

Cuddington and Dinton C of E School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110452
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	337504
Inspection dates	5–6 May 2010
Reporting inspector	David Wynford Jones

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	136
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christopher Blumer
Headteacher	Matt Tomson
Date of previous school inspection	26 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors visited two assemblies, 17 lessons and observed nine teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the data the school has collected on pupils' attainment and progress, procedures for keeping pupils safe and the school improvement plan. Inspectors analysed 94 questionnaires completed by parents and carers.

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

- opportunities for the more able pupils to develop their reading skills across the curriculum in Key Stage 1
- the effectiveness of the school's systems for monitoring, recording and evaluating pupils' attainment and progress
- the extent to which middle managers and governors are contributing to developments across the school.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average sized primary school serving the villages of Cuddington and Dinton and the surrounding area. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. There are very few from minority ethnic backgrounds. None speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or difficulties and the number with a statement of special educational needs are broadly average.

Since the last inspection, the previously federated separate Cuddington and Dinton schools have been reorganised. The two schools merged in September 2008 as Cuddington and Dinton C of E School. The school is based on two sites which are approximately two and a half miles apart. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and most of Key Stage 1 are based at Cuddington. Key Stage 2 (currently Years 3 and 4) and some Year 2 pupils are at Dinton. The school will ultimately become a full primary school by September 2011.

The headteacher retired at the end of the spring term 2010. The assistant headteacher, who took up post in September 2009, is currently acting headteacher. The governors have recently advertised the post of headteacher.

The school holds the Healthy School accreditation and the sports Activemark and gold Artsmark awards.

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 school. It is calm and well ordered. Its strengths lie in the welcoming and inclusive ethos and its commitment to the local community. The school supports pupils' personal development effectively. Pupils behave well and enjoy school. They have a good understanding of healthy living and how to keep safe. Their attendance is above average. Parents are pleased with and supportive of the school. One wrote, 'The school is a caring and stimulating environment in which the children can develop both academically and socially. We are very happy with the school.' Others echoed this sentiment.

The school is currently going through a difficult time, but nevertheless it has satisfactory capacity for further improvement. Staff are committed to taking the school forward and to see it flourish as a full primary school. The local authority is providing good support to senior and middle leaders. Governors have responded effectively following the very recent retirement of the headteacher. The acting headteacher has a sound action plan which is firmly based on a good understanding of the school's needs. Self-evaluation is honest and accurately identifies the strengths of the school and areas for further improvement. A systematic programme for the rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning is in the process of being established and coordinators' responsibilities reviewed. The role of leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, in driving school improvement are not clear. As a result, there is a lack of rigour in some aspects of management, such as the way that policies are implemented.

The large majority of children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and understanding at the expected level for their age and make satisfactory progress. The attainment of pupils in Year 4 in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly in line with expectations. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory but progress is variable as pupils move through the school. This is because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. There is some, but not enough, consistently good teaching to move pupils' progress from satisfactory to good. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Teachers manage the pupils well and ensure that they are aware of the purpose of each lesson. Many use information and communication technology effectively to enhance their lessons. However, staff do not get sufficient opportunity to share and build on good practice. Assessment information is not always used effectively to plan lessons that routinely challenge all pupils and to set ambitious targets. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. Although there are some examples of clear and informative marking this is not consistent in all classes. As a result, many pupils are unclear about what they need to do to improve their work. The curriculum supports pupils' personal development well but has been less effective

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in accelerating their academic development. Greater emphasis is now being placed on ensuring pupils make links and use their skills across different subjects. This is having a positive effect on their learning. Partnerships with other schools, the church and various agencies are good. These are proving effective in supporting the leadership of the school and enhancing the quality of education for all pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate the rate of pupils' progress by:
 - giving staff more opportunities to share and build on good practice thus ensuring greater consistency in the quality of teaching
 - making more effective use of assessment data to inform lesson planning and to raise expectations
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to work independently
 - making certain that pupils are clear about their next steps in learning.
- Develop the skills of leaders and managers at all levels in evaluating the school's work and in contributing to whole school improvement by:
 - clarifying their respective roles and responsibilities
 - ensuring that senior leaders, middle managers and governors analyse and use assessment information to set challenging targets
 - rigorously evaluating the impact of teaching on learning
 - promoting consistency in the implementation of policies throughout the school.

