. Standards have risen and are now average by the time the pupils leave school, due to the school's effective improvement strategies. The school works hard with pupils new to the school who, as a result, make good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well in relation to the targets in their individual education plans.

Most of the children enter the Reception Year with standards below those expected, particularly in their emotional and communication skills. They make good progress through all stages of their education and at the end of Year 6, their standards are in line with what is expected for pupils of this age.

Standards in the 2005 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 were, however, below the national average. The school's data show that this was a particularly challenging year group with nearly two thirds of pupils joining the school part-way through their education. The data from last year also highlighted that standards in speaking, listening, reading, writing and mathematics were of concern and the school has tackled these weaknesses effectively.

Inspection evidence shows that pupils in the current Year 6 are making good progress, have reached the targets set for them, and have caught up with pupils nationally. Targets are not as challenging as they should be for more able pupils, who make no better than satisfactory progress. In contrast, pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make consistently good progress and are served well by the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They have a very positive attitude to their learning and are keen to learn. They enjoy coming to school, and are willing workers and exceptionally well behaved. In their discussion with the inspector, they were very supportive of their school and of each other. Pupils are punctual and attendance is good.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They work and play happily together, and make sure that nobody is left out of playground activities. For example, 'bench buddies' sit and talk to pupils who are feeling lonely. They have a keen sense of justice and fair play. Pupils feel safe and report that they cannot recall an incident of bullying recently. They know that a balanced diet and regular exercise helps them to stay healthy. The school's gold mark achievement for health across the school and its provision of playground games and equipment help them to do so. Pupils appreciate that they are all valued members of the school community and they take their responsibilities towards it seriously, especially the members of the school council. They are not complacent and have identified improvements they would like to make to the school in the future.

The pupils' basic skills in reading, writing, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) are developing well. By the time they leave the school, these provide a solid foundation for their future education and economic well-being; although there are elements that the school knows it needs to improve.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good. There are three mixed age classes with a range of learners' needs and teachers work hard to ensure that all their needs are met through a stimulating, practical range of activities. This is evident in class one where a wide range of activities is provided for children in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, enabling them to make good progress.

There are strengths in teaching; for example, teachers use the interactive whiteboards confidently and effectively. This makes lessons exciting for pupils and engages them in successful learning. However, marking of pupils' work, although generally helpful to pupils and celebrating their achievement, does not tell them clearly enough what they need to do further to improve their work.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given practical and experienced help from teaching assistants who know when to intervene, and when to stand back and encourage pupils' independence.

The school's assessment systems accurately track pupils' progress. Each term, pupils are given tests to see how much they have improved. If staff think they are not doing well enough, they are given 'catch up' programmes, usually in English and mathematics, until they reach the standards expected for them. Relationships between all staff and pupils are very warm and friendly and new pupils are supported well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a well planned, flexible, varied and stimulating curriculum, which matches the needs of most of its pupils. The curriculum offers a comprehensive but flexible programme for pupils' personal and social development. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn how to be safe and lead a healthy lifestyle. The strengths in the curriculum include provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; work in ICT and art and design. Arrangements for settling children into the Reception are thorough and for those who arrive at other times, there is immediate support and friendship from both staff and pupils.

There is a good range of well attended after school clubs and visits to local place of interests; for example, Cardingmill Valley, that are effective in helping the pupils to develop their self-confidence and teamwork skills. The pupils were not entirely happy that the extra-curricular activities are dominated by sport. The school is broadening these to include the arts, particularly drama, which the pupils in the school council are pleased about. There are good links with the local church that enhance pupils' moral and spiritual development. The school is working hard and successfully to develop further links with the local community.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school cares well for all its pupils, child protection procedures are firmly established and staff are fully aware of these. Good attention is paid to their health and safety and there is a good focus on the importance of healthy eating and taking enough exercise. The pupils work enthusiastically with the school cook in charge. Together, they ensure that the variety provided is both healthy and interesting. They particularly enjoyed designing the 'World Cup' menu, making and drinking 'smoothies'.

The school has good arrangements for dealing with any incidents of bullying should it occur. It works effectively with individuals from a wide range of outside agencies, for instance, the education welfare officer, the social worker and the education psychologist, to provide the best support it can for all its pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those new to the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has a clear vision for improving standards and she provides a clear direction for the work of the school.

The school has a good range of monitoring systems. For example, the headteacher carries out regular and thorough lesson observations and analyses data well. This provides the school with an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses, which has led to strategies to raise standards that have been effective, for example, in English and mathematics. However, the monitoring does not focus closely enough on the results of the school's actions to secure the improvement sought. The governors are supportive of the school. They capably ensure that all statutory responsibilities are met. They do not, however, challenge the school sufficiently to help further raise overall standards. The school works well with parents, most of whom are very supportive and hold positive views about it.

The evidence from the school's recent improvement indicates that it has a good capacity to continue moving forward.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making me feel so welcome in your school and being so friendly and helpful. I particularly want to thank the school council, who gave up their lunchtime to talk to me.

The things that I most liked about your school:

You work hard and make good progress in your work.

Your teachers take good care of you and provide lots of interesting activities for you in clubs and visits out of school.

You behave in an exceptionally sensible and mature manner around the school and in lessons.

Teachers listen to your ideas and allow you to play an important role in helping to run the school. For example, you act as 'buddies' to those who are new to the school and 'bench buddies' where you make sure that no one in the school feels lonely or unhappy.

Teachers and the school cook are giving good advice on how to look after yourselves and stay healthy and safe.

This is what I have asked your headteacher and staff to do:

To help you even more to improve your speaking, listening, reading, writing and maths.

Spend more time checking on the work you do in your books and tell you what you need to do to improve your work even more.

Think more carefully about the work given to you so that you all have challenging and interesting work.

With best wishes

Rashida Sharif Her Majesty's Inspector