

# Dale Hall Community Primary School

## Inspection report

---

|                                |                   |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 124668            |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Suffolk           |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 315010            |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 25 September 2008 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Derek Watts       |

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.

---

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <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>  |   |
| School (total)   | 394   |
| Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS | 28  |
| Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years                                     | 0   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>   | The governing body                              |
| <b>Chair</b>   | Mr Martin Reason                                |
| <b>Headteacher</b>   | Mrs A Beckett                                   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 14 March 2005                                   |
| <b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>                              | Not previously inspected                        |
| <b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>   | Not previously inspected                        |
| <b>School address</b>  | Dale Hall Lane<br>Ipswich<br>Suffolk<br>IP1 4LX |

---

|                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Age group</b>         | 4–11              |
| <b>Inspection date</b>   | 25 September 2008 |
| <b>Inspection number</b> | 315010            |

**Telephone number**  
**Fax number**

01473251651  
01473251752

|                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Age group</b>         | 4-11              |
| <b>Inspection date</b>   | 25 September 2008 |
| <b>Inspection number</b> | 315010            |

---

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following aspects:

- The factors contributing to children's apparent good progress in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
- How successful the school has been in improving provision and raising achievement in writing.
- The progress the school is making in improving achievement and standards in mathematics.
- How effective the school's procedures are for monitoring and evaluating its performance.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' work and school documentation. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, governors and staff also contributed to the judgements.

## Description of the school

Dale Hall Community Primary is larger than the average primary school. Most of the pupils come from a White British background and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The nature of these include moderate learning difficulties and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Provision for the EYFS is organised through the Reception class. In partnership with a private company, the school provides a breakfast club and after school care for pupils.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of Dale Community Primary School is satisfactory. There are good features to its work. Children in Reception get off to a good start because of good teaching and an interesting range of activities. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 make satisfactory progress and standards are average overall by the end of Year 6. After a period of decline in standards, there are signs that pupil achievement and standards are improving. Across the school, effective pastoral care and support, and a positive school atmosphere help ensure good personal development and well-being for pupils.

Most parents hold positive views about the school and are pleased with the care and education provided for their children. They particularly like information provided about the curriculum and the workshops to help them support their children's learning. A significant minority expressed concerns about behaviour but recognised that most pupils behave well. The school has a few pupils with challenging behaviour, some of whom have joined from other schools. All such pupils are well managed and supported by staff.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall and are successfully promoting good pastoral care, which is a key component in pupils' good personal development. The impact of leadership and management on teaching and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Self-evaluation is satisfactory and the school has a sound understanding of its strengths and what is needed to bring about improvements. Positive action has been taken to improve pupils' performance in writing and the recent fall in mathematics standards has been halted. Leaders are aware that there is more to do before pupils' achievement is consistently good and have put in place an appropriate range of measures to ensure recent improvements are maintained and extended. The school's capacity to improve, therefore, is satisfactory. However, not all staff and governors have benefitted from training in monitoring and evaluating performance. As a result, evaluations are not always rigorous enough and in some areas, the school believes its performance is better than it is.

Effective procedures to ensure that pupils are protected and safeguarded are in place. Pupils feel safe at school and are confident that there are adults they can turn to. Pupils really enjoy school and this is reflected by their keen participation in activities and their above average attendance. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are friendly, polite and relate well to others. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and know how to keep themselves safe. They show a clear understanding of the importance of healthy diets and taking regular activities. The pupils are enthusiastic fundraisers for local and global charities, overall the school makes a sound contribution to community cohesion.

The school has maintained above average standards in English in Year 6. Pupils have good opportunities to develop and apply reading and writing skills. They write for a range of purposes and in a variety of styles. Standards in writing by the end of Year 2 have improved to above average. Standards are average in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. The school has increased its emphasis on investigative and problem solving work in mathematics and science in the drive to raise achievement and standards in these subjects. This approach is working particularly in mathematics. Progress is good in English and satisfactory in mathematics and science. The school's clear assessment and tracking systems show that pupils are beginning to make better progress as they move through the school.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and improving. Across the school, teachers establish good relationships with their pupils and manage them well. Teachers make the purpose of the lesson clear so pupils know what they are to learn. Teaching and learning are consistently good in the EYFS because interesting and varied activities are provided. There are examples of good teaching in Years 1 to 6 and, in these lessons, pupils are challenged well and purposeful teaching ensures learning proceeds at a brisk pace. However, this good practice is not consistent. Lesson observations and the study of pupils' work shows that levels of challenge are not always appropriate and, where this happens or where lesson introductions are too long, pupils' learning and productivity slow. Teaching assistants are well directed and contribute well to pupils' learning, particularly with pupils who need additional help with literacy, numeracy or their behaviour.

The curriculum contributes well to pupils' personal development and enables them to make satisfactory progress in their learning. There are good opportunities for pupils to apply and develop writing skills. Leaders have correctly identified the need to increase investigative work in mathematics and science. Good links are developing between subjects and these add meaning and relevance to pupils' learning. For example, writing, history and art were all effectively integrated into the Year 6 World War II topic. Health and safety education are promoted well and the curriculum is enriched by a good range of additional activities.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children generally enter Reception with the knowledge and skills that are expected for their age though some have lower than expected communication and language skills. Children settle quickly into routines and enjoy their learning. Good leadership, effective teaching, good care and an interesting range of activities enable all children to make good progress and enjoy the well-planned range of topics. Teachers and assistants provide an effective blend of adult-led tasks and opportunities for children to explore, be creative and work independently but, occasionally, assessments are not used well enough to plan the next steps of children's learning, and their progress slows. There are good plans to improve the outdoor learning areas in the near future. By the end of Reception, standards are above those expected except in elements of literacy.

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

- Raise achievement and standards in mathematics and science through the increased emphasis on investigative and problem solving work.
- Improve the overall quality of teaching, ensuring that pupils are challenged appropriately, that all lessons maintain a brisk pace and that the existing good practice is more widespread.
- Sharpen evaluation procedures by providing training for staff and governors who need it.

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.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|----------------|

### Overall effectiveness

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3   |
| 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?   | 3   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 3   |

### 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? | 2 |
| How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?                     | 2 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?                          | 2 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?                                 | 2 |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve?  | 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/or disabilities make progress                           | 3 |

---

<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.



## Personal development and well-being

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>                          | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 2 |
| The extent to which learners enjoy their education  | 2 |
| The attendance of learners  | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 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 | 3 |

## The quality of provision

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>       | 3 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 3 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?   | 3 |

## 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards  | 3   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 3   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated   | 3   |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?   | 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  |

**Annex B**

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

26 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dale Hall Community Primary School, Ipswich, IP1 4LX.

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school and showing us your work. We enjoyed our visit and would like to tell you what we have found. Yours is a satisfactory school and it has good features. The school is showing clear signs of improvement.

These are the main strengths of the school:

- You enjoy school and your attendance is good.
- Reception children get off to a good start.
- You are making good progress in English.
- The school is a friendly and pleasant place to be.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- Your understanding of how to keep healthy and safe is good.
- The teachers and other grown-ups take good care of you.
- There is a good range of additional activities for you.

There are three things the school could work on to make it even better:

- Some of you could make more progress in mathematics and science.
- At times, your teachers could challenge you more and make sure that lessons move on at a good pace.
- Staff and governors should be sharper at checking how well the school is doing.

Finally, thank you once again for all your help. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Derek Watts

Lead inspector