

Worcester, Dines Green Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116751
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	326442
Inspection dates	27–28 April 2009
Reporting inspector	Christine Millett

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	201
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	Angie Clay
Headteacher	Stephen Gough
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Tudor Way Worcester WR2 5QH
Telephone number	01905 423228

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	27–28 April 2009
Inspection number	326442

Fax number

01905 749096

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average-sized primary school situated in a residential area on the edge of the city of Worcester. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is provided for children in the Nursery and Reception classes. The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British background. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average and there is a high level of mobility with pupils joining and leaving the school. The school has been awarded the Sports Active Award, Heartbeat Award and Silver Artsmark Award, and achieved Eco Schools Status.

A Children's Centre, which is managed by a private provider, runs on the school site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Dines Green is a good and improving school. One parent summed up the views of many when saying, 'This is a great school. We could not wish for better.' Dines Green, quite rightly, prides itself upon being a fully inclusive school which meets a wide range of needs. Great emphasis is placed upon nurturing and supporting its pupils and their families. At the heart of the school's increasing success is the strong leadership and management, especially that of the headteacher, who provides vision and direction for the school. He is well supported by a hardworking staff and committed governing body. The school's self-evaluation is thorough and paints a largely accurate picture of the school. Many improvements have taken place since the last inspection and the school has good capacity to improve. Children get off to a good start in their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They enter Nursery with skills that are well below those typical of the age group and make good progress. Pupils make good progress through the rest of the school and achieve well, although standards in English, mathematics and science are still below average by the time they leave in Year 6. A number of factors contribute to this, such as high numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and below average attendance. In the past, poor behaviour and pockets of weak teaching have had an adverse effect upon standards, and the school has worked effectively to address these issues. Standards in English have, however, been slower to rise than those in mathematics and science. Teaching is now good overall and lessons are well planned. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to aid learning and maintain pupils' interest. The school provides a good curriculum which, at its best, is beginning to make links between different subjects. Themed events and visits play an important part in enriching pupils' learning. The care, guidance and support given to all pupils are satisfactory. Procedures for safeguarding pupils' welfare meet current government requirements. Academic guidance such as target setting is variable in its effectiveness and the marking of work does not always make next steps in learning evident. Because of the dedication of staff, every pupil feels valued, and pastoral care and support are of high quality. This is a truly inclusive school, with the needs of each pupil being central to new developments such as the very effective Nurture Room. As a result of the emphasis placed on pastoral care, pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. They are very polite, their behaviour is good and they demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. The attendance of most pupils is good but there is a very small proportion of pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern and the school is working very hard to combat this. All pupils have a good understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle and are aware of how to stay safe. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, although pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to develop their understanding of other faiths and cultures. The school generally promotes community cohesion effectively on a local level, and has plans in place to extend this further to establish links with schools overseas. Pupils work together well and make good contributions to the school and wider community. The school prepares its pupils well for the next stages in their education.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Under new leadership, there have been significant changes to provision in Early Years Foundation Stage and the impact of these is already being seen in improving standards. Children make a secure start to school. They behave well and settle quickly. Parents appreciate the support they receive and close contact they have with school. 'Nursery staff have been very welcoming and

my child loves coming to school,' commented one parent. Adults understand children's learning needs and these are increasingly well met. Newly-introduced accurate assessment helps teachers plan well-tailored activities in all six areas of learning both indoors and out. There is a good mix of adult-led and child-initiated learning. The support children receive enables them to make good progress, and the current group of Reception children are nearer to approaching the expected level of skills for their age in all areas except communication, language and literacy. Adults provide good role models and offer challenging support, as was seen in the successful use of 'talk partners' to answer questions about snails. Children work and play happily together and readily participate in activities. Improved communication between staff ensures there is a smooth transition to Key Stage 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards for all pupils, particularly in English.
- Ensure that marking and target setting provide pupils with a clear understanding about how to improve.
- Increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of the diverse range of communities within the United Kingdom and the wider world.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards in the past have been adversely affected by poor behaviour, below average attendance and weaknesses in provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, with the result that pupil attainment has been well below average by the end of Year 2. In Key Stage 2, pupils have consistently made good progress, although standards have still been below average in national tests at the end of Year 6.

The current picture is that whilst children still start Nursery with skills and knowledge well below those expected, they are now making good progress and the current cohort will enter Year 1 almost in line with national expectations. The smooth and effective transfer from Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 has become a priority to ensure that pupils who have not yet reached their early learning goals will have the opportunity to do so before moving on to the full Key Stage 1 curriculum. The Nurture Room has been set up for this purpose. Good teaching and more rigorous tracking is beginning to have an impact on standards in Key Stage 1. The school has worked very hard, and with measurable success, to eradicate the barriers to learning, with the result that behaviour and teaching are now good and attendance is steadily improving. Most recent data indicates that standards are continuing to improve in Key Stage 2, particularly in mathematics and science where the consistently good progress continues.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good overall. Pupils enjoy being at school'; one pupil said, 'we learn new things every day.' Pupils are friendly and polite and show respect both to adults and to each other, participating fully in the school community through an active school council and eco council. The pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. However their cultural development is not as strong as they have limited opportunities to develop their understanding of the diversity of cultures and faiths within the United Kingdom. Pupils' behaviour is good and they are attentive in class. They are appreciative of each other's efforts and collaborate well. They adopt safe practices in lessons. Pupils spoke in detail about what is

