



# Darley Churchtown CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 112839  
**Local Authority** DERBYSHIRE  
**Inspection number** 289432  
**Inspection dates** 3-4 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Martin Newell

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Church Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Darley Dale, Darley Dale
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11		Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 2GL
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01629 732236
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	94	<b>Fax number</b>	01629 732236
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Dr Nadine Snowsill
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Nigel Carr
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 March 2001		

<b>Age group</b> 4-11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 3-4 October 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 289432
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector during a period of two days.

## **Description of the school**

This is a smaller than average primary school serving the Darley Dale community in Derbyshire. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals and the number of pupils with learning difficulties is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is close to the national average. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. None are at an early stage of acquiring English.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a good school with some outstanding features and inspection evidence fully endorses the school's judgement of its own effectiveness. The good teaching, vibrant learning experiences and the leadership of the headteacher are the key factors as to why all pupils achieve well and love coming to school. As one parent pointed out, 'This is a real community where the staff care about a fully rounded education for all pupils.' She is right! The personal development and care and guidance for pupils are good with some outstanding aspects. All staff are ready to go the extra-mile to make sure that the school meets pupils' academic and social needs well. The school values pupils and they have a genuine voice in its life. Pupils are cared for exceptionally well and know they will get support if it is needed. In turn, pupils play their part to the full. Their excellent behaviour and infectious enthusiasm light up the school. The school ensures that pupils have a very strong grounding in knowing how to keep fit, safe and healthy, in recognising the importance of good citizenship through participation in community events and happenings and in gaining a good understanding of a culturally diverse world. Pupils demonstrate good team working skills and a real readiness to take on responsibility. However, the school does not always provide enough opportunities for them to take the lead in initiatives that would develop their decision making, creative thinking or investigative skills. Attainment when children start at the school is below average. By the time they leave, attainment is close to the national average with standards set to rise further. This paints a picture of good progress for all pupils, regardless of gender or ability. Much of this is due to good teaching that challenges pupils, gets them thinking, keeps them on their toes and at the same time makes learning fun and enjoyable. Although reading, writing and numeracy skills are taught well, writing skills are not put to the test enough in different subjects of the curriculum. The school has robust assessment procedures in place which means that pupils' progress is tracked very closely and any underachievement is quickly spotted and tackled. Pupils' learning and love of school is embellished by the good provision in the Foundation Stage and a rich curriculum in Years 1 to 6 which provides a wide array of after-school clubs, visits and visitors to school. Pupils are eager to point out, 'We really look forward to all of these!' The success of the school owes much to the very good leadership of the headteacher. He has played a significant role in moving the school forward, in accurately tackling weaknesses and in creating a strong team spirit with a shared passion of wanting all pupils to do their very best. Governance is good and parents think the world of the school. The partnership between staff, governors, parents and pupils is a winning one. There is no sense of complacency or resting on laurels. Instead, as the school seeks excellence, the headteacher points out, 'We just set the bar higher.'

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Provide relevant, stimulating and meaningful opportunities for pupils to enhance their writing skills in different subjects of the curriculum. - Provide innovative and exciting learning activities and initiatives where pupils' decision making, investigative, creative thinking and enterprise skills can be put to the test.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The small number of pupils in each year group leads to some fluctuation in standards from year to year. However, the important picture that emerges is that from Reception to Year 6 pupils achieve well. Children start school with attainment levels that cover the full ability range but are generally below average. By the end of the Reception year standards are close to national expectations. By the time that pupils leave school standards are never less than at the national average and are at times better than this. The good progress and achievement of pupils of all abilities owes much to good quality teaching, a stimulating range of learning experiences and robust procedures for carefully tracking pupils' progress. The good start that pupils get in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 has seen attainment rise. 2005 and 2006 assessment data shows attainment in English, mathematics and science to be a little above average by the end of Year 2. On the basis of this the school has set challenging targets for pupils in Years 3 to 6.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development is good with some outstanding aspects. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and this coupled with their tremendous enthusiasm and love of school contribute significantly to their achievement. They seldom miss school because, 'We enjoy it too much.' Pupils relish taking on responsibilities but this enthusiasm is not always capitalised on to enable pupils to lead more initiatives in the school. The school council which pupils run confidently gives them a showcase for their strong team-working skills. Pupils talk proudly about improvements they have brought about including new toilet facilities, high quality playground equipment and the introduction of healthy snacks. Pupils have a very good awareness of keeping fit, safe and healthy, helped in no small part by the physical activities that are planned every day at break times, the school's 'Safety Week' and the on-going healthy eating programme that is followed by many pupils. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are reflective, show a genuine concern for the needs of others and have a good awareness of cultures other than their own.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The good quality of teaching and learning are at the core of the good achievement of pupils. Lessons are often fun and enjoyable. The high quality of relationships consistently builds up pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Questioning is incisive and work is well matched to the individual needs of pupils. The good use of computer technology helps to bring learning to life and keeps pupils motivated. Teaching

