

Great Dalby Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119911
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	291568
Inspection dates	6 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Dilip Kadodwala HMI

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 on roll	
School	143
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Peter Topham
Headteacher	Mr Christopher Hannon
Date of previous school inspection	4–5 November 2002
School address	Top End Great Dalby Melton Mowbray Leicestershire LE14 2HA
Telephone number	01664 562750
Fax number	01664 562750

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The following issues were investigated: the pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and learning, and how well the school's leadership promotes high standards and personal development. Evidence was gathered from observation of lessons, the pupils' work, discussion with them and with staff, and a scrutiny of school documents and parent questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than most and draws its pupils from the village of Great Dalby and a number of outlying villages. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The very large majority of pupils are White British and all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. The school is successful in achieving its aim of 'learning through enjoyment and challenge'. A pupil commented, 'Teachers care for us and we are pushed to do our best', and this view is echoed by the great majority of other pupils and parents. Because of determined leadership from the headteacher, staff have worked well together since the last inspection. This has resulted in standards in mathematics and science rising from being above average to well above average by age 11, as measured by national tests.

The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is broadly in line with what is expected of young children. Pupils receive a positive start in the Foundation Stage, where they make good progress towards achieving the early learning goals. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress in reading and mathematics, and outstanding progress in writing. Older pupils in Years 3 to 6 receive good teaching, which results in pupils making outstanding progress in mathematics and science, but this is not matched in English where progress is good. The inspection focused on older pupils' progress in English, particularly in writing. The findings are that the school's good strategies are leading to a notable improvement in writing. The inspection also focused on how successful the school is in improving boys' attainment by the end of Year 2. Again, strategies to reduce the gap between boys' and girls' attainment are beginning to be effective, but there has not yet been sufficient time for a noticeable impact to have been made on Year 2 boys' test results. Ambitious targets in English and mathematics have been set for the current Year 2 and 6 pupils. School assessment information and pupils' current work indicate that they are on track to reach at least above average standards this year.

A strength of the school is the way it fosters pupils' personal development and well-being. This is very effective, supported by a good curriculum which provides interest and challenge to the pupils. The school is enriching the curriculum to ensure that pupils' understanding and appreciation of living in a multicultural society is developed more fully. Pupils' great enjoyment of school is reflected in their high attendance, very positive attitudes to learning, and participation in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Their behaviour is good, showing consideration for their own and others' safety and feelings. They play and work together very well. Pupils willingly take on responsibility to act as helpers and leaders, especially in the playground. The work of the school council is productive and pupil participation influences decisions which enhance their daily lives. The school's emphasis on exercise and healthy eating enables pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles. They readily explain the reasons for taking regular exercise and enjoy eating healthily, supported well by parents in this endeavour.

Teachers and support assistants know pupils very well. Good teaching underpins the school's caring ethos. Assessment information is used effectively to pinpoint those who are at risk of falling behind and to make sure that they have the support they need to catch up. Good use is made of targets in English and mathematics and these are referred to in teachers' marking to help pupils know how to improve their work.

Pupils write a regular 'learning log' which enables them to think about what they have learned and this provides useful pointers to staff to inform their teaching. The few lessons seen during the inspection were judged to be good.

Pupils benefit from good care, guidance and support. Pupils are well looked after and respected as individuals. Pupils say they feel safe and show confidence in staff to deal effectively with any concerns. Child protection and health and safety procedures are all in place. Vulnerable pupils' needs are well met, resulting in them making good progress from their starting points. Almost all pupils who have learning difficulties attain nationally expected standards. Arrangements for checking pupils' progress are good. Pupils are aware of how well they are doing and what is needed for them to get better.

Good leadership and management, under the strong leadership of the headteacher, results in all staff putting pupils' welfare and progress first. Parents value this especially, as reflected in one parent's comment that 'both children's emotional well-being and learning are viewed highly'. Careful monitoring of pupils' accomplishments and evaluation of teachers' work ensure that achievement and standards are good. The school's view of its own effectiveness is accurate, having a rounded picture of its strengths and weaknesses. The school improvement plan reflects this analysis, choosing the right priorities and criteria to assess success. Governors are committed and active and hold the school to account by providing a balance of support and challenge. Capacity to improve is good, as demonstrated by the improvements secured since the last inspection. Most notable is the significant improvement in the number of more able pupils attaining higher levels in national tests.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to improve and sustain pupils' progress and standards in English in Years 3 to 6.
- Further reduce the gap between boys' and girls' attainment by the end of Year 2.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	School Overall
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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
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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

¹ 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.



7 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Great Dalby Primary School, Great Dalby, Leicestershire
LE14 2HA

Thank you for your warm welcome and for being so helpful when I visited your school. I really enjoyed meeting and talking with so many of you.

You go to a good school. I was impressed by the part you play in making it so good. You do this by looking after one another, behaving well and working hard. Many of you told me how much you enjoy school because teachers care for you and challenge you do to your best. Your parents told me that too, and I agree.

You make good and sometimes outstanding progress because the headteacher and staff want the best for you. They check that you are learning as much as you can in lessons, give help when you need it and show you how you can achieve your targets in English and mathematics. Adults take good care of you so you feel happy and safe in school. Teachers, helped by your parents, make sure that you understand the importance of eating healthily and keeping fit. You take part in many outdoor activities and I noticed many of you sensibly choosing to eat healthy food!

There are a few things that can be even better than they are now. Teachers are already working hard to improve your writing skills and these are improving. But your progress in English needs to be as good as it is in mathematics and science by the time you reach the end of Year 6. I have also asked the school to make sure that, in Years 1 and 2, boys do as well as the girls.

I know that you will continue to help your teachers to make sure that these improvements are made. My best wishes for a successful future.

Dilip Kadodwala
Her Majesty's Inspector