

Ducklington C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123107
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	340282
Inspection dates	29–30 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Alison Grainger

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Godwin
Headteacher	Mrs Julia Hamper
Date of previous school inspection	6 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, pupils and representatives of the local authority. They also spoke informally with parents. They observed the school's work and scrutinised pupils' books. Documentation was considered, including the school's evaluation of its work, the information provided for parents and some of the records kept on pupils. Account was taken of the 64 questionnaires completed by parents, many of which included additional comments.

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

- how well the school meets the needs of all its pupils, especially in mathematics and writing
- the quality of the start given to children in the Reception Year
- the extent to which leaders and managers know the school's effectiveness and take well-targeted action for improvement.

Information about the school

The school draws its pupils not only from the village of Ducklington but also from further afield. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.

During the summer the headteacher took leave and returned to the school in September. Another senior member of staff was also away from school for a significant period during the last school year. Although no new teachers joined in September, most have changed the year group that they teach.

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.

The school's overall effectiveness is inadequate because it does not ensure that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable. As a result of weaknesses in teaching and the curriculum, there is significant underachievement of different groups of pupils, particularly in mathematics and writing. Teaching and the curriculum are not well enough matched to all pupils' needs. Frequently, teaching is pitched at the same level for all the pupils in the class. In sessions in which pupils work in groups, there is often too little variation in the tasks set for groups of differing ability. Insufficient use is made of teaching assistants to support learning. All in all, there are many missed opportunities to move learning forward and expectations of the standards all pupils are capable of attaining are too low.

As well as there being too little use of ongoing assessment to respond to pupils' needs during lessons, there is also inconsistent feedback given to pupils about what they are doing well and how they can improve their performance. This lack of clear guidance for pupils prevents them from taking more responsibility for their learning. The curriculum does not ensure pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are built systematically throughout each year and from one year to the next. Not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their key skills, such as in mathematics and writing across other subjects.

Arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not meet statutory requirements. Child protection training for staff and governors is currently out of date. Even though training is planned to take place shortly, this current situation is unsatisfactory.

Despite the significant weaknesses in the school, pupils enjoy being there. They feel safe and are sure that there is an adult to whom they can turn should the need arise. Pupils made this point clearly in their responses to the inspection questionnaire. As one pupil commented, reflecting the views of the vast majority, 'School is fun and the teachers are very respectful and really nice.' Parents endorse this view. They observe, for example, that 'Ducklington is a very warm and friendly school'. Although some parents have concerns about aspects of the school's work and communicated these in their written comments to inspectors, almost all parents are pleased that their children are happy at school. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and there are

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many strengths in the pastoral care of pupils. Because pupils enjoy being at school, the attendance rate is above average. They respond well to the school's promotion of healthy lifestyles, enjoying regular exercise and the sporting activities provided. They are considerate towards others and make a satisfactory contribution to the school and wider community.

The headteacher and other key staff recognise that the school has not ensured all pupils make the progress that they should. However, senior leaders and governors have not identified the extent of the weaknesses in provision. As a result, although some action is being taken for improvement, it is not enough and is not proving effective in improving the quality of teaching and learning or achievement in writing and mathematics. The leadership of subjects and aspects of the school's work by senior and middle managers is ineffective. Improvement since the last inspection is inadequate and the school's effectiveness has declined. The school is not demonstrating that it has the necessary capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure the statutory requirements for safeguarding are met by December 2009.
- Ensure teaching meets all pupils' needs so that their progress is accelerated and their achievement raised, particularly in mathematics and writing, by:
 - basing teaching on ongoing assessment and high expectations of the standards all pupils are capable of attaining
 - deploying teaching assistants effectively to support learning
 - giving all pupils clear feedback and guidance to help them to take more responsibility for their learning.
- Ensure that the curriculum promotes effective progress by:
 - providing work that securely builds pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in each subject and area of learning
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to use and develop their key skills, particularly in writing mathematics, across different subjects.
- Drive improvement and embed ambition by:
 - rigorously evaluating the impact of provision, particularly teaching and the use of assessment, on pupils' progress and taking swift action for improvement
 - ensuring that all staff with responsibilities for subjects or aspects of the school's work lead their areas competently and effectively.

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

Although attainment at the end of Year 6 has been broadly average in recent years, in 2009 there was a decline in standards in mathematics and writing. Only just over a half of pupils attained the level expected for their age or above in writing, and not many more did so in mathematics. The school's tracking of pupils' progress shows that a high

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proportion of last year's Year 6 made significantly less progress than expected in mathematics and writing. This contrasts with stronger attainment and progress in reading and science.

Evidence from lessons and scrutiny of pupils' recorded work for the start of this school year shows that learning and progress are inadequate throughout the school. The most significant decline in progress occurs during the pupils' journey from the start of Year 3 to the end of Year 6. Inspectors judged learning and progress to be often unsatisfactory not only for pupils of average and above-average ability, but also on occasions for lower-ability pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Pupils enjoy school and gain a secure awareness of the needs of others, for example through raising funds for charities and involvement with older people in the local community. As one parent commented, 'Pupils are kind and considerate to one another.' They are friendly and polite. Even though pupils develop many positive personal qualities, weaknesses in skills in writing and mathematics result in many being insufficiently well prepared for their future lives.

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	3
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	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
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	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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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How effective is the provision?

Teaching and the curriculum are insufficiently challenging for pupils and are not securely based on an assessment of their differing learning needs. Much of the current work across the school on the theme of 'Around the World in 80 Days' is set at a low level and is undemanding for many pupils. There were also times in lessons when lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities were given work that it too difficult. As a consequence the work planned did not fully meet the needs of many pupils.

