



# Ham Dingle Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 103808  
**Local Authority** Dudley  
**Inspection number** 286771  
**Inspection dates** 29–30 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Rajinder Harrison

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Old Ham Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community		Pedmore
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Stourbridge DY9 0UN
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 818965
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	336	<b>Fax number</b>	01384 818966
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	M Small
		<b>Headteacher</b>	P Harrington
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 January 2002		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

The school, located on the outskirts of the Dudley, is larger than average and is regularly oversubscribed. Although the school has a small number of pupils from other ethnic heritages, most are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to receive free school meals is very low. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average.

The school was designated an Extended School from September 2006.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school with outstanding features. Good teaching results in pupils achieving well and reaching standards that are well above average. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are particularly well supported and also achieve well. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and most exceed the expected levels by the end of the Reception year.

High commitment to do the best for every child underpins the teamwork that permeates across the whole school community. Everyone's contribution is valued and parents are extremely positive about the school and appreciate the warm and welcoming atmosphere in which their children grow and thrive. Pupils know school is important and that their teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and so they in turn try to do their best. A good curriculum that is well supported through an excellent range of additional experiences fosters in pupils a real enthusiasm for learning. They feel very secure and happy at school and trust their teachers. Pupils are well behaved and many help each other when teachers are busy so that valuable learning time is not lost. Relationships throughout are excellent and pupils extend kindness and care towards others by helping around the school and looking after each other when problems arise. Opportunities such as being members of the school council encourage them to speak up for themselves and take an active role in making decisions. Their work on environmental projects and supporting community ventures helps them appreciate their role in the wider world. Pupils understand how to keep themselves fit, healthy and safe. As a consequence, pupils' personal development is outstanding. They leave in Year 6 as very mature young people who are well prepared for the future.

The school takes good care of its pupils, particularly with regard to their safety and personal development. While teachers have a clear picture of each child's progress, the procedures for guiding pupils about how they might improve their work could be better.

Good leadership and management by the headteacher, staff and governors have resulted in good improvement since the last inspection. For example, improved provision for reading and writing has resulted in high standards throughout and astute management of resources has led to single age classes. The school monitors its performance diligently and recognises its strategies to promote pupils' problem solving skills need further consolidation if standards in mathematics are to be raised. The school has an accurate view of its performance and is in a good position to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure pupils have good opportunities to practise their problem solving skills in mathematics and in other subjects.
- Ensure pupils receive better guidance to help them improve their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good and pupils attain well above average standards in Year 6. Children start in the Reception class with above average attainment but sometimes their literacy and mathematical skills are less secure. A fine balance of teacher-led tasks and independent activities ensures all children progress well and most exceed the expected levels by the end of the Reception year.

All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, progress well in Years 1 to 6. In the 2006 national assessments, Year 2 pupils attained above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This was despite a significant number having learning difficulties, making it a lower attaining group than other year groups. Current Year 2 pupils are working at well above average standards. In the same national assessments, results for Year 6 pupils were well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. Rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress helped the school set and achieve its challenging targets, except in mathematics. Strategies to improve pupils' problem solving skills are having a positive impact on raising standards in mathematics. Current Year 6 pupils are working at well above average levels.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' outstanding personal development is reflected in their good attendance, great enjoyment of school, excellent relationships and attitudes and good, and sometimes exemplary, behaviour.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils understand how they need to take care of 'the world's limited resources'. They know how to stay safe and healthy, with many attending clubs that promote fitness. Pupils are very aware and respectful of the richness and diversity in society, for example through their links with Italy and exploring food from other countries.