assistants across the school make a pivotal contribution to how well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning. The good and direct teaching of reading and writing skills has led to improvements in standards. However, teachers do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to test out their writing skills in more meaningful and relevant purposes across different subjects of the curriculum. Assessment procedures are very thorough and the information is used very well to set challenging targets for all pupils. Marking of pupils' work is generally good but is not consistent in ensuring pupils act on the guidance given for improvement.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum adds much to the quality of pupils' learning experiences. The Foundation Stage provision is good and encourages children to explore and investigate for themselves whilst at the same time giving them a solid grounding in basic skills. The school's success at developing pupils' literacy, numeracy and computer skills in Years 1 to 6 has led to standards rising. The good levels of support that are on hand for pupils with learning difficulties enables them to achieve as well as their classmates. The wide variety of enrichment opportunities through visits, visitors, after school clubs, links with local high schools and the learning of a foreign language help to explain why pupils love coming to school. The weaker aspect is that not enough is done to develop pupils' investigative decision making and creative and enterprise skills to help take their learning on to the next level. The school is very successful at promoting the importance of healthy lifestyles, drug awareness, and good citizenship. It is equally successful in helping pupils realise they can make a telling contribution to the local community.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

This aspect of school is good with some outstanding features. The pupils are cared for exceptionally well and the individuality of all pupils is both recognised and celebrated. Parents point out, 'This is a wonderfully caring school.' The care that envelops the school adds much to the quality of learning and to pupils' sense of well-being. Pupils say that there is always someone to talk to if they have any worries and that, 'bullying doesn't happen because we all get on with each other!' Very good procedures are in place to safeguard pupils and child protection and health and safety arrangements are well known and assiduously followed by all staff. Very good use is made of well-established links with outside agencies to support vulnerable children and pupils with learning difficulties. The school has very robust procedures for tracking pupils' academic development. Whilst pupils have a secure awareness of their literacy targets they are uncertain as to their numeracy targets and do not yet play an active enough role in setting their own targets.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management of the headteacher are very good and ensure that the school's self-evaluation is not only accurate and honest but also effective. He tackles identified issues with rigour and steely determination. The headteacher, through a period of considerable staff changes, has created a very strong team spirit where all staff share his vision and quest for excellence. He analyses test and assessment data very well and monitors teaching and learning effectively. Teaching staff play their part too in monitoring standards and achievement through regular scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning. The scene is now being set for the recently appointed senior teacher to play a more prominent role in assessing the quality of teaching across the school. Governance of the school is good because governors play their part well in supporting but also in questioning and monitoring the work and performance of the school. Based on its successful track record the school is well placed to achieve further successes and provides good value for money.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

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

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

5 October 2006 Dear Children Darley Churchtown CE Primary School, Church Road, Darley Dale, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 2GL You may remember that I visited your school not too long ago and I am now writing to let you know what I found out. Before I do, I would just like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you for making me feel so welcome. I enjoyed my visit tremendously. Wherever I went in school, you were polite and helpful and always had a smile on your faces. I managed to talk to lots of you and it was good to hear how much you enjoy school, the after-school clubs and the visits. You told me that bullying is not a problem and that there is always someone to talk to if you are worried about anything. I found lots of good things about your school. I feel you and Mr Carr are right, when you said this is a GOOD SCHOOL with some outstanding features. Teachers and other staff make learning fun and enjoyable and help you to achieve well. The school does a very good job in the way that it helps you to learn about the importance of keeping fit, healthy and safe and works exceptionally hard at making sure you are cared for and looked after well. Another strength is the way in which your headteacher runs the school. An important strength of the school is .....YOU. Your excellent behaviour and infectious enthusiasm and readiness to help one another really impressed me. You are great ambassadors for the school. I have talked to your teachers about how they can help make the school even better. Your teachers are going to give you more chances to develop your writing skills in different subjects and to lead and take part in exciting and fun activities where your decision making, problem solving and investigative skills can be really put to the test! Mr Carr and all the staff and governors want the school to continue to improve. Having met you, I am sure you will play your part as well. I wish you every success in your futures. It was a pleasure and privilege to meet you. Martin Newell Lead Inspector