

The Dingle Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111080
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	325290
Inspection date	3 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Geoff Lawrence

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)	323
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	Mrs Janet Griffiths
Headteacher	Mr Ben Cox
Date of previous school inspection	3 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	The Dingle Haslington Crewe Cheshire CW1 5SD
Telephone number	01270 685700
Fax number	01270 501565

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	3 October 2008
Inspection number	325290

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: 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 one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' standards and achievement; the quality of teaching throughout the school; and the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Evidence was gathered from the school's judgements about attainment on entry, test results, teachers' records, observations of teaching, scrutiny of pupils' current work and discussions with the headteacher, staff, pupils and governors. 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 larger than average size school serves an area of social and economic advantage that includes both private and social housing. Over one third of pupils currently reside outside the catchment area. The percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is well below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The school provides full time EYFS provision for 50 children. A new headteacher was appointed in 2007.

The school holds the Inclusion Quality Mark, Activemark Gold, Information and Communication Technology Mark and the Healthy School Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Pupils receive a good education at this school which is well led and managed. They achieve well and standards are above average. The results of national assessments and tests have been above average in both Year 2 and Year 6 for a number of years and pupils' progress has been consistently good. Provisional results for 2008 show that there was a slight downturn in standards at the end of Year 6, partly because of the different abilities within the year group. These results also showed some weaknesses in pupils' writing, which the school is addressing well by increasing opportunities for all pupils to write at length in different subjects.

Pupils flourish at The Dingle because the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good across the school and teachers help pupils understand how well they are doing and how to improve their work. Teachers have recently started to make good use of assessment information to plan and to set targets for pupils. As a result, pupils' work is usually closely matched to their individual learning needs. These attributes, along with a good curriculum, contribute to the creation of an attractive and stimulating environment so that pupils develop an enthusiasm for learning. Pupils comment on how much they enjoy school, describing their lessons as, 'exciting'. This is echoed by the majority of parents who are highly satisfied with the school and whose comments typically included references to the school such as, 'making learning relevant and fun' and 'where children are encouraged'.

The curriculum is enriched through a good range of visits and visitors to help pupils broaden their education outside the classroom. It also allows pupils to develop their learning across a number of elements of the curriculum. For example, Year 3 and Year 4 classes worked with great enthusiasm writing letters to a fictitious Roman soldier in preparation for their forthcoming history visit to Chester. Information and communication technology is embedded firmly within the curriculum and pupils use it well. The school has made a satisfactory start to the introduction of French, Spanish and German teaching and there is a good programme of personal, social and health education, which plays a crucial part in promoting pupils' good personal development.

The sense of direction, teamwork and commitment to making The Dingle a successful school are apparent. To this end, the school has recently improved the degree to which pupils understand what they are aiming for in lessons and how to achieve the targets they are set. Older pupils now know the National Curriculum levels at which they are working and are also beginning to be more involved in the assessment of their own work. This is contributing to their good achievement and standards. Those younger pupils in the school who are more able have the opportunity to work alongside older pupils, enabling them to undertake more challenging work. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive well-targeted support so that they also achieve well.

Procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place, ensuring that they work and play in a happy, safe and well-ordered environment. Pupils enjoy school very much and their attendance is above average. They behave extremely well in class and around the school. When asked if there was any bullying, their spontaneous response was, 'It is very rare and it always gets sorted out.' Pupils' personal development is good. They have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy diet from an early age. However, this is not always reflected in their choice of break-time snack. Pupils enjoy sport and there is a high rate of participation in the wide range of sporting activities during and beyond the normal school day.

Pupils are rightly proud of, and speak confidently and articulately about, their considerable contribution to the life of the school, secure in the knowledge that their views are valued and that teachers listen to them. Pupils assume responsibilities confidently and eagerly, promoting very good relationships by acting, for example, as play-leaders, prefects and school councillors. Pupils are taught about different cultures, but their knowledge and understanding of these cultures and their impact on people's lives are weaker than other aspects of their personal development. Overall, however, pupils leave the school well prepared for their future.

The new headteacher leads the school very effectively. He ensures that the school has rigorous systems for checking on the school's performance. These enable all staff to have a realistic view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Subsequently, senior and subject leaders are in a secure position to identify areas of the school's work which need improvement and to plan pragmatically for those improvements. At the heart of decision making is a determination to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to achieve as well as they can. Governors are knowledgeable and supportive. They ask pertinent questions which provide them with accurate information about pupils' progress and their performance. The many improvements made since the school's last inspection provide evidence of its effective capacity to improve and to continue to offer good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter Reception with skills and knowledge generally in line with those expected for their age. The high level of care and support provided, coupled with the good provision for children's personal, social and emotional development, enables them to develop positive attitudes. This helps them settle very quickly and become confident learners. Children enjoy coming to school and behave well. By the time they leave Reception, most children achieve well and are secure in the skills and knowledge expected for their age, making especially good gains in their personal and social development. This is evident by the confidence they have to talk and engage with visitors. Their progress is commendable considering the restrictions placed on the staff through lack of space both indoors and out. The new EYFS manager recognises that the lack of a well-developed and resourced outdoor learning area is restricting the opportunities for children to practise and extend their experiences in all areas of their learning. She has radical new ideas to address these shortcomings and has made it a development priority. Teaching and learning are good and responsive to children's needs and interests. However, there is insufficient opportunity in some lessons for children to initiate learning or to follow their interests. Assessment systems are good and adults' observations contribute to the overall picture of children's development and achievement. Partnerships with parents are very strong and many support their children's learning at home.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities to enable pupils to learn about different cultural and religious traditions in the locality and in the wider community.
- Improve the outdoor provision and range of activities in the EYFS so that children have more opportunities to extend their learning.

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.

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?	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?	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?	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?	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	1
The extent to which 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	2
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 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?	2

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?	3
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 The Dingle Primary School, Crewe, CW1 5SD

Thank you for making me welcome during the recent inspection. I really enjoyed talking with you and seeing you work. I was impressed by your excellent behaviour and how friendly you all were. I enjoyed finding out about the things you like in school.

Your pride in the school shone through your comments. You, and most of your parents, are right in thinking you go to a good school. Those responsible for running the school do their job well. Staff care deeply for you and they work very hard, not only to help you learn as much as you can, but also to help you to develop into very mature and confident young people. You told me your teachers are good and they find ways to make learning fun and help you to reach good standards in your work. You are right. You know what a healthy lifestyle is and how to keep yourself and others safe, although I was a bit disappointed to see some of you making unhealthy choices for your snacks.

Within all its good work, there are two things the school could do to help make it even better. I want the school to help you to understand more about different cultures and communities. I have also asked the school to improve the outdoor area for the Reception class and to arrange more outdoor activities for the children in that class.

Thank you once again for helping me. I enjoyed my time with you and your teachers. I hope that you continue to work hard and enjoy school.