

Digby the Tedder Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120375
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	327264
Inspection dates	20–21 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Keith Edwards

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	79
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Allan Watt
Headteacher	Angela Douglas
Date of previous school inspection	15–16 May 2006
School address	Trenchard Road Ashby de la Launde LN4 3JY
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by an additional inspector. The inspector visited five lessons, and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, governors and the school's improvement partner. The inspector scrutinised pupils' work, examined the school's tracking and assessment data, attended a morning assembly and looked at the school's policies and documentation, including the school's safeguarding procedures. The inspector also scrutinised 29 parent questionnaires.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. The inspection looked in detail at the following:

- the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the achievement of pupils, particularly in writing, in light of the high incidence of pupil mobility
- the capacity of the school's management structures to support and sustain ongoing improvement.

Information about the school

This small primary school is located on the Digby airbase and a large majority of the children are drawn from forces personnel who live on the base. The remainder are drawn from the local community. Pupil mobility is very high. Very few pupils experience the whole of their primary education at this school. Almost all of the pupils are from White British backgrounds and all have English as their first language. Although attainment on entry varies year-on-year, it is broadly in line with national expectations. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal and the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school that provides good value for money. It has made good progress since the last inspection and is well placed to maintain this momentum. Standards are consistently above average at the end of each key stage because the quality of teaching and learning is good and the school benefits from the caring leadership of the headteacher who successfully nurtures teamwork. One delighted parent, whose views are echoed by many others, commented, 'My daughter has always been happy in school and she has progressed very well educationally, socially, academically and emotionally.' The school has the respect of the community that it serves and works well with other schools and organisations, particularly in developing information and communication technology (ICT) and providing for those children who are just starting school.

A particular strength of the school is the outstanding quality of care that staff show towards the pupils and their families. This, in spite of the significant change in teaching personnel in recent months and the constant fluctuations in the make-up of each class, is a consistent factor that ensures that new pupils settle well. The personal development of pupils is exemplary. Pupils really enjoy coming to school and achieve well. Attendance rates are consistently above average. Staff respect and value the pupils and consequently pupils develop self-confidence, self-esteem and self-discipline; their behaviour is outstanding. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and they respond very well to the many initiatives encouraging them to adopt healthy lifestyles. They work hard and play well together, forming excellent relationships with one another and with adults in school.

Pupils make good progress and reach standards in English, mathematics and science that are above average year-on-year at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The vibrant curriculum captures the pupils' interest and motivates them. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Because they are well supported, those pupils who find learning difficult make good progress. The more academic pupils are challenged to reach their potential because they are encouraged to apply their skills to solve problems. This is particularly evident in mathematics and science where the strong emphasis on scientific enquiry and practical investigations hones pupils' thinking skills. Pupils' performance in writing is now much improved as a result of a major revision to the way that it is taught. Because the pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve, and their attitudes to learning are very positive, pupils'

achievement is good overall. However, although children enjoy their experience in the Early Years Foundation Stage their progress is less pronounced than elsewhere in the school because the quality of teaching lacks rigour. Although most children achieve the goals expected of them by the end of their Reception Year, too few surpass them.

The headteacher provides successfully both ambition for continuing improvement and compassion for the needs of the children and their families. Her dedication is the bedrock of the school's success. Issues from the last inspection have been fully met and the leadership team has successfully refined its assessment to ensure that pupils' progress is monitored assiduously. The priorities detailed in the school improvement plan, based on a clear evaluation of its contribution to the broader community, are entirely appropriate. The quality of governance is good and the governing body has both the skills and strategies to gauge the school's effectiveness and to measure its performance.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that the children's progress is as good as elsewhere in the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils flourish in Key Stage 1 and consistently achieve standards that are above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. As a consequence of their frequent use of computers to support their learning, pupils become accomplished with their keyboard skills and a range of ICT applications. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 2 because they are motivated by the range of the curriculum and the strength of the teaching. Current standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average. Although, in the past, achievement has not been as consistent in writing as it has been in reading, this situation has been remedied. Standards in writing are now improving as a result of whole-school initiatives to encourage the pupils' fluency and confidence in using a broad range of vocabulary. The focus on problem solving in mathematics has been successful in building the pupils' confidence. The accurate use of assessment data when planning work for different groups of pupils ensures they are taught at the appropriate level, and promotes good achievement. In science, pupils benefit from the exciting, investigative approach to learning and a significant majority of pupils achieve the higher levels in national assessment tests.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. They show maturity in their approach to learning and take pride in their work. Pupils eat healthily and behave extremely well. They feel very safe in school and willingly take on additional responsibilities and make a strong contribution to the community. There has been a notable improvement since the last inspection in the school council's role in its contribution towards school policy. Adults in school provide excellent role models and pupils know how to treat each other with respect and are sensitive to the feelings of others. They respond very well to the

many opportunities to collaborate to solve problems and have developed a good understanding of cultural diversity. Pupils sing beautifully and the fabric of the building is enhanced by pupils' quality artwork.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Children's attainment ¹	2
The quality of children's learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	2
How well do children achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
To what extent do children feel safe?	1
How well do children behave?	1
To what extent do children adopt healthy lifestyles?	1
To what extent do children contribute to the school and wider community?	2
Children's attendance ¹	2
How well do children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
What is the extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	1

How effective is the provision?

