

# Dorrington CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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Unique Reference Number	123545
Local Authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	327935
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2009
Reporting inspector	David Carrington

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

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Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	52
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tom Williams
Headteacher	Gill Reynolds
Date of previous school inspection	20 June 2006
School address	Church Road Dorrington Shrewsbury SY5 7JL
Telephone number	01743 718462
Fax number	NA
Email address	thehead@dorrington.shropshire.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited nine lessons, and held meetings with staff and governors. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at the school's data tracking, quality monitoring, improvement planning and other key documents. The outcomes from 17 parent questionnaires were also evaluated.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work, looking in detail at the following:

- the achievement of boys, the more able and pupils who do not complete their whole primary education at the school, especially in mathematics and reading
- the quality of provision in information and communication technology (ICT)
- how well all pupils are safeguarded
- the school's work to promote community cohesion.

## Information about the school

Dorrington CofE Primary School is smaller than most primary schools. Most pupils come from the village and surrounding areas and are largely from White British backgrounds. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. These are mostly for social and emotional reasons.

A privately run Nursery school is sited within the school grounds. This Early Years Foundation Stage setting is inspected separately. Within the school itself, Early Years Foundation Stage education is provided in a mixed-age class that includes Reception children and Year 1 and 2 pupils.

## Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

1

## Main findings

The school provides a good education for children from Dorrington and district. Staff and governors are self-improvers and are led most capably by the ambitious and determined headteacher. This very sure direction has resulted in a number of particular strengths.

- Pupils make good progress regardless of their ability or age, and standards are above average.
- Children in Reception do well. They make good progress and are well prepared for their work in Year 1.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school, alertness to health and safety needs, behaviour and attendance are all outstanding.
- Teaching is good and is based on a good curriculum which is well balanced to enable pupils to succeed in their personal, social and emotional development as much as their basic skills.
- As parents recognise, the quality of care, guidance and support is a strong point of the school and safeguarding procedures are very reliable.
- The school ensures all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed.
- The school has developed very successful partnerships with parents, other schools and the local authority, which enable it to offer good-quality learning across a wide range of subjects.
- The headteacher, staff and governors work as an effective team who pursue improvement with determination and enjoyment.

The school has outstanding capacity to maintain its improvement. This is due to the school making very accurate evaluations of its work and school development planning pinpointing the crucial areas for improvement. Work to make these improvements is successful. Most judgements in this report are good or outstanding, although there is one satisfactory feature. The school's promotion of community cohesion has focused on the pupils' own and local communities. Links with people in other parts of the country and overseas are not as strong as they could be. This is why the promotion of community cohesion is not yet good.

The good assessment system has room for further improvement. While pupils know their targets, and are eager to share them, they have insufficient opportunities to do this in lessons or in response to teachers' marking of their work. The headteacher agrees that this is an area for development.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Give pupils more opportunities to evaluate their own progress towards their targets and to recognise the steps to take to improve their work.

The school makes effective assessments of pupils' standards and tracks their individual achievement clearly. Pupils know the targets they are set in mathematics and English. Marking of work is helpful in identifying what pupils achieve and how they can improve their work. What is not as obvious is the development of a dialogue with pupils where they respond to written and spoken comments about their targets and work. This happens at the start and end of many lessons, but is not an ongoing feature through the whole session. In their books, there are not many responses from the pupils about teachers' ideas. Targets do not have a high enough profile in displays around the school. A sensible deadline for this improvement would be by spring half-term in 2010.

- Develop strong and direct links with schools and/or people in other parts of the country and overseas.

Pupils are involved in many initiatives to help strengthen the community within the school. They are proud of their own and other pupils' successes and work harmoniously together. There are also good opportunities to mix with pupils from other schools locally and to take part in village events, visit nearby attractions and meet visitors to school. Other links are not as evident. Governors have agreed an action plan to develop such links and they see the existing contact with a school in Japan as the bridge to effective improvement. A reasonable deadline for completion of this improvement would be the end of summer term 2010.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Because the size of each age group varies from year to year, it is difficult to pinpoint trends in standards and achievement. However, evidence from across the years suggests the starting level of skills and knowledge in Reception is below average. The current children are an exception that shows the difficulty in arriving at such judgements. They started with secure skills and knowledge and progressed well to above average standards as they prepare to move to Year 1.

Pupils currently in Year 2 started at a lower level of skills and knowledge. Their average standards at present show they too have made good progress. The work in books is of a good standard, it is neatly presented and covers a good range of work in English, mathematics and other subjects. Similarly, the range of work for older pupils is good and they work productively and purposefully. The Year 6 pupils are reaching above average standards. Lesson observations showed they have good skills in ICT as well as English and mathematics. Assessment data indicate that pupils who join or leave the school part way through their primary education achieve well.

