

Dawley Church of England Primary School with Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123544
Local Authority	Telford and Wrekin
Inspection number	327934
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Susan Currie

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	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	243
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	Mike Clark
Headteacher	Sue Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Doseley Road North Dawley Telford TF4 3AL
Telephone number	01952 386280

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2009
Inspection number	327934

Fax number

01952 270505

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Dawley Church of England Primary School with Nursery is a larger than average primary school. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is higher than average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than found nationally. The school has Healthy Schools and Activemark awards. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision comprises of a Nursery and Reception class.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Dawley is an improving school, providing a satisfactory education for its pupils. One parent summed up the views of parents saying, 'The school is positive and supportive; my children have thoroughly enjoyed their time here.' The nurturing atmosphere developed by the caring staff ensures the behaviour of pupils is good and encourages their positive attitudes to learning.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, making good progress because of the good teaching and stimulating activities provided. Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress across the school leading to standards that are broadly average in mathematics, English and science by the end of Year 6. The school has rightly identified writing as a priority for improvement as pupils' attainment is below average in this aspect of English. Past underachievement amongst some pupils has resulted in gaps in their understanding and some more able pupils have not always attained the levels of which they are capable. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and there is now more good teaching, an improvement since the last inspection. However, teaching is not yet consistently good enough across the school to bring about the required accelerated rates of progress. Teachers are now developing pupils' thinking skills and their speaking and listening skills well. Marking has improved and pupils now know what they need to do to improve their work. Occasionally, teachers do not always pitch work at the correct level and this leads to slower progress made by some pupils.

The satisfactory curriculum promotes the creative arts well, but it is only now leading to improved pupil progress rates in English and mathematics. The satisfactory care, guidance and the pastoral support of pupils are effectively ensuring that pupils feel safe and enjoy learning. The school reaches out to parents well and works in partnership with other agencies effectively. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and they have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and how to stay safe. Absence rates are broadly in line with the national averages and the school has sound systems in place to further improve this. The school has good links with the local community and the church. Pupils have a sound preparation for their future working life.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher has good leadership skills and is effectively supported by the governing body. All teachers have a sound understanding of how well their children progress. However, the school's vast amount of assessment data is not always used efficiently to pinpoint clear priorities for improvement. Difficulties in staffing mentioned in the previous report have recently been resolved and there is a more cohesive staff team who are making improvements. Subject leaders have developed their roles further and play a good part in checking how well the school is doing. The school has taken effective steps to improve since the last inspection and the improvements show the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The effective leadership and management ensure the provision is good. Children are looked after well by the caring staff. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities at standards well below those expected for their age. Their speaking and listening skills are particularly weak. Overall, they make good progress, and by the time they enter Year 1,

standards are broadly average in most areas of learning. They make very good progress in personal development because of the well-planned opportunities to work together. Children gain confidence in becoming independent, helping themselves to snacks when needed and getting out equipment and toys. The development of children's speaking and listening skills is good. For example, while enjoying the snow outside, children discuss why tractors and cars find it difficult to move on icy surfaces and described the snow as 'having ice in it' and 'being cold, glittery and white'. The school has rightly identified that there are too few opportunities for outdoor learning to take place and this is an aspect it is striving to improve. Children learn well because teaching is good overall and lessons are interesting, well planned and productive. There are good opportunities for children to work independently or in a small focused group with the teacher. During this time, good, detailed assessments are made by the staff and these are used to enable teachers to understand the next steps the children need to take. There is a good range of stimulating and enjoyable activities that motivate learning. The school works effectively to develop good links with parents. Induction into school is good and parents speak highly of the Nursery and Reception classes, recognising that they give their children a good start to their learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the standards of writing for all pupils and provide more opportunities for extended writing.
- Ensure teaching is consistently good across the school to secure the required accelerated pupil progress whilst ensuring that work is matched to the correct level for the pupils.
- Ensure assessment data are used efficiently to inform school self-evaluation and improvement.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils who underachieved in the past are now catching-up because of new reading materials and the improved teaching of numeracy. However, writing skills are still not as good as they should be. Pupils now make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1 because of the better teaching. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make satisfactory progress, because they often work in small groups and are effectively supported by teaching assistants where activities are well matched to their individual needs. The rate of pupils' progress has improved across Key Stage 2 and they are now achieving satisfactorily. However, the school recognises the need to ensure progress is further accelerated, particularly in writing. There is no difference in the progress rates of boys and girls.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The good progress that pupils make in their personal development reflects well on the school's religious foundation. They are proud of their school and speak warmly of the interesting work they do. Behaviour is good and pupils behave responsibly and safely around school. With very few exceptions they work hard in lessons and cooperate well with others. The number of exclusions is low and attendance is average. Pupils show impressive initiative in fund raising; for instance Year 6 pupils publish a lively and attractive school newspaper every month. The

benefits of healthy eating and exercise are well understood, reflecting the school's recent work towards a national award. Pupils willingly take on duties that involve them in the life of the school and local community. School council members effectively discuss significant developments and sound out the views of other pupils.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

