

Dean Oaks Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135245
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	329062
Inspection dates	9–10 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Kevin Johnson

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)	301
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 Helen Marsh
Headteacher	Mrs Janet Ciaputa
Date of previous school inspection	11 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Handforth Road Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 2LX
Telephone number	01625 525908
Fax number	01625 520128

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	9–10 March 2009
Inspection number	329062

© Crown copyright 2009

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 three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average school. It was opened in September 2007 as the result of the amalgamation of former infant and junior schools. The headteacher of the former infant school took up her post as headteacher of Dean Oaks when the school opened. Most pupils are White British. A small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are at an early stage of English language development. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. Similarly, the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about average. The school has the Healthy Schools Award and Activemark.

There is pre-school provision on site for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery). A separate report for this provision is available on the Ofsted website. Most pre-school children transfer to the school's Reception classes. Extensive alterations to the junior building are being carried out to accommodate pupils on a single site in the autumn term 2009.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school, which is led and managed well. Pupils are well cared for. Their personal development is good and they achieve well.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is a positive influence on their good personal development. They greatly enjoy expressing their ideas through art and writing, and are very enthusiastic about the 'special' days in school, for example to explore science. Pupils work well together. Relationships have improved and are now good. Pupils state strongly that there is no racism in school, and that playtime confrontations caused by limited playing space are now rare. They have good awareness of faiths and cultures other than their own and share their different cultural experience with others in school. Attendance is good and pupils arrive punctually. Pupils have a first-rate understanding about eating healthily and strive to keep themselves fit by taking lots of exercise. They are enthusiastic about the range of jobs they do to help the school run smoothly and take their school council and other duties very seriously. Pupils make good headway in developing basic literacy and mathematical skills to help prepare them for the workplace.

Pupils' achievement is good and standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Children get off to a good start in Reception and make good progress to reach most of their early learning goals. Good progress throughout the school continues with most pupils working at or above the levels expected for their age. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because their needs are well met. The small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language make equally good progress because of the extra support which the school provides for them. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Well-planned activities and teachers' good knowledge of pupils' varying abilities means there is good challenge in lessons. Relationships are good and pupils enjoy their learning. The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and interests and to achieve well. It is enriched by the teaching of Spanish and French as well as by a good range of additional activities outside the classroom.

The headteacher leads and manages the school well. She has successfully moulded the teaching and support staff from the former schools into a cohesive team. This has contributed to good improvements in teaching and the use of assessment and has helped to maintain standards and the overall quality of care. Senior leadership roles are clear but some responsibilities of subject leaders are not clearly enough defined, resulting in the lack of accountability and of a longer-term vision for the development of pupils' learning. Nevertheless, senior leaders carry out rigorous checks on pupils' progress and review targets regularly to ensure that all are suitably challenged. They monitor teaching and other aspects of provision and, overall, have accurately evaluated the school's effectiveness. Community cohesion is promoted well and confirms the school's commitment to promote equality and diversity. Governors are very supportive. They are well informed about the school's work and effectively fulfil their role as critical partners in its development. Leaders have already demonstrated their capacity to bring about improvement and have good capacity to further improve the school.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's skills on entering Reception are typical for their age. They make good progress because of good provision and work securely within early learning goals by the time they transfer to Year 1. Children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted well. Consequently, they show high levels of confidence and independence, play amicably alongside one another and behave well. Children make good progress in early reading and writing skills because they learn to link letters and sounds well. This gives them the confidence to tackle reading and writing independently. The impact of this good start is seen in above average standards higher up the school. A good balance is planned between adult-led activities and those children choose for themselves. Activities that adults lead are well focused on new learning and development. However, there is sometimes too little guidance and help for children when they are playing. This results in some children missing out on the support they need to learn essential skills when not being taught directly by an adult. Provision for children's welfare meets requirements. Staff ensure that children feel secure and are cared for well. Good assessment records provide a valuable tool for planning the next steps in children's learning. Links with parents are positive. Reception teachers manage provision effectively, which is apparent through their comprehensive understanding of how activities influence children's progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of subject leaders so that they are more accountable for improving learning in their areas.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From entering Reception at levels expected for their age, pupils make good progress and achieve well by the time they leave the school. In 2008 standards at the end of Year 2 were above average in reading and writing and broadly average in mathematics. Inspection evidence confirms an improvement in mathematics standards in the current year because of the particular emphasis on that subject. Standards in reading and writing have been maintained. Data held by the school indicates that while standards at the end of Year 6 were above average in 2008, fewer pupils than the school expected reached the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics. Increased challenge, especially for the more able pupils has pushed standards up. The school's assessments and inspection evidence show that currently more pupils are achieving at the higher level. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress because of the effective extra support they are given. Their learning is planned well and adults in the school who support them are very sensitive to their particular needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils really enjoy school. Their good, and improving, attendance is an indication of their enthusiasm for lessons. They say that, 'There are always super things to do.' Some parents raised concerns about past behaviour, but pupils themselves say that this is much improved due to better playground arrangements to help cope with new building work. Inspection evidence