Good teaching and learning ensures effective progress is made by all groups of pupils, including the more able. Boys work as effectively as girls do in lessons, although in a few examples they do not ask or answer as many questions. All pupils

are enthusiastic about school and enjoy the variety and richness of the experiences provided. Behaviour is outstanding and attendance is getting better and better. The school has no persistent absentees. A particular strength is pupils' awareness of safety for themselves and others. They show excellent concern for each other's welfare and are widely consulted on how the school can improve their safety and security.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	2
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	1
How well do pupils behave?	1
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	1
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	2
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	1

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching quality is consistently good and improving in all three classes. As the scrutiny of work shows, teaching has outstanding features. Subject knowledge is extremely strong, due to the effective ways the school uses the expertise of other schools and specialist teachers, and effective staff training. The pace of lessons and use of time are particularly effective and lesson planning takes account of the different abilities of pupils. Assessment is accurate and produces reliable data that is used well in the planning of the next steps for the pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils' learning. There is not yet a sufficiently strong dialogue with pupils about their targets and how they can improve.

The curriculum has been strengthened considerably since the previous inspection. ICT is a strong focus, with good and improving resources. Regular use of computers ensures pupils are confident users of new technology and that they have reached above average standards. The school has taken the necessary steps to ensure pupils know the possible hazards of using computers and has established reliable systems to safeguard their access to the internet.

It is the concern of all adults in school to ensure every pupil is able to achieve well.

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

Counselling and guidance is sensitive, sympathetic and trustworthy. The school has a caring ethos and the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural outlook is outstanding. Although the school acknowledges the need to extend pupils' understanding of different cultures, it has a very effective programme to aid their appreciation of art, dance, drama and music. This ensures their cultural development is good.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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?

Parents are very pleased with the work of the school and rightly say it is well led and managed. They contribute well to out-of-school activities and other aspects of school life. They are consulted on key matters and their views are built into school development planning. Partnerships with other schools and agencies are very strong and contribute very effectively to the very secure safeguarding procedures. Governors are particularly effective in judging the quality of the school's work and in making improvements. They are ready to take more responsibility for this by improving their own interpretation of available data and greater opportunities for direct observation of the school at work.

Pupils' awareness of the lives, cultures and beliefs of people who live in other parts of this country and around the world is not complete. This influences their opportunity to benefit fully from contact with people from all walks of life. Within school, however, there are good procedures to ensure equality of opportunity and prevention of discrimination on any grounds.

Resources and staff are used well. The outside space for children in Reception is some distance from the classroom, which makes ease of access difficult. The Forest School is used intensively and effectively to ensure that these young children are able to develop their skills, knowledge and personal needs as the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance requires.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's learning and development is good in Reception. Staff work well together to plan motivating learning, such as the investigation of the 'lost dog' (a toy) during the inspection. This theme was used very successfully to stimulate the children's writing and to give them responsibility for their own learning. At the time of writing this report, the dog's owner had not been traced but the children had not given up their efforts to track him/her down.

The school fully meets the welfare needs of the children. They learn and play happily in the knowledge they are safe, protected and cared for. Planning and assessment are both thorough. The work for children in Reception is sufficiently distinct from that for the older pupils in the class and provides the necessary experiences in all areas of learning. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is led jointly by the headteacher and Key Stage 1 teacher and is good.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Parents have very positive views of the school with few concerns. Parents are particularly pleased with the caring, friendly and welcoming ethos. All said their children enjoyed school. Evidence from the inspection supports parents views that staff care for children's health and safety and the school is well led and managed. A few parents had worries that their children did not make enough progress. The inspector judges that, in fact, pupils make good progress and that the school is alert to those whose achievement falters and takes effective steps to overcome this problem.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dorrington CofE 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 17 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 32 parents and carers registered at the school.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	10	6	0	0

*One parent did not respond to this question.*

## 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.



25 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dorrington CofE Primary School, Shrewsbury, SY5 7JL

Thank you for making my recent visit to your school so memorable. You were all very helpful, polite and extremely well behaved. You were also very eager to share your thoughts about your school. This helped me to make my judgements and write my report. In the report, I have written about many good things at your school.

- You make good progress and reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Children in Reception thoroughly enjoy their work and make good progress too.
- You are well taught and your lessons are fun and interesting.
- Your work in art, dance, drama, ICT and physical education is well planned and you develop good skills and knowledge in these subjects.
- You thoroughly enjoy the excellent range of out-of-school activities.
- You are extremely well cared for and this helps you to develop an excellent understanding of health and safety.
- The staff and governors work very successfully to improve your education.
- Mrs Reynolds leads the school very well and expects everyone to do their best.

I was particularly impressed by how everyone, including all pupils and the adults, wants to be even better in their work. There are two things in particular that your teachers are going to work on to make the school better.

- They are going to make sure you have more chances to talk and write about your targets and how you can make even better progress.
- They will find ways to link with schools in other parts of the country and overseas to help you learn more about other people's lives.

I know you have lots of good ideas to help improve the school. To help your teachers, you can think of ways to find out about how well you are reaching your targets and what you need to do to improve. Share these ideas with your parents, carers and teachers.

Good luck in your studies.

Yours faithfully

David Carrington  
Lead inspector

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