

# Michael Drayton Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	125512
<b>Local Authority</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	315254
<b>Inspection date</b>	1 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ian Hodgkinson

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>	7-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	450
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jeff Brown
<b>Headteacher</b>	John Buxton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 November 2003
<b>School address</b>	The Woodlands Hartshill Nuneaton CV10 0SZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	02476 392272
<b>Fax number</b>	02476 392281

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' standards and progress in their work, the monitoring of and support for pupils with English as an additional language, pupils' personal development, and pupils' attendance. Evidence was gathered through discussion with school senior leaders, subject leaders, the chair of governors, parents, pupils and representatives of the school council; together with visits to lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work, and analysis of school records and planning documents. Parents' questionnaire responses were also analysed. 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, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This very large school serves a former mining area in North Warwickshire, although many pupils travel from much further afield. Numbers on roll have declined significantly in the last year and are set to fall further in line with local demographic factors. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic heritages, but otherwise pupils are drawn from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is higher than in most schools, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils join the school in Year 3 with attainment in line with national averages.

## 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, with several outstanding features. The beaming smiles and eager enthusiasm on the faces of children arriving for school in the morning reveal just how much they enjoy their education. There is a striking maturity in pupils' relaxed conversations with visitors, and a ready courtesy in their volunteering of help or holding open of doors for adults and each other. Their excellent behaviour contributes significantly to their good learning in lessons, as they listen carefully to instructions and readily engage in tasks they have been set. Pupils themselves acknowledge how well teachers manage their classes, by making their lessons fun, by varying activities, and by adjusting grouping arrangements to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' capabilities. Pupils feel very safe in the school, and they and their parents express a good deal of confidence in staff to resolve any concerns and anxieties. The quality of pastoral care is high, and requirements for safeguarding the well-being of pupils are fully met. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory overall. The school works very hard to support and promote the benefits of good attendance, but still too many pupils are taken away for holidays during term time, which adversely affects their progress.

Pupils' outstanding personal development is further supported by the exceptional breadth of activities offered through the curricular and extra-curricular programmes. The school makes very good use of its large size, extensive grounds, good links with partner schools and the expertise and enthusiasm of its staff to secure a high degree of participation in a wide range of sport and physical activity. 'Healthy School' status has been attained and pupils demonstrate a high level of awareness of how to live and eat healthily. Pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported by the many opportunities given to them to work in teams and to show initiative and leadership. They make extensive contributions to the life and work of the school and their local community. The most obvious manifestation of this is in the work of the active and articulate school council, which is consulted on a very wide range of key school developments, such as healthy eating and the potential of the school to become an 'Eco-school'. Adults with responsibilities in these areas, such as representatives from the local authority, come in to speak directly to the school council on such matters, so that councillors are well informed and develop a good deal of confidence. On a less formal level, pupils show themselves well able to organise clubs and playground activities. Pupils' cultural development is strongly promoted by a well-resourced curriculum and specialist teaching for music, which supports a good level of participation in musical activities and instrumental tuition. While most pupils are from a White British background, they show a good level of awareness of the diversity of faiths and cultures in modern Britain.

Standards have risen since the last inspection and are now above average, particularly at the higher level of attainment (Level 5). While this partly reflects pupils' stronger attainment on joining the school, it also reflects the good progress that pupils make. Pupils achieve well. Standards of writing have improved strongly over the last two years. Pupils are given clear targets to improve the technical precision of their writing. Links between subjects and to numerous off-site visits stimulate pupils to write effectively in a range of styles and for a variety of purposes. Pupils' attainment in mathematics has been marginally higher than that in English since the last inspection, but the school's targets for attainment in mathematics in Year 6 national tests were missed in 2007 because a small minority of pupils underachieved. The school has now strengthened its tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress in mathematics, and this has revealed slower progress than expected for a small minority of pupils in Years 3, 4, and 5.

