

# Desford Community Primary School

Inspection report - amended

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119921
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	313445
<b>Inspection date</b>	19 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Terry Elston

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	225
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ruth Camamile
<b>Headteacher</b>	Barbara Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 May 2003
<b>School address</b>	Kirkby Road Desford Leicester LE9 9JH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01455 822379
<b>Fax number</b>	01455 822379

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## **Amended Report Addendum**

Report amended due to administration error

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The school admits pupils mainly from the village of Desford and the surrounding rural area. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds or are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The headteacher has been in post since September 2006 following a period when the school had three headteachers in three years. Attainment on entry is broadly average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Desford Community Primary School provides a satisfactory quality of education. Despite the considerable staffing turbulence over recent years, pupils' achievements are satisfactory and standards by the time they leave are broadly in line with the national average. Progress is satisfactory, overall, and good in science where pupils throughout the school show a good understanding of how to conduct experiments. In writing, progress is too slow because pupils have too few opportunities to write in subjects other than English. Children make a sound start in the Reception class and parents speak highly of the way all adults help them settle quickly into school life. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because teachers and skilled teaching assistants support them well in lessons. While the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, it varies from adequate to outstanding. Teachers build good relationships with pupils and make lessons fun. They generally have high expectations of pupils' work but this varies from class to class. Not all lessons provide sufficient challenge for more able pupils and this helps to explain why not all of them achieve the high standards of which they are capable.

Pupils enjoy school, and their personal development and well-being are good. They feel safe and have a good awareness of the importance of living a healthy lifestyle. Pupils appreciate the good care, support and guidance provided by the school because they feel valued and well looked after. While the curriculum planned for them is satisfactory, pupils are justified in feeling that there could be more clubs and activities after school. This is particularly the case for girls who have no opportunities to be involved in sport outside physical education lessons.

The headteacher and other leaders have a clear awareness of these strengths and weaknesses of the school. While the leadership and management are satisfactory, the new leadership team has made a good start and their priorities are the right ones to move the school forward. Their analysis of pupils' progress is detailed and provides valuable information on which areas of the school need to be improved. The leaders recognise the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning, but have not yet introduced a rigorous system of lesson observations to show teachers how to teach better.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all teachers provide activities to challenge more able pupils to do their best work.
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning more rigorously.
- Provide more opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to develop their writing skills.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils' standards are broadly average and their achievements are satisfactory. Children in the Reception make a sound start to school and make satisfactory progress. Their attainment by the end of the Reception Year is average, with strengths in their mathematical and early reading skills where many exceed the expected goals. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress and standards by the end of Year 2 are average in reading, writing and mathematics. These

standards show an improvement in writing since last year's assessments when they were below the national average. Pupils' achievements in design and technology and art and design are good and they produce some excellent models and three-dimensional pictures.

By Year 6, standards are broadly average in English and mathematics and above average in science. These findings are similar to the results in the 2006 national tests. The tracking of pupils' attainment over time shows that they have made satisfactory progress, overall, and good progress in science where the teaching is good. However, progress in writing is significantly slower than that in reading. While pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress, few of the more able pupils achieve well enough, particularly in mathematics and writing.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They think deeply about issues and have the confidence to express their feelings on topics such as emotions and the dangers that humans pose to the environment. They have a good awareness of different cultures of the world and some of the work produced by Year 6 pupils when studying Islam shows exceptional understanding of how Muslims worship. Pupils develop a clear sense of right and wrong and nearly all behave well. One pupil commented, 'Behaviour's really good most of the time – just the odd blip.' Attendance is good. Pupils enjoy school but not all of them like writing because they find it difficult. Nevertheless, they find lessons interesting, because as one pupil put it, 'Teachers are really good at making lessons fun.' Pupils feel safe in school and have the confidence to talk to adults about their problems. They explain knowledgeably about how to live healthy lifestyles and enjoy the fresh fruit and vegetables prepared at lunchtime. Pupils develop their independence satisfactorily, although the lack of opportunities for more able pupils to work on their own at challenging tasks sometimes makes them too dependent on the teacher.