necessary to adopt a healthy lifestyle, which is reinforced by the excellent school meals prepared from locally sourced produce. The view of one parent that staff have created a 'welcoming, nurturing environment' was echoed by many. Pupils described how they feel safe and well cared for. Appropriate emphasis on social as well as academic skills, along with mini-enterprise schemes such as the pupil-operated tuck shop prepare pupils well for their future economic well-being. The attendance rate is slightly below average but the school is working hard to improve this, with some success.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching has improved and is now of good quality, enabling pupils to make good progress. Teachers organise activities well and have good subject knowledge that ensures they present their lessons confidently. They have good relationships with pupils, understanding and responding to their needs. Teachers have high expectations and as a result, pupils have good attitudes, enjoy their learning and behave well. Praise is well used to develop confidence and self-esteem. Classrooms are orderly working environments. Teachers use resources such as interactive whiteboards well to make learning more interesting and relevant. The planning of lessons is thorough and work is generally well matched to need but just occasionally, tasks do not offer sufficient challenge. Good opportunities are given for all pupils to discuss their work, particularly in pairs, and this also develops speaking and listening skills. Teaching assistants work well with the teachers and are generally used effectively to support particular groups or individual pupils to enable them to make good progress. Pupils' work is marked regularly, though pupils do not always receive clear instruction as to how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum which focuses extremely well on the all round development of its pupils. It matches pupils' needs well and enables them to make good progress in their learning. In mathematics, older pupils are taught in groups of similar abilities so that they receive work that is more closely tailored to their needs. The school's good curriculum is enriched with a wide range of additional activities which pupils thoroughly enjoy. Good quality specialist teaching in music, dance, drama and sport add to the excitement of learning. Pupils value the opportunities they are given. As one pupil commented, 'we learn about lots of different things that will help us make choices when we are older.' The curriculum is further enhanced through a good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors to the school. Whilst pupils benefit from themed days such as The DT Challenge, other opportunities for making interesting links between subjects are not yet fully developed throughout the whole school. French is taught to all pupils in Years 3 to 6. This is helping to raise pupil awareness of the lives of others. Good use is made of the school's spacious accommodation and there are many examples of pupils' work attractively displayed around the school. The Forest School programme and its facilities are a valuable resource, used effectively to expand pupils' interests and horizons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Dines Green is an inclusive school where individual needs are given a high priority. Pupils are well cared for in a happy learning environment. Systems to safeguard their health, safety and well-being meet current government requirements. Child protection procedures are clear. Adults provide particularly good personal support for pupils. This, along with very good relationships, means that pupils feel safe and secure in school, knowing that they can talk to an adult if they have a problem. The overwhelming majority of parents are very pleased with the care given to their children and the support that the school offers. 'The school is very good with children with problems,' commented one parent. Links with other professionals such as the educational psychologist and learning support service are good and provide valuable support for pupils when required. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, and helps them to make good progress in line with their peers. Academic guidance is satisfactory but not all pupils have a clear understanding of their learning targets or how to reach them. Revised systems for target setting and tracking progress have been put into place but have yet to have a full impact in raising standards.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has worked tirelessly to ensure that all staff, pupils and parents feel fully valued and an integral part of the school. As a result, the school has a clear sense of purpose and a strong team spirit. The deputy headteacher and senior staff provide good support for the headteacher and together they form a well-balanced and cohesive senior leadership team. Many of the barriers to learning have been dealt with extremely effectively, either being removed or reduced. Self-evaluation is largely accurate. It clearly identifies what needs to be done to bring about further improvement, and the school's capacity to improve is good. Teachers with leadership responsibilities are making an effective contribution to school management. They have carried out detailed curriculum reviews which provide a platform for future development. Governors are well informed and have played a full and active part in the school's improvement. The use of targets to drive up standards has been underdeveloped, but the school has been working closely with the local authority to introduce a new system to track pupil progress. Information from this is being used effectively to show rising standards in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils speak very positively about the help they receive and how fairly everyone is treated. Links with parents are strong and the school is committed to playing a leading role within the local community. Provision to promote community cohesion is satisfactory, although the school recognises that it needs to take further steps to develop pupils' awareness of life in a multicultural society.

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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

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	3
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	3
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	3
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	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?	3

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	3
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**

29 April 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Worcester, Dines Green Primary School, Worcester, WR2 5QH

Thank you very much for the warm and friendly welcome you gave us when we came to visit your school recently. We appreciate all the help you gave us. A special thank-you to the pupils who gave up some of their lunchtime to tell me what makes your school so special. We agree with you and think that you attend a good school.

These are the things we liked most about your school.

- Mr Gough and all the adults in your school work hard to make it better.
- Children get off to a good start in Nursery and by the end of Year 6, you have made good progress.
- Teaching is good and your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting.
- Adults look after you very well and make sure you are safe.
- You show a great deal of enjoyment and pay attention in your lessons.
- You are friendly and polite and behave well.
- You show a very good understanding of healthy lifestyles and know how to stay safe.
- You contribute well to the life of the school and local community.
- You are well prepared for the next stage of your learning.

To make your school even better, this is what we would like the school to do now.

- We would like you and your teachers to work together to help you improve the standards of your work, and particularly your literacy skills.
- We would like your teachers to give you more information about your work when it is marked so you know how you can make it even better.
- We would also like your teachers to help you find out more about the lives of people with different cultures and beliefs in other parts of the UK and the world.

Good luck in your studies.

Yours sincerely

Christine Millett

Lead inspector