



Old Dalby Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report - Amended

Unique Reference Number 120150
Local Authority Leicestershire
Inspection number 291649
Inspection date 19 September 2006
Reporting inspector John Eadie

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Longcliff Hill
School category	Voluntary controlled		Old Dalby
Age range of pupils	4-11		Melton Mowbray LE14 3JY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01664 822455
Number on roll (school)	129	Fax number	01664 823554
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Margaret Morris
		Headteacher	Steve Cliff
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2001		

Age group 4-11	Inspection date 19 September 2006	Inspection number 291649
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Amended Report Addendum

Report updated to resolve formatting inconsistency

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small school serves the villages of Old Dalby and Nether Broughton and a number of smaller surrounding villages. A higher-than-usual proportion do not spend the full seven years in the school as there are a number of families who serve in the Armed Forces. Almost all pupils are White British.

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 where pupils achieve well. The school copes successfully with the regular changes to classes when parents and their children are posted overseas. Pupils who join the school during the year are given very good support and this helps them to settle and achieve as well as others. Pupils' outstanding personal development is largely a result of the excellent individual care taken of them by all adults. Parents have very positive views about the school's ethos and identify 'a happy, relaxed environment where staff are approachable'.

Children start school with levels of skills and knowledge below those expected for their age. Provision for children in the Reception year is good and they make good progress in this year. Pupils' achievement is good by the end of Year 6 but progress varies from year to year. It is more rapid in Reception and Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2. This is because some more-able pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not always given work that enables them to achieve to their full potential. Additionally, the use made of targets to help pupils know how to do better and aim as high as they can is not always rigorous enough.

The major reason for pupils' good achievement is the quality of teaching, which is good. Pupils say that their teachers make lessons fun so that they enjoy coming to school and learn many new things. A further factor that increases pupils' enjoyment of school is the wide range of exciting opportunities available, both within the curriculum and as extra-curricular activities.

Pupils behave extremely well and one of the significant strengths is how well older pupils get on with younger ones. They take a lot of responsibility for them and ensure that they keep each other safe. Pupils regard the school as a secure place. The outstanding contribution to the school community extends to the wider world as pupils have a number of links with the village as well as conducting their own collections for charities. Pupils have a good awareness of how to lead a healthy lifestyle, although they don't always stick to it as a number of unhealthy snacks are seen in school.

Leadership and management are good and this is reflected in pupils' good achievement and excellent behaviour. School leaders have an accurate view of strengths and weaknesses. For example, they have identified that there is a need to offer further challenge to more-able pupils, and staff are working hard to do this. They have been successful in science and, to some extent, in mathematics. However, there is more work to be done to improve higher-level attainment, particularly in English, and to ensure that test results improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in the national tests in Years 2 and 6 by:
- making sure that the work set for more-able pupils is demanding enough and enables them to achieve as well as they can

- setting accurate targets for pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science that help them know how to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress and achieve well by the end of Year 6. They leave having reached standards that are higher than average and most reach the school's suitably challenging targets. They start in the Reception year with levels of skills and knowledge below those expected, especially in their mathematical development. By the time they start in Year 1, pupils have made good progress and achieved the expected levels in all areas of learning. They make particularly good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world, where standards are higher than expected. In Years 1 and 2, progress is satisfactory and pupils are achieving average standards in the national tests at the end of Year 2. However, too few pupils are achieving the higher Level 3 in these tests. This is largely because they are not given sufficiently challenging work. From Year 3 to Year 6, progress is good. In these year groups, there has been a history of more-able pupils not achieving as well as they could, but this has been addressed well by the school, except in English. In mathematics and science, a variety of strategies has led to improvement, in particular, the greater use of problem-solving techniques that allow more-able pupils to extend their learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. With the wide range of curriculum provision, as well as the close links with the church, there are ample opportunities for pupils to experience awe and wonder. The links with schools abroad, as well as with an inner-city school, enhance pupils' cultural development well. Pupils' behaviour is excellent, with younger children being made to feel very much a part of the school by the way that older pupils look after and care for them. This is especially the case when older pupils act as buddies or play leaders, responsibilities which they carry out very effectively. The school council takes significant responsibility, having its own budget and also operating a mini-enterprise scheme to raise funds that are spent on extras for the school. These high levels of responsibility are preparing pupils well for their future careers as well as making an excellent contribution to the school community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Classes are well ordered and well organised and this environment ensures that pupils are developing a good work ethic. Teachers make their lessons interesting and pupils

