

Diggle School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105665
Local Authority	Oldham
Inspection number	308913
Inspection date	18 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Peter Jones

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	169
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mike Rea
Headteacher	Miss E Lawson
Date of previous school inspection	3 May 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Sam Road Diggle Oldham Lancashire OL3 5PU
Telephone number	01457 872114
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards; leadership and management; personal development and well-being; and care, guidance and support. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, parents' questionnaires, the scrutiny of pupils' work and of assessment data and other documents. In addition, discussions were held with pupils, governors and key staff. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This small rural primary school in a village setting takes in pupils from the full range of social and economic backgrounds. The school offers Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision in its Reception class. The vast majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than in most schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school holds the Eco-School Bronze and Activemark awards.

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. It has some outstanding features. The dedicated headteacher inspires staff, pupils and parents. She provides outstanding leadership, well supported by skilled staff and a resourceful governing body. The school has made a good improvement since the last inspection and provides good value for money. Practical approaches to strategic planning and very good financial management have enabled the school to improve the school site and its resources substantially. The pleasure and enthusiasm shown by pupils using the recently completed state of the art computer suite is a fine example of the leadership's positive impact on school life. The school's systems generate a wealth of data about pupils' performance and targets set for pupils are generally challenging, though not always for the most able. The school's self-evaluation is accurate, and given its sustained performance, it has good capacity for future improvement.

The school provides outstanding care, guidance and support for all its pupils. There is an exceptionally strong family atmosphere and sense of community in the school. Pupils say they are well cared for by the friendly staff and know there is always someone to turn to should they be upset or troubled. Links with outside agencies are well developed. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified at an early stage and thanks to the expert and sensitive support they receive, they too make good progress in this inclusive school. The well managed before and after school clubs are a great success with pupils and parents, who appreciate the flexibility and opportunities they have created. Arrangements to safeguard pupils and ensure their safety are in place.

Pupils build on their good achievement in the EYFS in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Provisional results for the 2008 national tests, and the achievement of the school's current pupils, show pupils making good progress to reach standards that are well above national averages by the end of Year 6. The school's initiatives to improve standards in targeted areas have been a success. The results show a good improvement in writing and mathematics. The gap between boys' and girls' attainment, an issue identified by the school, is now negligible. Good teaching has led to significant improvements in writing and mathematics standards. Pupils respond positively to the high expectations of effort and behaviour. The school's good curriculum has developed a themed approach that links different subjects. Pupils benefit from an extensive programme of visits and visitors. Lessons are well paced, and pupils are given opportunities to discuss issues and offer opinions. These factors combine to make learning interesting and enjoyable. In some lessons, not enough attention is given to ensuring that the work set for individual pupils sufficiently matches their needs and abilities. This is particularly the case for the more able pupils. They work diligently, but there is not always enough challenge to stretch their capabilities. They sometimes spend too much time being taught with the whole class when they could be learning new skills. As a result, they do not always make the best possible progress. The school has greatly improved the quality of the academic guidance it provides for its pupils since the last inspection. Pupils are made familiar with their learning targets from an early age and develop an increasingly sophisticated understanding of them as they move through school. Marking by staff is conscientious and pupils receive excellent and regular advice about what they need to do to improve their work further. Their progress is good as a result.

Pupils are friendly, extremely polite and very proud of their school. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning are outstanding. The school makes full use of its attractive grounds, set on the edge of rolling moorland, to add to pupils' enjoyment of learning and their knowledge of

environmental issues. Attendance is consistently very high and pupils take part eagerly in the wide range of sporting, musical and artistic clubs and activities. Pupils say, 'All the staff are really kind and we make lots of new friends.' They feel safe and say that the rare instances of bullying are dealt with effectively. Pupils show a highly developed awareness of the need to eat healthily and take exercise. They are encouraged to take responsibility from an early age and many serve as monitors, class representatives or 'young leaders'. Links with the local community are very strong. Many parents and grandparents attended the school themselves, and a number pass on their knowledge and experience to pupils as volunteers or visitors. Pupils develop into confident, articulate learners. Their knowledge is further enhanced by good opportunities to experience commercial and enterprise activities. This, together with their high standards in basic skills, means that they are extremely well prepared for success in later life.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the EYFS. They enter Reception with skills and abilities that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Excellent links have been forged with parents and carers and also with local Nursery providers. As a result, children settle quickly and make good progress to reach standards above the national expectations for their age at the end of Reception. This success is the result of good teaching, the bright and stimulating atmosphere and the effective teamwork between the highly skilled staff. Children are able to make choices about the activities they undertake, but there is an appropriate balance of adult-directed learning. Children are very well behaved and get on well together. The EYFS is outstanding in its promotion of the welfare of all children and in ensuring that they are safe and happy. As a result, children develop into confident learners who make informed choices and become increasingly independent. The indoor and outdoor learning areas are well planned to promote enjoyment of learning. The many opportunities to socialise and share experiences with the adjoining Year 1 class further enhance children's skills and confidence. The EYFS is well led and managed and children's progress is carefully assessed and recorded.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all pupils, and particularly the most able, are given more access to tasks that provide appropriate challenge and opportunities to develop new skills.
- Make better use of data to provide more challenging targets for the school's more able pupils.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
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	1

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?	1

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Diggle School, Oldham, OL3 5PU

I am writing to thank you for being friendly and helpful when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit very much. I would like to share with you what we found out.

You go to a good school. You work hard in lessons and make good progress. Your teachers really want you to succeed, and they give you excellent advice about how to improve your work. The way your school cares for you all, and the way you care for each other, is outstanding. Your young leaders do a super job organising games for the younger pupils at lunchtime. Also, your class representatives let the school know your views and opinions about its work. Your behaviour is excellent at all times, and we were impressed with your good manners and your consideration for others. You told us that the school keeps you safe, and that you really enjoy your lessons and the interesting activities your school provides for you. You like to stay healthy and keep fit. You really appreciate the lovely healthy meals your school provides. You are very proud of your school's sporting and artistic achievements. We know that you put on marvellous musical concerts for the whole community. The Year 6 pupils told me about the great time they have on their activity holiday in Cumbria. You like to help others and you raise money for school and charity.

I would like you to do even better with your work and so I have suggested two things that will help. I would like your teachers to make sure that the work they give those of you working at the highest levels is really challenging, so you learn new skills whenever possible and make even more progress. Also, we have asked your school to improve the ways it checks your progress as you move through school so it sets more challenging targets for those of you who find learning easy. You can help by continuing to work hard and trying your best.

Keep looking after each other.