

The Dasset CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130379
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	315625
Inspection date	13 November 2007
Reporting inspector	David Carrington

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	182
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mikkel Squire
Headteacher	Barbara Williams-Cook
Date of previous school inspection	28 June 2004
School address	Fenny Compton Southam CV47 2XU
Telephone number	01295 770267
Fax number	01295 770267

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the improvements made to achievement in writing, the impact on children's progress of leadership in the Foundation Stage, and the extent to which provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is being improved, gathering evidence from observations of lessons, pupils' work, discussions with pupils, staff and governors, and the study of school documents. 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

The Dassett CE Primary School serves several villages in and around Fenny Compton. Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds. Overall, an above average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, although the proportion is much higher in some classes compared with others. When children start school, they have good skills and knowledge, above the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Just as parents and pupils said, 'The Dassett CE Primary is a good school.' It has a number of outstanding features that make pupils' life in school enjoyable, productive and fruitful. Standards are well above average and pupils make good progress. In recent years, however, standards and achievement in writing have lagged behind those in the other subjects. The effectiveness of improvement is shown very clearly in management's identification of this issue and the subsequent work to raise achievement in writing. Boys and girls throughout the school now enjoy experimenting with words to produce expressive and evocative writing. Some examples are of a very high quality and the general standard of writing is improving well. The staff work hard to improve what they offer to their pupils because they are led so effectively by the outstanding headteacher. Constant improvement is a way of life and this affects the pupils who strive to reach their best in both their academic work and their personal development.

There is a creative and often original approach to improvement. This shows up in the vibrant classrooms in all key stages, the richness of the excellent curriculum and activities that are well suited to pupils' needs. Thus, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities now have much more precisely matched targets that reflect the small step-by-step approach necessary for success. These pupils are very well supported. Their specialist provision is organised in the same way as work for the middle and high attainers. There is a real sense that all pupils belong to one community, and they all work hard to support each other and take pride in what others achieve. Behaviour is excellent and pupils have very well formed skills of self-discipline. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is impressive. The school has a sensible priority to extend pupils' understanding of the diversity and appeal of the many cultures in Britain today. It has introduced a number of themed visits and events to do just this.

Teaching and learning are both good, and are improving all the time. Learning is typically practical in nature and is usually stimulating and personally involving for the pupils. They clearly enjoy being together, whether finding out about the world's major rivers, nonsense poems, or to dramatise hunters and the hunted. When asked how their learning could be improved, pupils said that the computer suite is not big enough for whole classes to work together, which they miss. This means it cannot be used effectively for large-scale investigation and research, which reduces the potency of learning at times. School leaders recognise this shortcoming and have long-term plans to increase its size. Despite the concerns about the suite, pupils have appropriate opportunities to develop the expected level of skills in ICT. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are built well and pupils are prepared thoroughly for the next stage of education and future life.

The adults and children enjoy each other's company. Attendance rates are above average because, as some parents said, 'Our children don't want to miss a minute of school.' The pupils are cared for thoroughly. They have an acute understanding of keeping healthy and safe and report that school meals always have a healthy option that they find tasty. There are robust systems to safeguard pupils' needs.

Because staff know the pupils so well they are ready instantly to give exceptionally well judged advice and support to help them achieve well in academic and personal matters. The school has a comprehensive system to track pupils' progress, which is the basis for the very effective help and support provided to enable pupils to reach their next target.

The many successes in school are as a result of the vigilance and high expectations of the headteacher. Parents recognise her commitment and qualities as a leader. Senior staff fulfil their leadership roles effectively. The school is working currently to develop and improve the leadership of subjects, and to give such staff greater influence over the quality of education and pupils' achievement. The excellence of leadership and management is boosted by the acute understanding that governors have of the school's effectiveness. Governors provide the constructive challenge that is required to ensure the school moves forward and is not complacent. School self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate. Because of the strength of leadership and the very positive stimulus it provides for improvement, the quality of education and rate of progress are similar in all classes and the school has an outstanding capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Foundation Stage settle in quickly to school routines, and play and work happily together. They are given good support and guidance and are cared for properly. Children have well developed skills when they start in Reception, and their work is closely matched to their needs. Teaching is good and blends a more formal approach with the necessary encouragement for children to work independently. In a typical lesson, the children have ample opportunities to explore and investigate on their own and to work with an adult to learn the next key skill or knowledge.

The curriculum covers all six areas of learning in good detail. Outside space is small and this can restrict opportunities for the children to enjoy greater freedom in their explorations and discoveries. Children's personal, social and emotional development is good and they achieve well in numeracy, and language and literacy. When children join Year 1 they are well set up for the next step in education and most have reached their targets. The Foundation Stage is well led, which is enabling good improvements to be made to the assessment of children's emerging skills and knowledge.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the accommodation and resources in the computer suite so that pupils have every opportunity to investigate and research together.

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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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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 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	2
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 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?	1

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
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	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

14 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Dassett CE Primary School, Fenny Compton, Southam, CV47 2XU

Thank you for welcoming me so warmly when I visited school recently. I will remember for a long time the way you were so well behaved and polite. You helped me find out a lot about your school. I think The Dassett is a good school and that you enjoy being there. I have written more about your school in my report but the following are the important things I have included.

- You work hard, make good progress and reach well above average standards.
- You are pleasant, friendly and caring, and work enthusiastically together.
- Your lessons are taught well and are made interesting and enjoyable.
- Your work includes some exciting and very useful topics.
- All the staff look after you well and make sure you are safe.
- Children in Reception soon settle to their education and they make good progress.
- Your headteacher leads the school most successfully and all the adults work really well as a team.

When we spoke together you told me that you thought the computer suite should be much bigger so you can work together as a class. You are right, and this is the one key thing that I have suggested should be improved.

I am sure you will continue to do well. Good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Carrington Lead inspector

14 November 2007

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