There are few opportunities for pupils to research and investigate. Pupils follow instructions in lessons and settle to the tasks set, but they are not helped to develop real initiative and independence as learners. There are examples of marking that moves learning on, such as in writing in Year 3, but much of the marking is not developmental. As at the last inspection, marking and target-setting are not used well enough to improve pupils' achievement.

Satisfactory personal support is provided for the most vulnerable pupils. The school works appropriately with external agencies to help these pupils. A calm and friendly atmosphere is evident in lessons and throughout the school. Pupils appreciate the play equipment available to them at break times and value the clubs and extra activities such as the Year 6 residential visit to Devon. There are good aspects to the enrichment of the curriculum that support pupils' personal development and contribute to their well-being. Safeguarding arrangements are not met. The school has only recently started to contact parents on the first day of a child's unexplained absence. There is no system in place to ensure that these calls and their outcome are logged or to show that follow-up action is taken when necessary.

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?

The headteacher made accurate judgements on teaching when observing lessons jointly with an inspector. She recognises that the school needs to improve and is active in supporting individual teachers to develop their performance. The school has known for some time that pupils' progress from the start of Year 3 to the end of Year 6 has been too slow in mathematics and writing. However leaders and managers have not

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established why this is or identified the extent of weaknesses in teaching and the curriculum.

There is a lack of rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance, not only at a senior level but also by teachers responsible for subjects and aspects of the school's work. Mathematics provision, for example, has not been monitored for 18 months. There has also been inadequate management of any changes, such as the change in staffing of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision. Because the school has not identified and tackled the weaknesses that cause pupils' underachievement, it is not improving their outcomes and promoting equal opportunities. There is, however, satisfactory promotion of community cohesion. This is seen in pupils' respect for those from backgrounds different from their own and their involvement in the local community.

Governors are supportive of the school and a wide range of skills and expertise can be found among governors. However, the governing body has not ensured that statutory requirements are met for safeguarding pupils. Neither has it asked searching and challenging questions about the school's performance.

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

The school's data shows that in previous years pupils have made good progress in Reception, transferring to Year 1 with attainment that is above average. Currently, however, the provision and resulting outcomes for pupils are inadequate. The same strengths and weaknesses in provision that are found in the later years are evident in

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Reception.

Effective pastoral care and support in a welcoming environment help children to settle into school well. However, the assessment of children's learning needs is not secure enough, resulting in teaching and activities that are not matched to their differing needs. Expectations of what children are capable of doing are too low. There is imbalance in the range of activities that are adult-led and those that children select for themselves. Because there is too much focus on adults leading activities, children do not develop the independence of which they are capable.

The school has not taken the action necessary to ensure that staff new to Reception are supported and that children get off to a rapid start. As a result, the school's leadership and management of its Early Years Foundation Stage are inadequate.

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

Taking account of parents' written comments as well as their responses to the statements on the questionnaire, it is clear that most parents are pleased with the school. Inspectors agree with parents that their children are happy at school and that they are generally well looked after. Inspectors found that while the school does much that helps to ensure pupils' safety, it does not do all that is should.

Some parents, particularly those with children in specific year groups within Years 3 to 6, have concerns about how well the school ensures that their children make progress. Inspectors have found that the school does not support all pupils in making the progress of which they are capable and that there is underachievement, which becomes most evident by the end of Year 6.

A number of parents expressed concerns about the quality of information they receive on their children's progress and the curriculum. As a result, inspectors scrutinised a sample of pupils' annual reports and the information provided on the curriculum. Inspectors agree that parents could be provided with more information on the curriculum and on how to support their children's learning. The quality of reports to parents is inconsistent. Some are good but others provide too little information on progress and attainment.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ducklington 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 64 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection, some responding to some questions for more than one child. In total, there are 195 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	77	15	23	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	47	73	16	25	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	15	23	43	67	5	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	31	39	61	4	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	36	56	22	34	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	42	31	48	5	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	59	23	36	2	3	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)	23	36	35	55	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	42	29	45	5	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	40	29	45	4	6	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	31	32	50	4	5	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	33	52	29	45	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	55	26	41	2	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 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 pupils' 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.



1 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ducklington C of E Primary School, Witney, OX29 7US

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. You are polite and welcoming young people. You told us that you like school and that your school is a friendly and pleasant place. You also told us that the adults in school are nice and that you are sure that you have someone to turn to when you need help. Your attendance is good. We saw that you adopt healthy lifestyles and enjoy exercise.

We found that there are some important things that the school needs to do to improve. This is because it is not making sure that you all do as well as you can, particularly in mathematics and writing. So, we have asked the adults to make sure that teaching and what you are asked to learn take more account of your different learning needs. We have said that you should be given more helpful feedback on how well you are doing and on what you could do better. This would help you to take responsibility for your learning, as we are sure that you are capable of doing. At the moment some of you are given this sort of advice when your work is marked, but many of you are not.

You told us that you feel safe in school. We have asked the school to make some changes to ensure this always the case.. It was good to hear about the Year 6 visit to Devon. You also told us that you enjoy the extra activities such as the clubs.

So that your school improves at a steady pace, we have asked the adults to do more checking-up on how well they are supporting your learning. You can help by telling your teacher if your work is too easy or too difficult. To help your school, other inspectors will visit to see how it is getting on.

Thank you once again for your help.

Yours sincerely

Alison Grainger

Lead inspector

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