

Dilhorne Endowed (A) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124336
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	340545
Inspection dates	1–2 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Lois Furness

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	36
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kay Hulse
Headteacher	Louise Pickard
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited nine lessons or parts of lessons, and held meetings with the chair of governors, staff, groups of pupils, parents, local authority representatives and the school improvement partner. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at teachers' planning, pupils' books, the school improvement plan, monitoring and evaluation records, assessment records, individual education plans, minutes of meetings, safeguarding information and the termly reports of the school improvement partner. The responses from the pupil and staff questionnaires were analysed, as were the responses from the 14 parents' and carers' questionnaires received during the inspection.

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

- The learning and progress of boys, more able pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/ or disabilities to determine if assessment information is used effectively to plan their work.
- How pupils are involved in knowing how to improve their learning.
- How effectively the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are met in the mixed-year group class.
- The extent to which the curriculum meets all pupils' needs and whether pupils find it enjoyable.
- The effectiveness of governors in ensuring that weaknesses are tackled and statutory responsibilities are met, especially with regard to safeguarding and community cohesion.

Information about the school

In this very small village school, almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Pupils are taught in two mixed-year group classes. These are Class 1: the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception), Year 1 and 2; and Class 2: Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. More boys than girls attend the school. Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes in both headship and staffing. The local authority has been working closely with the school over the past year and the new headteacher took up post approximately four weeks before the inspection. The school has gained a number of awards, which include Activemark and the Financial Management Standard in Schools Status (FMSiS).

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.

Overall effectiveness is inadequate and there has been too little progress in tackling the key areas for improvement identified in the last inspection. Weaknesses remain: lessons do not consistently challenge all pupils and there has been insufficient improvement in the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Despite extensive support from the local authority, the quality of teaching is not good enough. The advice given is not always acted upon and weaknesses in teaching still remain. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection varied from inadequate to satisfactory.

Although weaknesses in pupils' progress are known, governors have not sufficiently held the school to account. They have accepted the reasons why standards by Year 6 are steadily declining without exploring if these reasons are justified. School leaders have not implemented rigorous enough procedures to set targets and to measure the progress made by pupils over time. Consequently, the learning and progress of different groups of pupils, including the more able and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is too slow and achievement is inadequate. This is because teachers do not use assessment information consistently to plan activities that meet the needs of all pupils. Staff are not held accountable for the progress of their pupils. The school improvement plan identifies the right priorities, but the evaluation of the impact of actions taken is weak. This is illustrated by the inadequate provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, despite it receiving extensive support. The new headteacher has very swiftly gained a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses, but there has been insufficient time for her to make a difference to pupils' learning. The inadequate track record of improvement over time means that the capacity to improve is inadequate.

Pupils say they like school. They are polite and welcoming and are happy to speak to visitors. A particular strength is the extent to which pupils feel safe. Those pupils spoken to during the inspection unanimously said that they feel safe and that there is no bullying in school. 'We are like one big happy family here, and all help each other', said one pupil. Pupils are confident that adults will help them if they have a concern. However, although pupils say they enjoy school, lesson observations show that too often they are not fully engaged in their learning. The curriculum lacks excitement and teachers do not use a range of strategies and resources, such as information and communication technology, to capture pupils' interests. Boys, in particular, lack

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motivation at times, and assessment information shows that in most year groups, boys are not performing as highly as girls. Teachers do not expect enough of pupils. At times, poorly presented and insufficient written work is accepted too readily. Published schemes are used for most subjects and long-term plans show the topics covered. However, these plans do not show clearly how pupils' knowledge and skills will develop each year. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported satisfactorily through the school's work on promoting personal, social and emotional development. However, pupils are insufficiently aware of the different ethnic, faith and socio-economic groups that exist in the local, national and worldwide contexts. Governors do not ensure that the statutory requirements regarding promoting community cohesion are met.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress and improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that the good advice teachers receive through monitoring by the local authority is consistently put into practice
 - using assessment information precisely to plan activities that will match the range of ability within the class
 - using strategies to ensure all pupils take an active role in all parts of lessons
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to do, including the way they present their written work and the amount they produce.
- Improve the quality of the curriculum by:
 - producing a whole-school curriculum which ensures pupils develop skills and knowledge systematically across different subjects and over time
 - using different resources, including information and communication technology, to engage all pupils' interest, especially that of boys.
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - meeting fully the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework
 - using assessment information to plan meaningful indoor and outdoor learning experiences
 - developing a strategic plan for improving resources, especially for the outdoor environment.
- Strengthen the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring tracking and target-setting systems contain accurate information about what pupils know and can do
 - regularly reviewing pupils' progress to hold staff to account for the progress of their pupils
 - ensuring that statutory requirements regarding community cohesion are met
 - ensuring that governors acquire the knowledge and skills they need to equip