supports that view. Pupils behave well. They are well mannered and courteous. Pupils play very well together and relationships are harmonious owing to their very strong understanding of how to keep safe. Pupils have an excellent understanding of what it means to maintain a healthy lifestyle. They are proud of their Healthy Schools status. Sport is high on most pupils' agenda and after-school sports clubs are very well attended. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities. The school council works conscientiously to ensure that everyone has a voice, and road safety and recycling officers make a further valuable contribution to the school community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

There is good teaching throughout the school. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and lessons are planned well. Some lessons seen during the inspection were outstanding. Teachers use a good variety of methods to engage pupils in learning. In some mathematics lessons, for example, teachers encourage pupils to count in Spanish, instead of English. That link across subjects makes learning more meaningful for pupils who feel rewarded by their good sense of achievement. Teachers' expectations are high and all pupils are challenged well, whatever their abilities. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning and are valued members of the teaching team. The pace of learning is generally good, but slackens in some lessons when teachers spend too long on explanations, leaving too little time for activities. Relationships in lessons are very good. Pupils feel secure because they know that teachers value their contributions to lessons. As a result, pupils enjoy their learning, behave well, and are more willing to 'have a go.' Homework is used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum caters well for pupils' needs. Good emphasis is placed on the development of basic skills in literacy, mathematics and science, resulting in good achievement in these subjects. Provision for information and communication technology, as a tool for learning across all subjects, is satisfactory. The curriculum is enriched well by visitors to school and by visits, including residential, which provide good opportunities for learning and personal development. Overall, there is a good selection of after-school clubs for infant and junior pupils. In response to some parents' views, more provision is planned once the new building work is completed and the new site is fully occupied. The school provides an effective programme to deal with pupils' social and emotional growth. They are made aware of the dangers linked to drugs and other substances, and of the importance of secure and reliable relationships.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Most parents agree that their children are well cared for in school. Pupils endorse that view. They say they feel safe and that adult help is there when needed. Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet requirements. The provision of care and support for the most vulnerable pupils is exceptional. Parents comment on the way in which the school does all that it can to give additional support where needed to ensure that those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported to achieve their best. There are robust systems for monitoring pupils' attendance. Clear guidance about conduct and relationships contribute to pupils' good behaviour. Academic

support and guidance is good. Pupils know their targets and teachers' marking is helpful. Some pupils are increasingly involved in assessing their own progress, but the practice is not fully embedded in Key Stage 2. Whole-school systems for checking pupils' progress through the school are good.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and governors have successfully steered the school through the process of amalgamation and set it on a path to improvement. All leaders share the clear vision for the school's future. Senior leaders are ably supported by senior managers who share the important role of monitoring the school's performance and contributing to the accurate evaluation of the school's work. Subject leaders recognise the strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility. Nevertheless, these middle leaders need more clearly defined responsibilities to develop learning in their subjects. The school has raised its sights with regard to future attainment levels and is making good headway towards achieving targets for attendance. Dean Oaks amply demonstrates its commitment to equality of opportunity because inclusion is at the heart of the school's planning. Community cohesion is promoted well. The school understands the diverse needs of its pupils and promotes racial harmony well in the school through the curriculum and special events such as European languages day. It reaches out to the local community well, for example by offering family learning opportunities, and has plans to extend links further with schools in Spain and Africa. Governors know the school well and are fully committed to its success. They manage finances efficiently to ensure that the school provides good value for money.

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	NA
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	1
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	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?	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	3
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?	2
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 Dean Oaks Primary School, Wilmslow, SK9 2LX

Thank you very much for the lovely welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school recently. It was a pleasure to talk to you about your school because you are so polite and well mannered. We were pleased to see that your attendance is good and that you behave well. All of these things are very important so do keep them up.

Dean Oaks is a good school. You achieve well and reach good standards in your work. Your teachers are good too and work hard to make your lessons fun. All of the grown-ups in school take good care of you. Your headteacher works hard to make sure the school runs smoothly and that you continue to enjoy learning. Like you, she is looking forward very much to the day when the building work is finished.

Even though your school is good, your parents, teachers and school governors would like it to be better. To help that to happen I have asked teachers in charge of subjects to use the information they have to plan for the future and check that their plans really work, to make your learning even better.