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

Pupils are confident and readily engage visitors in conversation. They enjoy school and get on well with each other. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong. The pupils' commitment to healthy living and to taking part in sporting activities has contributed to the school being awarded Healthy School status and the sports Activemark awards. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe in daily life and when using the internet. They want to take on responsibility and are keen to help improve the school and to take part in local events. Pupils' understanding of other cultures is developing satisfactorily. Links with a school in Ghana are successfully enabling pupils to compare and contrast ways of living. However, pupils do not have a sufficiently wide understanding of other faiths, values and beliefs found in the United Kingdom. Consequently they are not sufficiently well prepared for living in today's culturally diverse society.

In lessons, pupils are attentive. They enjoy the opportunities to work together in pairs and small groups. Pupils are motivated and respond well to challenge, but some say the work is often too easy and they do not get enough opportunities to follow up their own ideas. In Year 2, pupils' skills in reading are above average and have improved significantly on previous years. More able pupils read with fluency and good

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understanding. Throughout the school the large majority present their work neatly. Their handwriting skills are good. Pupils write for a range of purposes and audiences. Their use of punctuation, vocabulary and sentence construction is generally accurate. However, pupils do not consistently use adventurous vocabulary or apply their knowledge of conjunctions and more advanced punctuation to reach the higher levels. Pupils are developing their mathematical and scientific investigative skills satisfactorily. A practical approach in a Year 4 lesson enabled pupils to develop their understanding of the properties of three-dimensional shapes well. From drawings, they identified and carefully cut out various two-dimensional shapes before joining them together to make a three-dimensional shape. They used terms such as faces, edges, corners and names of the shape accurately. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive satisfactory support. This enables them to make progress similar to their peers. Overall, the progress of boys and girls is broadly similar.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Within an overall satisfactory picture, teaching has a number of good features. In the

¹ 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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better lessons, pupils of all abilities are challenged. These lessons proceed at a quick pace and there is good balance between the teacher’s and the pupils’ contributions. Responses are probed and pupils’ thinking is consolidated and extended. Teachers display good subject knowledge and promote pupils’ use and understanding of subject-specific vocabulary. Clear links are made between pupils’ learning in different subjects. In other lessons, progress is restricted because the work is not matched closely enough to pupils’ different levels of attainment and some are unclear about what is expected of them. As a result, progress is slowed.

Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils’ learning, especially by ensuring that those who need extra support are involved in lessons. However, at times some teaching assistants are not deployed effectively at the start and end of lessons. Assessment strategies to support learning are improving but are still in the early stages of development. Staff do not routinely analyse performance data to identify where pupils are doing well and to pinpoint areas for development. Pupils’ understanding of their targets in literacy and numeracy is inconsistent, as are their skills in evaluating their own learning. Their understanding of their next steps for improvement is variable. All pupils know that they can turn to staff if they have any concerns and they will be listened to. The school works well with a wide range of agencies and local cluster schools to promote pupils’ learning. It welcomes the involvement of parents and carers. Parents respond positively to requests from the school. They support various events and are keen to discuss their children’s progress with staff.

Staff are in the process of reviewing and developing the curriculum to take on board national initiatives and, as the school moves to becoming a full primary, to meet the needs of the older pupils. Half-termly themes have been identified with the aim of consolidating basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills through other work. This initiative is in the early stages but is beginning to have a positive impact in engaging pupils in learning. The award of the gold Artsmark award is reflected in good quality of art work throughout the school. Themed days and weeks present staff with good opportunities to promote learning across all subjects and provide an added stimulus for the pupils. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities. These contribute effectively to promoting the pupils’ personal development. The school monitors attendance closely and is keen to ensure that the above average attendance levels are maintained.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

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How effective are leadership and management?