respond positively and work hard. Although teachers typically plan for the varying abilities of pupils in their classes, they do not always offer sufficient challenge for the most able, or enable them to start at a higher level rather than join in with class work that they find easy. Teachers' marking helps pupils to see how to improve their work; however, their use of assessment to inform pupils of their next steps in learning is not sharp enough. A positive feature of the good teaching is the work of teaching assistants. They are very much part of the teaching team and are deployed very well, mainly to support pupils who are finding work difficult, so aiding these pupils' good progress. Teaching assistants are increasingly being used to support the work of more-able pupils and this is beginning to have a positive impact on their progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and is planned well to cope with the mixed-age classes. The school has worked out the skills that need to be learnt in each year and ensures that these are addressed within the topics that are being studied. This enables pupils to learn progressively. The curriculum is made more interesting for the pupils through the introduction of two languages, Spanish for the younger pupils and French in Years 3 to 6. Spanish is supported by links that have recently been established with a school in Spain. Useful links are also being established with an inner-city school and a school in Delhi, which is widening pupils' cultural development. Pupils enjoy taking part in the many additional activities provided, including a wide variety of sporting clubs, which are very successful in local competitions, and cultural activities such as music and drama. Such activities significantly enhance their motivation and interest and so contribute to their good achievement.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Parents identify that, 'This is a very caring school, where staff listen to children and parents and the children gain in self-esteem and confidence.' The personal care for pupils is outstanding and adults know the pupils and their needs very well. Pupils are well aware of this and there are warm relationships between adults and pupils, which is one of the major factors in pupils' excellent personal development. Procedures to safeguard pupils are rigorous and pupils feel well looked after and secure at school. Academic guidance systems understandably focus on making sure that those who are experiencing difficulties receive the right support. There is scope for sharper assessment of how well all learners are doing to assist their better progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and senior staff give the school clear educational direction and know its strengths and weaknesses well. They have, for example, accurately identified the

need to raise levels of challenge for, and the achievement of, more-able pupils. Work has been going on in this area for a couple of years, but the impact has been slower than it might have been. One of the reasons for this is that the school has had significant changes to staffing in the recent past. A further reason is that planned initiatives, particularly in English, have not been put in place quickly enough, which in part is due to the staffing problems. A recent success that reflects well on the school's capacity to improve are the rising standards in science. Although the school places a high priority on equal opportunities, some more-able pupils do not achieve as well as others and are therefore not reaching the standards of which they are capable.

Governors are fully involved in the monitoring of the school's effectiveness and governance is good. They are closely involved in self-evaluation and school improvement planning, as are all staff. The self-evaluation process is thorough and various meetings involve all staff and governors, before the final version of the school improvement plan is produced. This plan correctly identifies the appropriate needs for development and is instrumental in improving provision for pupils. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The school is well placed to continue to improve.

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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
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

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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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 the 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

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.

Leadership and management

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

I very much enjoyed my time in your school and talking with many of you. It was good to hear how much you enjoy school. You told me that you think it is a good school and I agree.

One of the best things I saw on my visit was how well you behave. I really liked the way that older pupils play with younger ones and how you all get on well together. You work hard in class and this is because, as some of you told me, your teachers make their lessons fun. This is helping most of you to make good progress. All adults look after you really well and you feel safe and secure in school. You also told me that you enjoy all the extra activities that are provided. For example, there is a wide range of sports clubs, trips out of school and visitors into school. I particularly enjoyed hearing about the pantomime group who came into school last year.

Your headteacher and staff know exactly what needs to be done to make the school better. Here are the most important things that we have discussed that need to improve and that you can help with:

- You should tell your teachers if the work they set isn't hard enough, as some of you are finding the work too easy.
- Make sure you know what your personal targets are in literacy and numeracy and be clear about how you can reach them. Also, make sure you know what national curriculum levels you are working at and what level you should be aiming for.

Thank you for your help during the inspection and keep up the good work.