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them to support and challenge the work of the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Although broadly average, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 has been declining over the past three years. Unvalidated results for 2009 show that attainment declined even further. Achievement is inadequate. Information about pupils' progress shows that, in 2009, most Year 6 pupils did not make the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics. Throughout the school, inspection evidence shows that too many pupils are underachieving, and are not making the progress they should. Pupils have learnt to be too passive and accept work that does not challenge them. At times, more able pupils are left to work alone, as was seen in mathematics when more able Year 6 pupils worked through a published scheme. This meant that these pupils were not progressing as fast as they should. When asked if this was typical, one pupil said 'We work alone unless we get stuck, then the teacher helps us'. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive satisfactory support from teaching assistants during independent work. However, as the work given to them is often not matched well enough to their needs, they also do not learn as effectively as they should. Pupils have a good understanding of how to cope with unsafe situations, for example the dangers of the internet and of speaking to strangers. The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is good, but there is a small minority of younger pupils who behave inappropriately when they lose interest in their learning. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle although, as yet, they do not take responsibility for this aspect of their development. Acquisition of the Activemark confirms the schools' commitment to this aspect of pupils' physical development. Pupils want to help others in school and in the local community. They are enthusiastic about the school council, and proudly remark how the council helped to make the community safer by reducing the number of cars speeding through the village. Attendance is broadly average. Despite pupils' satisfactory personal development, their inadequate progress in the acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy skills, means they are inadequately prepared for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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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	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is not good enough to enable all pupils to make the progress they should. Assessment information is not used routinely to plan activities that meet the needs of different groups of pupils, particularly the more able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Lessons are too often dominated by teacher talk with few opportunities for pupils to share and record their ideas or to take responsibility for their learning. Despite intensive support from the local authority, good advice is not consistently followed. For example, the local authority consultants, and the new headteacher, identified that teaching assistants must be deployed more effectively during all parts of the lesson. Despite this, during introductions and ends of lessons, teaching assistants were observers, doing little to support pupils' learning.

Pupils are becoming more involved in knowing how to improve their work and teachers consistently share the intended learning of the lesson with them. The scrutiny of work in books shows that marking has improved over recent months, providing pupils with information about progress towards the intended learning outcomes. However, this is not consistent, and in the mathematics books of the younger pupils, work was not marked, and incorrect answers ignored. Better marking is evident in the books of pupils in Years 3 to 6.

The curriculum is unexciting and does not meet the range of pupils' needs. Resources such as information and communication technology are not used to stimulate and enthuse pupils. Too often during lesson observations, pupils were passive learners and boys, in particular, lost interest during overly long teacher introductions. Pupils do not consistently take a pride in the presentation of their work. Extra-curricular activities are

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starting to improve as the new headteacher has introduced a number of after-school clubs including drama, art and gardening. Pupils say they really appreciate these new opportunities, the take-up rate is good, and they think their new headteacher is 'great'. Staff are caring towards pupils and relationships are satisfactory. Pupils who are vulnerable are supported well. During the inspection, the parent of one such pupil took the time to say how helpful the school has been to ensure her child is included in all activities.