A consistent approach to planning ensures that lessons are clearly focused and fully resourced. The role of teaching assistants is planned well so as to make best use of their skills, and staff teamwork is a strength. However, the lesson focus is not always stated in language that all pupils understand and slower pupils spend too much time copying the focus into their books. Interest is held well through practical activities and the use of stimulating resources, including computer software. Teachers have high expectations for pupils' attentiveness and active involvement, so discussions are usually lively and thoughtful. At times though, these discussions go on too long. This leaves too little time for pupils to work on their own, particularly to write at length or to research information independently. Tasks do not always match the abilities or needs of pupils closely enough. This results in inconsistent progress by some groups, particularly in writing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The stimulating curriculum develops the creative arts well, for example participation in dance festivals and Africa days where links between subjects are helping to make learning more interesting and purposeful. Provision for numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology is satisfactory. However standards in writing skills are not yet high enough and there are too few opportunities to allow pupils to write for extended periods and to complete longer pieces of writing. Speaking and listening are encouraged well through innovative ways such as 'box clever bags' used to structure stories and encourage writing. The school has rightly identified the need to increase the opportunities for pupils, particularly the higher achievers, to apply their investigative and enquiry skills in mathematics and science. The curriculum provides well for pupils' personal, social and health education and makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development. Enrichment of the curriculum is good. Visitors, visits and other activities help capture the interest of pupils such as the visits to an outdoor residential centre. A good range of well attended after-school clubs increases pupils' learning and adds much to their enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Staff know their pupils well and the family atmosphere is a strength of the school. Pupils feel safe, knowing who to turn to if they need help. Incidents of bullying are rare and there are sound procedures for dealing with them. Effective mentoring plays a very valuable role not only in boosting the confidence of pupils with specific needs, but also in leading stimulating initiatives such as working with pupils to build a greenhouse out of recycled materials. Systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress in basic skills are thorough and provide a wealth of information but this is not used effectively enough. There is a good amount of assessment

information but teachers do not always make good use of it to pitch the work at the correct level. Nevertheless, strong teamwork between teachers and assistants ensures that pupils having difficulties in a lesson are quickly spotted and given extra help. Marking has improved and is generally used effectively to identify weaknesses that need improving.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher demonstrates good leadership and a determination to improve the provision. She has a strong commitment to the school, successfully developing new initiatives such as the creative curriculum and use of mind-mapping tools to enable change and improve progress. The local authority and the governing body support her well. The school strives to involve all members of the community in school life. The school has a plethora of information tracking pupils' progress. However, these data are not used efficiently to pinpoint trends and patterns of achievement across the school, to inform the development planning, to know how effective initiatives are, or to ensure the school self-evaluation process is effective. The development plan has too many priorities to lead to effective improvement. Subject leaders are now effectively bringing about change in their areas. Parental satisfaction is high and the school is closely involved in the life of the church and the community ensuring that community cohesion is developed effectively through a mixture of activities to ensure pupils understand diversity, different religions and the wider world.

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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?	3
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	3

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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

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	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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

12 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dawley Church of England Primary School with Nursery, Telford, TF4 3AL

Thank you for welcoming us into your school when we visited recently. We were particularly impressed with how well you behaved in class. You were very friendly and showed good attitudes.

Here are some of the good things we found about the school.

- You enjoy learning, because of the interesting activities teachers prepare for you such as in art, dance and music.
- You feel safe and any bullying is well dealt with and you know who to go to if you have a problem.
- The school council represents your views well and you all help the school to run smoothly.
- You have a good knowledge of how to stay safe and to live healthily.
- You enjoy taking on responsibility such as making the recycled greenhouse and having jobs to do in school.

Your school is giving you a satisfactory education. We have asked the headteacher, governors and staff to improve the school even more by doing the following.

- Help you find more ways to improve your writing and give you chances to write longer pieces of work.
- Make sure the teachers find even better ways to teach you by making more lessons good and helping you make as much progress as possible.
- Find ways to use the information the teachers gather about your learning to help plan what the school can do to help you all improve more.

You can help with this by continuing to enjoy your learning, working hard and trying to meet the targets set for you.

Best wishes

Susan Currie

Lead inspector