

Little Dewchurch CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116828
Local Authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	338900
Inspection dates	28–29 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Martyn Groucutt

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	51
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr A Bailey
Headteacher	Mrs S Sumner
Date of previous school inspection	3 January 2007
School address	Little Dewchurch Hereford HR2 6PN
Telephone number	01432 840645
Fax number	01432 840340
Email address	admin@little-dewchurch.hereford.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	28–29 September 2009
Inspection number	338900

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector observed four lessons, one assembly, and held meetings with pupils, staff, governors and a representative of the local authority. He observed the school's work and looked at administrative, policy and other documentation. A total of 34 parental questionnaires were analysed.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at the following:

- Results in English in Key Stage 2, which were much lower than those in mathematics and science in 2009.
- The progress of pupils across both key stages to check whether the most able are being fully challenged.
- The effectiveness of leadership and management in promoting school improvement.
- The extent to which community cohesion is promoted by the school.

Information about the school

Little Dewchurch Church of England Primary School is a small school where virtually all the pupils are White British in origin and none are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Currently no pupils claim free school meals and 14% have special educational needs and/or disabilities: both proportions are below the national average. The school has been awarded the Healthy School and Eco School awards.

At the time of the inspection the headteacher had been absent on sick leave since the summer term. The local authority has appointed an executive headteacher (supported by her leadership team) from another school to support the acting headteacher, who took up her role one day before the start of the inspection.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with Section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Pupils' achievement is inadequate. In particular, in the national tests in the summer of 2009 no pupils in Key Stage 2 reached the nationally expected level in writing.

The provision made for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those who are gifted and talented pupils is unsatisfactory.

The school is not yet able to analyse differences in performance between different groups of pupils throughout the school.

Teachers are enthusiastic and committed practitioners with effective classroom management skills, although the lack of systems to promote and track pupils' progress undermines their overall effectiveness.

Assessment takes too little account of pupils' prior learning, and systems to support improvement are inadequate.

The curriculum is not sufficiently individualised to take into account the specific needs of pupils.

Care, guidance and support are inadequate because there are deficiencies in the arrangements for safeguarding the pupils.

The leadership and management of the school are inadequate and have failed to embed ambition and drive improvement.

Pupils feel safe in school and their behaviour is good. They understand many of the factors that lead to a healthy life and many eat healthy snacks and lunches, and participate in a range of sporting opportunities.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve standards and achievement across the school, and especially in writing in Key Stage 2, by:
 - ensuring that teachers are provided with information on the prior and current attainment of their pupils and use this to speed up pupil's progress
 - developing a whole-school marking policy that consistently enables pupils to be clear about how to improve their work.

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

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that school-wide systems for checking on pupil's progress are in place and used to improve pupils' learning and achievement
 - implementing systems for evaluating the impact of teaching on pupils' learning
 - supporting subject coordinators in developing their expertise in checking on the quality of provision and outcomes in their areas.
- Improve outcomes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the gifted and talented by:
 - matching closely tasks set to these pupils' needs
 - identifying aspirational and measurable targets that provide good challenge
 - ensuring that procedures for identification and tracking of these pupils are implemented effectively
 - involving teachers, parents and pupils in regular reviews of progress and target setting.
- Ensure that safeguarding arrangements are robust and effective by:
 - training all staff in child protection procedures
 - training relevant personnel in procedures to support safe recruitment of staff
 - meeting all responsibilities for health and safety.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Too often pupils are not suitably challenged and hence their progress is inadequate overall. Sometimes, when progress is better, pupils enjoy their learning because the teaching inspires them. In such instances, pupils rise to the expectations of their teachers. However, the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for those identified as being gifted and talented, is inadequate because their needs are not fully taken into account or addressed. Outcomes clearly reflect these weaknesses in provision. In 2009, the overall standards in Year 2 continued to decline. Although pupils joined the school with skills above those expected for their ages, pupils' performance by the end of Year 2 was below the national average in each subject area. In Year 6, attainment is much stronger in mathematics and science than in writing. In 2008 it was above average in mathematics and science but a little below in English. Results in English dropped markedly in 2009. The development of skills that will contribute to pupils' future economic well-being is inadequate, mainly because pupils' attainment in writing is particularly low.

Pupils show a good understanding of issues around personal safety and how to adopt healthy lifestyles. Many take part in sporting activities, benefiting from links with a local specialist college. The school is a focal point for the village and pupils make a good contribution to the wider community, as well as within their school community where the school council plays an active role.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall, but less

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

well developed in the cultural area. In a very good assembly, pupils responded enthusiastically to a presentation about diversity.

Behaviour is good, although sometimes pupils become distracted when they are not fully engaged in lessons. Attendance is broadly average, but there are insufficient systems in place to investigate absences.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

While the teachers often show good classroom management skills, the work set in lessons does not take proper account of pupils' prior learning or understanding because this information is not provided to teachers. Within each class, teachers are aware of the broad ability of pupils through regular marking of their work. The lack of a whole-school assessment policy, however, limits the effectiveness of teachers' marking in helping pupils to improve their work. Neither is there a common understanding of standards or a sharing of good practice. Lesson plans show an effective structure and clear expectations of what pupils will learn, and in each class there is a good working relationship between teacher and classroom assistant. Computer-assisted learning is

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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

effective. Good questioning tests what pupils know and understand; pupils respond well, often having very positive relationships with their teachers. The weaknesses lie primarily in the lack of structures that support staff and enable them to maximise their professional skills. The same is true of the curriculum. The school does not have an effective way of measuring the impact of the curriculum in meeting the needs of individuals, particularly those who should be receiving additional support. The curriculum overall makes insufficient contribution to pupils' learning and development.