Additional support and intervention has now been set in place to boost progress for these pupils. While academic guidance and support for pupils are generally good, the full effect of these additional measures has yet to be felt. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported to make good progress, through early diagnosis of their needs and effective in-class support from teachers and teaching assistants. One parent reflected the views of others when she wrote that the school 'went above and beyond to get the help needed' for her child with a statement of special educational needs. The few pupils with English as an additional language also generally make good progress, and staff receive good advice and support on how to meet their needs.

Pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) very well to support their learning. As a lead school for ICT within the local authority, the school is very well resourced and teachers plan very effectively to help pupils to incorporate ICT in their learning. So, for example, pupils readily use the Internet for research and spreadsheets to help them process and organise data. By equipping them with strong personal skills and good basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT, the school prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education and in later life. To boost their progress still further in mathematics and science, pupils need to have more opportunities to develop their problem-solving and investigative skills, and to apply their number skills in a wider variety of situations.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher, ably supported by his senior team, has given the school excellent strategic direction to sustain good achievement for pupils and to continually seek to improve the quality of provision. The school and its leadership are highly regarded by the overwhelming majority of parents. Parents value the school's 'strong sense of community' and how well the headteacher 'knows the children and enjoys spending time with them'. This is not a school to rest on its laurels. Its self-evaluation offers an accurate appraisal of its strengths and weaknesses, and its improvement planning springs coherently from this appraisal. Subject leaders and staff have a 'can-do' attitude and a clear sense of what needs to be done to improve standards. Targets for attainment in English have not fully reflected the school's rising standards in the subject and need to be more challenging to build on and develop success in this area. However, the school is setting appropriate targets in mathematics in its drive to improve progress in the subject. Good governance provides strong support for the school's leadership and has ensured that the school is very well resourced; governors have managed fluctuations in numbers on roll very well. Since the last inspection, standards have risen and the school has moved ahead particularly strongly in areas such as the development of healthy lifestyles and the use of ICT. The school is clearly well placed to continue its success in the future.

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

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- Rigorously monitor and support pupils' progress in mathematics through the school.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to apply number skills in a variety of contexts, and to develop problem-solving and investigative skills in mathematics and science.

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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

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
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	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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
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 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

2 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Michael Drayton Junior School, Hartshill, CV10 0SZ

Many thanks for the welcome you gave me when I visited the school for its recent inspection. I was very impressed by the sensible way you were able to discuss your views about the school. You are very confident and clearly well-used to talking about such matters with adults. This is just one example of your excellent personal development, and the school supports you in this by giving you lots of opportunities to help out in the school and community. Your excellent behaviour and courtesy towards others helps everyone to feel safe in school and helps you concentrate on learning in class. This in turn helps you to make good progress in your work, and to reach standards which are higher than those found in most schools.

Good teaching ensures that your lessons are lively and interesting, and it is clear that you enjoy school very much. You are given many opportunities to develop a wide range of skills and interests through the exceptionally broad range of activities on offer. It is clear that the school has given a high priority to helping you to develop healthy lifestyles, and good to see that so many of you get involved in a wide range of sports and physical activities. Your school has been well led and managed to ensure that you keep making good progress in your lessons and that you can develop particular strengths in areas such as healthy living and the use of ICT. It is clear that you and your parents value in particular the excellent direction given to the school by the headteacher and his senior team.

Your school is already a good one, and my inspection report points to two ways in which it can get even better. Firstly, the school has identified that a small minority of pupils make less progress than expected in mathematics in Years 3, 4 and 5. Their progress needs careful checking to make sure that the support the school is putting in place is having good effect. Secondly, your standards in mathematics and science could be raised still further by giving you more opportunities to develop your skills in solving problems and carrying out investigations, and to apply your number skills in a variety of situations. You can help in all of this by continuing to follow carefully the good advice given to you by your teachers about how to improve your work.

I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Ian Hodgkinson Lead inspector