Pupils willingly take on responsibilities, for example as 'playground buddies', 'happy helpers' and house captains. Through the school and class councils, they develop leadership and decision making skills. 'I like the school council', said one councillor, 'because it gives children a chance to have their say.' Pupils make an excellent contribution to the community through raising funds, helping at fêtes, and organising concerts and visits to the elderly. They have an impact on the environment through taking part in the local entry to 'The Heart of England in Bloom'. Through working with a wide variety of visitors, they gain an excellent insight into the world of work.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Good teaching and learning result in pupils achieving well. Pupils enjoy learning because, as some said, 'teachers make lessons fun'. High quality displays brighten up the school and remind pupils of previous learning. Teachers build on these prior experiences and plan work that matches pupils' needs. In most lessons, the high level of challenge urges pupils to think and question what they are doing. In occasional lessons where this challenge is missing, pupils achieve less well. Very good support helps pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities to be fully involved and thus achieve well. Pupils are encouraged to become independent learners and discover for themselves through practical activities. They engage even more enthusiastically when using interactive whiteboards. In outstanding lessons, where teachers really capture pupils' interest, the pace is brisk and pupils work relentlessly to do their best, listening attentively and conducting sensible discussions with their classmates.

Pupils' progress is reviewed regularly and most teachers use this information effectively to modify their planning. The practice of setting pupils challenging individual targets is inconsistent, but where it is good pupils know what they have to do to improve their work and excellent relationships give them the confidence to ask for help.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. From the Reception class to Year 6, the curriculum prepares pupils well for the future with good provision for basic reading, number, scientific and information and communication technology skills. Single age classes are helping teachers to challenge pupils more effectively and good deployment of support staff ensures the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good. The school recognises that it needs to provide more opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills to solve problems. The very well planned personal, social, health and citizenship programme does much to help pupils understand the need to adopt healthy lifestyles and stay safe. The excellent range of visits to places of interest and regular visitors such as artists, musicians and dancers make the curriculum come to life. Many exciting activities before and after school extend the curriculum and enable pupils with particular talents to develop them further. The very good range of residential events provides pupils with valuable opportunities to improve their social skills.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

All children are valued and supported through outstanding pastoral care. They say that the rare instances of bullying are dealt with quickly and that they have an adult to turn to if they need help of any kind. 'Teachers are very kind and if you go to see

them they will be very understanding', said one pupil. All the necessary checks to ensure pupils' safety, protection and welfare are in place.

Pupils' progress is carefully checked especially in literacy, numeracy and science. Any pupils not making the expected rate of progress are quickly identified and given additional support. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are supported very effectively and external agencies are involved when necessary. While most teachers set targets, these are often for a whole class or group rather than for individual pupils. This limits their usefulness in helping pupils to become more involved in assessing and improving their work. Teachers' marking is also inconsistent in the guidance it offers to help pupils make improvements.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The leadership and management are good and underpin the school's continued success. The headteacher, well supported by the senior managers, provides strong leadership. All staff are focused on making the school as good as it can be. 'We all pull together in the same direction,' observed one senior teacher. The leadership knows the school well through an effective programme of self-evaluation. Teaching is monitored very rigorously and excellent procedures track pupils' performance. As a result, the leaders and managers have clear insights into recent underachievement in mathematics and some variability in teaching that need to be addressed.

The governors play an active role in the school. They check the school's performance and ask the right questions. Money is spent wisely, as seen in the recent building extension which allows pupils to be taught in single age groups.

The school benefits from outstanding partnerships with parents, other schools and external agencies. Parents have a high level of confidence in the school. 'This is my third child here and I know the school will give her an excellent grounding for the future,' said one. Pupils' views are taken into account as are those of parents, as seen in the recent successful introduction of a breakfast club.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I am writing to tell you what we found out when we came to your school recently to look at the work that you do and talk to your teachers. It was lovely meeting you. Thank you for making us feel so welcome and for being so friendly, polite and sensible. Please thank your parents for filling in a form that gave us their views about the school and we are delighted that everyone likes the school so much. We particularly liked the way you all get on with each other so nicely and I really loved watching the children in Reception making those yummy rainbow sweets!

Here are some of the things that make your school good:

- You love being there, always do your best and get good results.
- Your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and fun for you.
- The school takes good care of you and you have many friends to help you succeed.
- You behave well and know so much about staying fit and healthy.
- The school organises so many excellent activities and visits, like going to Italy, and you meet lots of interesting people who help you learn new things.

Your school is really good but there are a couple of things that could be better. These are:

- Your teachers need to give you lots more practice to solve those tricky mathematics problems that some of you find difficult.
- Your teachers should give everyone of you your own special targets and show you how you could make your work even better.

It is brilliant that you love school so much and we hope that you continue to do well.