

# Dial Park Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106043
<b>Local Authority</b>	Stockport
<b>Inspection number</b>	336605
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 November 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Halford

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	243
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs K Southwick
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr James Clark
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 February 2007
<b>School address</b>	Halfmoon Lane Offerton Stockport SK2 5LB
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 4831445
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and personnel from outside agencies working in partnership with the school. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' work, improvement planning, a range of policy documents, national published assessment data and the school's own data. Inspectors also analysed 49 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as a number of questionnaires completed by staff and pupils.

- pupils' attainment in English and mathematics since the last time the school was inspected
- the impact of recent changes in leadership in the school
- how effectively the quality of teaching is promoting improved achievement in the pupils.

## Information about the school

This larger than average primary school serves a mixed area in social and economic terms, including some areas of significant disadvantage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also well above average. There are a small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, very few of whom are at an early stage of learning English, and a small number of pupils are in local authority care. The school is operating in a 'soft' federation, sharing its current site with a nursery school and a special school, each of which operate under separate leadership. The recent changes and relocation of the school, referred to in the last inspection report, are still impacting on the school. Its part-time nursery class is due to close at the end of the current school year. The school is operating under relatively new leadership. In the period of the last 18 months the school has had a new headteacher and deputy headteacher.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

### Main findings

This is a satisfactory and improving school, which cares for its pupils well. It is emerging from a period of instability following its reorganisation and relocation to a new site, new challenges in the needs of the pupils in its care, closely followed by a change in senior leadership. This series of difficulties has had the effect of slowing pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. Recent advances in keeping track of how well pupils are doing are beginning to be effective in raising attainment and speeding up the rate of pupils' learning, but these improvements have yet to impact results at the end of Year 6. Good partnerships within the school and with outside agencies contribute well to the welcoming atmosphere that is evident in the school. Pupils are appreciative of the good care shown to them by staff and say that they feel safe and secure at all times. Comments such as, 'My school is really helpful when I have trouble with my work' and 'It helps us all get along' are typical of many received during the inspection. This aspect of school life is an important factor in promoting pupils' improvement and promoting good behaviour, attitudes and relationships amongst the pupils.

From very low starting points most pupils make satisfactory progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, although their levels of attainment remain below those normally expected for their age. Pupils' attainment in Key Stage 2, however, shows an uneven trend. Nationally published data up to 2008 indicates that pupils attain broadly average standards in English and below average standards in mathematics and science. This reflects satisfactory progress over time. Standards at the end of Year 6 for the 2009 group of pupils show a significant drop in standards in all three core subjects. The school accounts for this because of high levels of pupil mobility, significantly high numbers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and difficulties in tracking pupils' progress accurately during the amalgamation of two schools. Good tracking processes now in place show that through both key stages pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress towards the expected levels of attainment by the time pupils complete Year 6. Good quality support to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities leads to these pupils making good progress in their learning.

Teaching is of good quality overall and there are examples of outstanding teaching. Pupils say that teachers 'make learning fun'. The curriculum is satisfactory. It is planned well giving appropriate importance to developing pupils' skills in information and communication technology (ICT) and placing a high importance to the development of pupils' basic skills. The Early Years Foundation Stage is housed in spacious accommodation with direct access to outside learning, but this is not yet used as well as it might. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not have continuous access to

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this outside facility, nor does the outside provision yet cater fully for all the areas of learning.

The leadership of the school is good. The newly appointed headteacher and deputy headteacher have a clear vision for the future of the school. Supported by an able senior leadership team and with purposeful assistance from the local authority, they have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. The school has a strong and shared drive to promote improvement and at this stage demonstrates a satisfactory capacity for improvement. Currently it provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Raise attainment in pupils' basic skills by improving the quality of teaching to the standard of the best.
- Improve the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by ensuring children have continuous access to outside play which caters for all the areas of learning.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Published data indicates that since the last inspection, pupils' standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 have been broadly average, but standards in science have been below average. Early indications for the 2009 group of Year 6 pupils show a significant dip in all three subjects and the reasons for this can be explained, such as the reorganisation. The school's most recent data, together with evidence collected from classroom observations, shows that standards are improving and a high proportion of pupils are attaining higher standards in class than previously recorded. This was clear, for example, in a mathematics lesson, where older pupils – many of whom did not find learning easy – were involved enthusiastically in measuring accurately the area of the room, supported particularly well by high quality teaching assistants. There is little difference in the achievement of pupils from different backgrounds, but the good quality of the support offered to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities enable them to make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The school is aware that standards in English, mathematics and science need to rise and have steps in place to bring this about.

Many aspects of pupils' personal development are good and promoted well by the good quality of care provided by the school. Where pupils' behaviour is challenging it is supported well and pupils indicate that they feel safe. Behaviour across the school is good. There are good levels of enjoyment and pupils respond well to the adults with whom they interact. Pupils say that the adults help them to do their best work. The learning mentor has a central role in promoting satisfactory attendance and in linking effectively with pupils and their families. Pupils support each other well as seen in a French lesson in Year 1. Pupils act as peer supporters, which ensures that all pupils are

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happy in school and helped to adopt a positive attitude to their lessons. They clearly enjoy taking on areas of responsibility and respond well to it. Pupils know right from wrong and the school takes good opportunities to promote their self-esteem. They have a good understanding of other cultures and generally get on well with each other.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good and is now promoting good learning in many lessons. However, for most pupils, overall progress is satisfactory because there is a legacy of underachievement still to be overcome following the movement of school sites which was undertaken relatively recently. There are examples of outstanding teaching. In the majority of lessons, pupils show good levels of interest and teachers' knowledge is secure. Recent development in assessment procedures informs planning well and leads to lessons which increasingly meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Pupils are becoming increasingly well informed about their progress and how to improve it through the use of informative marking and dialogue with adults. In the best lessons, outstanding teaching results in pupils making good progress and ensures that pupils

<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.