Staff endeavour to get to know their pupils and their parents well. They seek to provide a warm learning environment in which pupils feel valued. The overall judgement of 'inadequate' for care, guidance and support reflects the serious concerns about safeguarding in the school, referred to under leadership and management.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	4
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	4

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management are inadequate in several ways. Senior leaders have failed to display a clear vision to drive the school forward. Structures for monitoring and evaluating the progress of pupils throughout the school are not in place. This fact limits the school's capacity to ensure good outcomes for pupils. There are no challenging targets to raise standards and eliminate any low attainment among pupils. Performance data are not used to promote high quality teaching and learning. There is little evidence of consistent classroom observations or procedures for performance management and professional development for staff. No systems are in place for analysing the impact of teaching, or the learning and progress of pupils across different subjects. As a result, serious issues such as the inadequate attainment in writing among the older pupils have not been addressed.

Class teachers do not have a register of gifted and talented pupils and no individual education plans have been reviewed since January 2009. Teachers, parents and pupils had not previously been involved in writing or monitoring these plans.

Satisfactory links exist with external partners, such as local specialist colleges and the support services of the local authority. The school has made a start in promoting community cohesion through its positive links with the local community and in trying to develop links with schools in India, but little has been done to help pupils develop an appreciation of the diverse nature of contemporary British society. Links with parents and carers, particularly at class teacher level, are satisfactory although many parents

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

express concerns about leadership and management. Since the school is not effectively addressing the needs of some of its pupils, it is inadequate in promoting equal opportunities. Similarly, since outcomes for pupils are inadequate the school is not achieving satisfactory value for money.

Procedures for safeguarding pupils are inadequate. Teachers have not been provided with training in child protection procedures and the designated governor has not yet completed the training in safer recruitment of staff. There is only one fully trained child protection officer on the staff, so the presence of such an officer in school cannot be guaranteed. Risk assessments for activities in or out of school, a responsibility undertaken by the headteacher, have not always been completed. Procedures such as regular fire drills have not been undertaken, leaving pupils and staff vulnerable.

The composition of the governing body has changed greatly over the last year, including the election of a new chair of governors. As a virtually new body, governors have received inadequate support in understanding their role and undertaking their statutory responsibilities. Consequently, they have failed to fulfil their statutory duties in several areas, such as in ensuring effective procedures are in place for safeguarding, monitoring the effectiveness of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school. However, the governing body is showing a real commitment to bringing about school improvement and raising standards.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Last year children entered Reception with knowledge, skills and understanding at just above age-related expectations. However, by the end of Reception their level of attainment was lower than expected because provision at this stage was inadequate. The children who started this year have settled quickly and are enjoying being at school. The teacher is seeking to get the correct balance between teacher-initiated and child-chosen activities for a group who are again showing above average ability. As with the other areas of the school, there is a need to develop systems to allow the teacher and classroom assistant, who work together effectively, to monitor progress over the year so that the goals reached reflect children's capabilities and starting points, maximising the progress of which they are capable.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4

Views of parents and carers

Many parents made positive comments about the intimate, friendly atmosphere that pervades the school. They are very supportive of the teachers and support staff and are aware that the school is going through difficult times. A majority of respondents expressed concerns regarding the quality of leadership and management of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Little Dewchurch CofE 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 inspector received 34 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 51 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	65	12	35	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	25	74	9	26	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	38	20	59	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	47	15	44	3	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	62	13	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	47	13	38	3	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	56	13	38	2	6	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)	10	29	21	62	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	38	16	47	4	12	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	26	21	62	3	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	38	16	47	5	15	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	6	18	8	24	17	50	2	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	47	16	47	2	6	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"> ■ 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.



30 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Little Dewchurch CofE Primary School, Hereford, HR2 6PN

I am writing to thank you for the warm welcome that you gave me when I visited your school. It is clear that you get on very well with your teachers and with each other. Your behaviour is good and you know how to be safe and live a healthy lifestyle. A special thank you goes to those of you who gave up some of your lunchtime to talk to me about school - you did a very good job.

It is clear that your teachers and all the other staff care a great deal about you and want you to do well. However, some of you are not reaching the standards of which you are capable and so the school needs 'special measures' - which means that the school will be helped to do better and inspectors will come in from time to time to make sure that things are improving. I have asked the school to do some things that will help all pupils to achieve their best. The school should:

- make sure that teachers know exactly how much you have achieved and improved as the year goes on and as you go through the school
- raise standards throughout the school, especially where they are weakest at the moment, such as in the quality of writing in Key Stage 2
- set clear goals for those of you who need some extra help, give you that help, and let you and your parents know how well you are progressing
- ensure that the teachers in charge of each subject receive help and support so that they can do a really good job
- make sure that all your teachers, helpers and governors do everything necessary to keep you safe, such as helping you to know what to do if there is a fire, or when you go on a trip.

I hope that you continue to enjoy school and will play a full part in helping the school to improve, such as through the school council.

Yours sincerely

Martyn Groucutt

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.