Pupils feel well prepared for the future by taking full advantage of the opportunities to plan budgets, work together on sales projects and improve their communication skills. They contribute well to their community through activities such as litter picking and organising events at school for the local village.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

While the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, it varies considerably from class to class. A consistent strength of the teaching is the high quality of the relationships between adults and pupils. This starts in the Reception class where children settle quickly into school life because all adults value their contributions and are quick to praise them for their successes. In all classes, teachers are very good at giving pupils confidence to answer questions without fear of failure. Teachers make clear at the start of lessons what learning is expected so that pupils can assess their progress accurately at the end. They make lessons fun by creative use of interactive whiteboards that pupils find fascinating. For example, children in the Reception loved directing a caterpillar across the screen when learning left from right and pupils in Year 2 delighted in 'dragging' words down to make a tongue twister. Some of the teaching lacks challenge, particularly for more able pupils, which is why they sometimes make slower progress

than they should. Too often, all pupils are set similar tasks, with just more of the same work for those who finish quickly. Pupils' good rate of learning in science is the result of effective work by the school to improve the teaching of investigational skills.

Assessment is satisfactory. While teachers check on pupils' progress regularly, the quality of their marking varies from helpful comments that help pupils improve, to columns of ticks that offer little guidance.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum's strong focus on literacy and numeracy skills ensures that pupils gain confidence in reading and number. In writing, the school has recently focused on encouraging pupils to write more in all subjects in order to raise standards. This has worked well in Years 1 and 2, but higher up the school the planning is more patchy and some of the writing tasks ask too little of pupils. The good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities explains why they make rapid progress, especially in their reading and number skills.

The school provides an adequate range of popular activities at lunchtime and after school to extend learning but pupils are justified in feeling there could be more. There is good use of visits and visitors such as the fire and police services to enhance the curriculum and teach pupils how to stay safe. Provision for personal, social and health education is good, and gives pupils valuable opportunities to discuss their worries and learn how to stay healthy. Residential visits make an important contribution to pupils' personal and social development.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The good quality of care, guidance and support has a strong impact on the personal development of pupils. Adults know the pupils very well and are guided by robust systems to ensure their health, safety and well-being. Parents speak very highly of the arrangements for their children when starting in Reception and the way they enable them to settle quickly and enjoy school. High expectations of behaviour and a clear behaviour policy ensure that pupils know the rules and adhere to them. Academic guidance is satisfactory, but its quality varies from class to class and not all pupils are clear about their personal targets. The school provides good support and guidance for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities that ensure their individual needs are met well.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The school's self-evaluation systems are satisfactory. The headteacher has done well in her first two terms to begin to evaluate the quality of teaching and analyse strengths and weaknesses in pupils' achievements. This has provided her with a firm basis upon which improvements can be planned. The headteacher, supported well by other leaders who are largely new to the role, has introduced good tracking systems that identify clearly the progress made by different groups of pupils and has made effective use of consultants to evaluate the teaching and learning. The leaders recognise that their next priority is for them to make formal observations of teaching. This has not been done adequately for some time and helps to explain the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, marking and assessment from class to class. Despite this, and the many

recent changes in staffing, progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory and standards are satisfactory. Now that the leadership team is becoming established, the school is soundly placed to improve further.

The school has good partnerships with other schools that provide worthwhile opportunities to share expertise and training. Effective links with literacy and numeracy consultants has provided good guidance on how to teach reading and mathematical investigations more effectively.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors take a keen interest in the school, but not all yet feel they have the experience to hold the school to account.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

20 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Desford Community Primary School, Desford, Leicestershire LE9 9JH.

As you know, I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed my day with you and found you welcoming and friendly. Those who were kind enough to speak to me told me a lot about your school. Your school is satisfactory, with some things that are good and others that could be better.

What I found out about the school:

- You make satisfactory progress, and your work overall is at a similar level to that expected nationally. However, while you do well in science, some of you find writing difficult.
- Pupils who need extra help with subjects such as reading and number work make good progress.
- The teaching is satisfactory, but better in some classes than in others. Teachers are good at making lessons interesting, but not all of them provide work that is hard enough.
- Your personal development is good. You nearly always behave well and you are very kind to each other.
- You know a lot about how to stay safe and keep healthy.
- You enjoy the activities planned for you but many of you say (and I agree) that there are too few clubs after school.
- All the staff take good care of you and keep you safe.
- The leadership of your school is satisfactory. Your headteacher and other leaders know how to improve the school and their plans to do this show they have the right priorities.

What we have asked the school to do now:

- Ensure that all teachers provide work that is hard enough for all of you.
- Give teachers more guidance to make sure that all lessons are as good as the best ones.
- Provide more opportunities for you to practise your writing skills in all subjects.

Yours sincerely

Terry Elston Lead inspector