The governing body is very supportive of the acting headteacher. It has done much to support the merger of the two schools and to improve the learning environment. Governors ensure that the school’s safeguarding and child protection procedures are thorough and implemented consistently. Staff and governors promote equality of opportunity satisfactorily. They welcome all pupils to the school and ensure that all are included. Governors recognise the need to further develop their skills in challenging the school on the outcomes for pupils and further improving their achievement. The acting headteacher has risen well to the challenges of leading and managing the school, undertaking a teaching commitment and preparing for the introduction of a Year 5 class. However, the skills of middle leaders in analysing the performance of the school and in leading developments across the key stages have yet to be developed.

The school’s contribution to promoting community cohesion is satisfactory. The governors, headteacher and staff know the local community well and have done much to involve the school in local activities. Pupils take part in a wide range of local events. However, links with culturally diverse areas within the United Kingdom have yet to be established.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good induction arrangements ensure that children feel safe, settle quickly and develop their self-confidence. Children are developing a good understanding of healthy living and

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follow routines which develop good hygiene practices. They understand, for example, the importance of washing their hands before handling food.

Staff use their secure understanding of how young children learn to plan a suitable range of activities that maintain their interests. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Children’s attainment across the early learning goals is securely in line with expectations. There are strengths in their skills in communication, language and literacy and in problem solving, reasoning and number.

The school has moved forward to develop the curriculum to meet the needs of the children and the enlarged intake. The outdoor area has been improved significantly. It is secure and is being used appropriately as a natural extension of the classroom. Until recently the Early Years Foundation Stage staff have not been fully involved in evaluating the provision and outcomes for children. Although children’s attainment is regularly assessed, the outcomes are not collated. As a result, staff are not able to compare performance against national data or form a clear view of how well the children are achieving.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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

There was a high response rate from parents and carers, the vast majority of whom are entirely supportive of the school’s work. Their positive views are generally confirmed by inspection evidence. A particularly high percentage of parents and carers stated that their children enjoy school and it keeps them safe. A few parent and carers felt that the school did not help them sufficiently to support their child’s learning and the school was not fully meeting their children’s particular needs. Inspectors found that links with parents are good but more could be done to accelerate pupils’ progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cuddington and Dinton C of E 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 94 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 136 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	61	65	32	34	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	63	67	29	31	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	42	45	47	50	5	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	46	44	47	5	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	52	55	40	43	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	48	51	38	40	6	6	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	51	54	40	43	2	2	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)	28	30	48	51	3	3	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	45	43	46	5	5	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	40	48	51	4	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	40	50	53	5	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	45	48	42	45	3	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	57	61	34	36	3	3	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



7 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cuddington and Dinton C of E Primary School, Aylesbury HP18 0AP

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed our visit and talking to you. We were very pleased to hear that you like coming to school and to see that your attendance is above average.

You showed us that you are keen to take responsibility and that you all get on together. You like getting involved in your local community. You have a good understanding of healthy living and enjoy keeping fit. Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. You show respect for each other as you move safely around the school and in the playground.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. Over time you make the progress you should, but inspectors believe you can do better. There is a lot of good work going on in your school, but it is not happening in all classes all the time. We have suggested that your teachers have more time to share their good practice so that all lessons are equally good. We agree with you that your teachers do not always give you clear guidance on how to improve and more opportunities to work independently. We have asked them to do this.

There are lots of changes happening at your school at the moment. The governors are advertising for a new headteacher and there will be more changes as the school grows to include Years 5 and 6. This will mean that teachers with responsibilities for different subjects will have to extend their roles across the school. We have suggested that they need to be clear about what they have to do, for example in checking how you are getting on and ensuring that policies are implemented consistently across the school. This will need to be checked carefully by the headteacher and governors to make certain that you make good progress. We have asked that systems are put into place now.

Please remember, you must also play your part by always trying your best. Good luck for the future and remember to keep working hard.

Yours sincerely

David Wynford-Jones

Lead inspector

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