A common feature in all classes is the warmth of the relationships that ensures excellent standards of behaviour and motivates pupils to do their best. Teachers and classroom assistants work effectively together to provide pupils with good support to develop their independent learning skills. Because the work set is designed to encourage the pupils to think and is closely matched to the range of ability in each class, learning is fun and pupils make good progress. They show evident enjoyment in lessons and report that they appreciate the school's approach to learning through themes. Teachers ensure that the pace of learning is good and provide pupils with good feedback to ensure that they learn from their mistakes. The rigorous application of the school's tracking and assessment procedures has enabled teachers to set work at an appropriate level to challenge groups of different abilities. Consequently, pupils have a good understanding of the next steps they need to take in their learning and are confident in expressing their views and in explaining their learning tasks.

The school places a strong emphasis on making learning exciting, active and imaginative. Pupils appreciate the wide range of curriculum enrichment activities and clubs. They particularly enjoy visits to places of interest and visitors to the school to enhance learning. The well-planned curriculum for pupils' personal and social development is particularly successful. The care, guidance and support of pupils is

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

outstanding. Activities are well matched to learners' capabilities and help them build effectively on what they already know. The curriculum strongly supports the progress of higher attaining pupils whilst meeting the needs of those who find learning difficult.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of teaching	2
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is the driving force in maintaining the school ethos and bringing about improvements. The cornerstone of her work lies in her professional integrity and uncompromising approach to equal opportunities that is evident throughout the school. The headteacher maintains an accurate view of the school and is acutely aware of the relative shortcomings in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the level of support that is required to improve the provision. However, there has been good progress since the last inspection and the school's contribution towards community cohesion is good. Notable successes are team building, curriculum innovation and the further strengthening of relationships with parents and the airbase community. The staff team are growing in confidence in their role as subject leaders and are developing their role in monitoring school effectiveness. The leadership team have accurately identified those few areas that require further refinement and continue to strive for further improvement.

The governing body is fully involved in the school's strategic development and has become more confident in its ability to hold the school to account, particularly in terms of understanding school effectiveness. It fulfils its duties well and makes a good contribution to the work of the school. The school gives high priority to ensuring the safety and welfare of its pupils. Its safeguarding procedures are reviewed and updated on a regular basis to ensure a rigorous adherence to current guidelines.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2

The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, both in their personal and social development and academically. They enjoy their time in class and achieve the outcomes expected nationally in each of the areas of learning. There has been an unsettled period in staffing in the Early Years Foundation Stage since the last inspection and this has restricted the progress made. Nevertheless, staff have created an attractive and welcoming environment that enables children to feel secure and settle quickly into school routines. The outstanding links with home and the local pre-school ensure that the children's progress is tracked carefully. The good ratio of adults to children also ensures that those in most need feel secure because they receive close attention. Children respond well to the school's systematic teaching of letter sounds and this enables them to develop a secure basis for the development of their reading and writing. However, much of the teaching lacks sparkle and does not consistently tackle the next stages of each child's development. For example, the work set in number is sometimes too difficult for the children and this limits their progress. Opportunities to develop the children's skills outdoors are limited by a lack of imagination and too much direction from the teacher. Otherwise, the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory, and, together with the secure environment and sound teaching, ensures that children at the end of Reception are given a sound preparation for the next stage of their education.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents are very pleased with the education provided by the school and say that their children are happy and enjoy lessons. Parents are impressed by the standards of behaviour. They are very pleased with the leadership provided by the headteacher and the overall quality of teaching. However, there is some concern about the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and their children's lack of progress in that class. The inspectors agree that this aspect of the school is an area to develop.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Digby The Tedder Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

The inspector received 29 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 48 families registered at the school.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	9	2	0

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



22 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Digby The Tedder Primary School, Ashby de la Launde,
LN6 4DY

I really enjoyed my visit to your school earlier this month because everybody was so helpful and friendly. I particularly enjoyed my discussions with you and hearing your views. It was also delightful to be able to work with you in your classrooms, take part in your assembly and meet members of the different school committees. I can understand why you are so proud of your school as there are many things that make it special. Here are some of them.

- You have an excellent attitude towards your work and you achieve good standards.
- You clearly enjoy school and you behave very well indeed.
- The school is very mindful of the need to keep you safe and happy.
- Your teachers make a good team and they make sure that learning is fun and exciting.
- The school provides a wide range of activities to keep you interested. It is delightful to see that so many of you are enjoying sport and music.
- Mrs Douglas and the staff are determined to make sure the school gets better and better.

Digby The Tedder is certainly a good school and it is really important that you continue to work hard and make the most of the opportunities the school provides. However, there is one important matter to which the school should attend to help it become even better. We have asked the school to improve the way that the youngest children are taught to ensure they achieve their best.

I would like to wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Keith Edwards
Lead inspector

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