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	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher has made a good start and has quickly gained the respect and support of staff, governors and pupils. Her vision for school improvement is clear and determined. Already, she has influenced provision through the recently introduced breakfast club, resulting in pupils who were sometimes late for school, now being punctual and ready to start learning. She has also increased pupils' enjoyment through the introduction of a variety of after-school activities. Her own evaluation of provision is realistic and she is fully aware of what needs to be done to raise pupils' achievement. Existing monitoring and evaluation systems are weak and have too little impact on pupils' outcomes over time. For example, the tracking system does not provide accurate information about pupils' prior attainment. Target-setting is not used well enough to ensure that all pupils make at least satisfactory progress. The actions agreed as a result of monitoring and local authority support have not become embedded in teachers' practice. Holding staff to account for pupils' progress is not firmly established and value for money is inadequate. The school ensures that all pupils are treated fairly and with respect, but information about different groups of pupils is not analysed well enough to influence decisions about how to promote pupils' academic development. Governors have not had a full grasp of pupils' declining attainment and their lack of progress over time. Procedures to find out information for themselves is underdeveloped. Financial management is secure.

The school is harmonious, and pupils have opportunities to work with those from other schools in the local small schools' cluster. However, as yet, the school has not identified what it needs to do to promote community cohesion. There is no action plan or evaluation strategy in place. Safeguarding procedures are satisfactory and at the time of the inspection all safeguarding documents met government requirements.

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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	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	4
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills broadly matching those expected for their age, although this can vary considerably year on year with such small cohorts. Children quickly settle into daily routines and, as was seen during the inspection, are happy, well-behaved and enjoy the company of others. Their personal development is satisfactory and this provides a sound basis for the future. However, planning is not specific enough to ensure that the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are met in this class, where three age-groups of pupils learn together. Planning does not ensure there is an appropriate balance between teacher-led activities and tasks chosen by the child, in both the indoor and outdoor environments. The outdoor environment is poor, and the resources available do not promote effective learning in all the six areas of learning. Although by the time children enter Year 1, most have attained the knowledge and skills expected for their age, the lack of quality provision and insufficient use of assessment means that achievement is inadequate. Past information shows that boys do not progress as well as girls in almost all areas of learning. Leadership and management of this key stage are inadequate due to a lack of understanding of the needs of children in this key stage.

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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

The vast majority of parents have positive views about the school and several commented favourably about the new headteacher. Typical of these comments were, 'In a short time our new head has made our school a happy, warm and lovely learning environment', and 'I feel the new headteacher is making a brilliant start to leading the school and has time to speak to parents and takes notes of their suggestions'. Parents and pupils who responded to the questionnaire think the school keeps pupils safe. One parent did raise a concern which was investigated, but no evidence was found to support this concern. Some parents expressed concerns about how well their child is prepared for their next class. Inspection findings support this view.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Dilhorne Endowed (A) 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 14 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 36 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	10	71	2	29	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	10	71	4	29	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	7	50	5	36	1	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	57	4	29	1	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	7	50	5	36	1	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	7	50	5	36	2	14	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	5	36	8	57	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)	6	43	4	29	3	21	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	9	64	4	29	1	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	6	43	5	36	2	14	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	7	50	5	36	2	14	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	8	57	4	29	1	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	79	2	14	1	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">■ 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.



5 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dilhorne Endowed (A) Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST10 2PF

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I am very grateful to those of you who told me about the work you do. I thought you were very polite and helpful, and your parents and carers should be very proud of you. I was pleased to know you feel safe in school, and adults will always help you. I also liked the way you help each other, making sure everyone can take part in all activities. I particularly liked your enthusiastic singing, and I thought the rap you sang in assembly was brilliant. I do hope you manage to raise the money for the trim-trail, so you have lots more to do at playtimes.

Although I think your new headteacher has done lots of good things since she started, such as setting up the breakfast club and the after-school clubs, she has not had the time to make improvements in some important areas. I found out that too many of you are not making enough progress in your learning, and so I have placed the school in 'special measures'. This means your school will get lots of help to make it much better, and other inspectors will visit in the future to check that things are improving.

To help with this I have asked school leaders to:

- make sure teachers set you work that makes all of you think as hard as you can
- plan an exciting curriculum where resources such as information and communication technology are used to keep everyone interested
- give those of you in the Early Years Foundation Stage good opportunities to learn both indoors and outdoors
- support everyone to do their best and check regularly that your progress is improving
- give all of you have more opportunities to work with communities that have pupils from other faiths, cultures and ethnic backgrounds.

You now need to help your headteacher and teachers as they try to make your school a better place to be. You can do this by attending regularly, working hard and always trying to do your best.

Yours sincerely

Lois Furness

Lead inspector

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