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learn well. A clear focus to learning, thoughtful use of good quality teaching assistance, high quality questioning and sustained pace through the lesson are all features of this high quality teaching. The school needs to build upon these examples to accelerate pupils' overall progress in learning, as this effective teaching has yet to impact fully on pupils' outcomes.

Curriculum provision is currently satisfactory with some good elements. The curriculum provides imaginative opportunities for learning and an appropriate range of experiences which contributes effectively to the good promotion of pupils' personal development and well-being. It is adjusted effectively to meet the needs of a wide range of pupils' needs. Cross-curricular provision is at an early stage of development, and the curriculum is enriched by a varied range of opportunities which are well supported and enjoyed by the pupils. They spoke excitedly about the residential experience undertaken in Year 6. The care, support and personal guidance pupils receive are good. Support staff, including those employed by external agencies working in partnership with the school, make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils know that the adults involved in the work of the school care for them and respond well to this provision. This support enables all pupils, including the most vulnerable, to be fully involved in school life and make positive progress.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher and senior staff have worked well in a relatively short time to create a coherent team approach in which all staff are strongly committed to improvement. The staff questionnaire return indicated that all staff were proud to be part of the school. Good quality improvement planning is presented clearly. Senior staff are beginning to develop the role of middle leaders and staff are responding well to these new developments. Teaching and learning are monitored effectively and there is a good system of marking and assessing pupils' work, which is becoming well-established. Governors are knowledgeable, support the school well and have a good knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. They have a good understanding of data, know what it is saying and how the school is addressing the necessary improvement. Staff and governors take their responsibility for safeguarding the pupils very seriously and are well aware of the processes and procedures which are in place.

The school's provision for the promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory, largely

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due to the current significant variations in pupils' achievement, but its approach to eliminating discrimination is good. The school evaluates its work in community cohesion well, has received an international award and has close links with India, where it has supported a child through her education to a very high level.

The school enjoys good links with parents and carers and there are effective communication links between school and home. That has contributed well to the good quality care and personal development of the pupils on which it is building its improvement. The school works well with outside agencies.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Most children enter the Nursery class, which is open in the afternoon, with skills that are well below typical age-related expectations, particularly in terms of their personal and social development, their communication skills and their calculating skills. Overall, they make satisfactory progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage to progress towards standards which are nearer to those expected by the time they enter Year 1. They experience a balanced blend of lively play and calm listening. There is, rightly, a strong emphasis on speaking and listening and improvement can be seen owing to the engaging teaching children receive.

The accommodation inside the Reception Unit is spacious and provides a wide range of experiences which the children use effectively. They work in groups in which they feel safe and are cared for well. Insufficient use is made of the outside provision, which does



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not always cover fully all the areas of learning expected for this age group of children, nor is access to this outside experience continuous.

Good relationships are promoted by well-known routines. Sound and sometimes good teaching ensures that children make positive progress in their learning. An effective partnership is established with parents, which contributes well to the assessment of children's learning and development. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is well represented on the school's senior leadership team and there are appropriate plans in place for further development.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
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 of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

**Views of parents and carers**

Approximately one-fifth of parents and carers returned the questionnaires distributed prior to the inspection, which represents a relatively low number of responses. Virtually all of the responses returned were entirely positive and expressed views in line with the inspectors' view of the school. Very few questionnaires included comments and almost all of those praised the school for its work.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dial Park Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 243 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	86	6	12	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	39	80	9	18	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	39	80	9	18	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	78	10	20	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	78	10	20	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	71	14	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	71	13	27	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	29	59	18	37	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	73	11	22	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	67	14	29	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	69	14	29	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	39	80	9	18	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	40	82	9	18	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



Dear Pupils

My colleagues and I really enjoyed our recent inspection of your school. Thank you very much for your warm welcome, and for looking after us so well. You were very helpful in lessons when we asked you to explain what you were doing and also very friendly around the school. Particular thanks should go to everyone who spoke with us and who helped us to understand why it is that you enjoy your school so much.

Dial Park Primary School is a satisfactory but improving school, with some interesting work taking place. The staff cares for you all well, make sure you feel safe and secure and we think that the way your headteacher and his staff manage your school is good. I shall remember Year 5 and 6 measuring the area and perimeter of shapes, learning some French with pupils in Key Stage 1 and singing my first Christmas songs for this year in the hall with the juniors.

When we visit schools we also look for things which will help each school to get even better. At the moment, the standards you reach in English, mathematics and science are really not high enough and need to be improved. Also, we think that the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage should have more opportunities to work and play outside. My colleagues and I have asked your headteacher to make those important improvements.

Thank you once again for all your help when we made our visit to you. We send you all our very best wishes for the future. We do hope that you continue to enjoy learning as much as you do at the moment.

Yours sincerely

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