

Doxey Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124200
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	314841
Inspection dates	28–29 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Gerald Griffin

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	181
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Charles Soutar
Headteacher	Sue Plant
Date of previous school inspection	8 March 2004
School address	Marsland Road Doxey Stafford ST16 1EG
Telephone number	01785 356100
Fax number	01785 356100

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Doxey is a primary school of average size. Nearly all pupils come from White British families. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is above the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Doxey is a good school where pupils achieve well and attain broadly average standards. Personal development is good and pupils thrive in the school's calm and happy atmosphere. They have positive attitudes, feel very safe and thoroughly enjoy all aspects of school. As a result, pupils are polite, considerate and well behaved.

Progress in English, mathematics and science is good. Progress in writing however is not as rapid as in reading, because pupils' spelling and punctuation skills are not always accurate. Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception where they also make good progress. This good progress throughout the school is because teaching and learning are good. Lessons are interesting and pupils are keen to learn. They work hard and lessons proceed at a lively pace. Occasionally the work planned by teachers does not match the needs of all pupils. This means pupils' progress sometimes slows because the level of challenge is not sufficient.

The school is correct in its view that the curriculum is satisfactory rather than good. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise and develop the skills they have learnt in English and mathematics lessons in other subjects, in order to further accelerate their progress and raise standards. However the curriculum supports pupils' personal development well, and the many examples of good quality artwork are testament to the exciting creative work provided for pupils. Care, guidance and support are good overall. Staff have a very detailed knowledge of the needs of every pupil, and use this most effectively to provide an outstanding level of pastoral care. Pupils with learning difficulties receive good support, especially in the specialist multi-sensory learning unit. Pupils receive good academic guidance.

Parents overwhelmingly support the school and believe it provides a good quality of education. One typically writes, 'My three children have made good progress at Doxey. Children are happy and the school is well managed. The staff are very enthusiastic and caring.' Parents also appreciate the advice and encouragement they receive from the school that helps them to support their children's education.

The headteacher provides clear direction for the school. Other leaders support her well and staff moral is high. There are many signs that the school is improving under its good leadership and management. Standards have been steadily rising over the past four years and pupils' progress is now good. This good record of improvement means the school can get even better.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception. Nearly all reach the expected levels in most areas of learning by the time they start Year 1. Their development in reading, writing and speaking is slower than other areas and reflects the often low level of literacy with which children start school. Children are happy and enjoy their work and play. They behave well and readily share apparatus and toys. Parents are pleased with the programme that ensures they settle quickly into the routines of school. They are especially pleased with the high level of care children receive. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers use assessments well to plan challenging activities. Occasionally children's work is over directed and this hampers their gaining of independence. The outside learning area is regularly used, but outdoor apparatus is limited and this restricts opportunities for children's physical development. The Foundation

Stage is well led and managed. Improvement plans are robust and there is a well structured programme to improve further staff's expertise in teaching young children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the accuracy of pupils' spelling and punctuation skills.
- Ensure teachers always provide work that challenges pupils.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to strengthen their English and mathematics skills across all subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children's skills and experiences on entry to Nursery are below those expected for their age. By Year 6 standards are broadly average, and pupils' achievement, including those with learning difficulties, is good. The progress of girls, higher attaining pupils and those who receive free school meals has improved greatly so that it is now similar to that of other pupils. This is because the school has introduced effective measures to check regularly the progress of each pupil, and provide appropriate action to remedy slow progress.

Progress in writing is good but slower than in reading. Pupils' spelling is not always correct and their use of punctuation, such as speech marks and capital letters is not sufficiently accurate. The handwriting of a minority of pupils lacks clarity and is difficult to read. Progress in mathematics has improved because pupils have more opportunities to practise mental arithmetic. Specialist teaching and good opportunities for practical work lead to good progress in science. New computers with advanced software are raising standards and ensuring good progress in information and communication technology (ICT).

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a high level of respect for others, property and the environment. Pupils are respectful of people with religions and traditions different from their own. A clear understanding of right and wrong underpins their good behaviour. This means pupils do not need constant adult supervision. Occasionally pupils call out in lessons, which distracts others from their work. However, pupils readily help each other and co-operate well in teams.

Pupils feel very safe in school and say that the rare cases of bullying are quickly and effectively dealt with. Pupils understand how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and most do their best to take plenty of exercise and eat a balanced diet. Pupils enjoy most of their lessons, educational visits, school clubs and being with their friends. They particularly enjoy the 'wake and shake' session after assembly to prepare themselves physically and mentally for the forthcoming day's work. Pupils' enthusiasm for school however is not reflected in their attendance, which is average. The school is working hard with parents to secure good attendance. Pupils readily take responsibility as monitors and 'playground buddies'. The school council has helped improve the toilets and reorganise the house system. Pupils enthusiastically take part in local events and are keen to support the wider community through charity collections. Average standards and positive attitudes provide satisfactory preparation for secondary school and future employment.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers use resources such as computers, games and apparatus well to engage and interest pupils. Relationships in lessons are positive. Lesson targets are always clear and as a result, pupils know what they need to do and work hard. Teachers are becoming more skilled in the use of assessment results to prepare lessons but sometimes their plans still do not take sufficient account of the different needs of pupils in the class. In these lessons, progress slows as some pupils struggle with work that is too difficult while others coast because their work is too easy. Occasionally teachers over direct lessons, limiting opportunities for pupils to take control of their learning and gain independence. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning especially for pupils with learning difficulties.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Assemblies, swimming, physical education and health lessons support pupils' personal development well. Improvements to the English and mathematics curriculum ensure good progress in these subjects. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise skills such as writing reports and letters and to apply their knowledge of number to solve problems in subjects, such as geography, history and design and technology. This is preventing an even greater rate of progress in English and mathematics. The school is aware of this and is currently implementing plans to provide more time for such activities. There is a good range of popular and well attended clubs that extend pupils' horizons and add to their enjoyment of school. The many visitors to school and educational visits to such places as museums broaden pupils' experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are looked after very well in school. Pupils can readily approach an adult at school with a problem knowing their concerns will be sympathetically and effectively resolved. Pupils with learning difficulties receive sensitive support. Their effective learning programmes make good use of the multi-sensory learning unit with its specialised resources to accelerate their learning. Experts provide training for staff so that they can effectively respond to pupils' special educational needs, such as dyslexia. The school works well with a wide range of outside specialists, such as the Educational Welfare Officer, to support pupils' learning. Health and safety matters and child protection procedures are robust and regularly reviewed.

Good academic guidance means that pupils know their targets well. Assessments provide them with an accurate measure of their progress. Marking is more variable although it is good overall. It is regular and shows pupils where they have gone wrong. It does not always make clear to pupils how they can improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Regular and robust monitoring and evaluation provides the school with a largely accurate view of its strengths and areas for development. The school has effective improvement plans. For example, the school has successfully improved pupils' ICT skills by refurbishing the computer suite. The headteacher and other leaders have provided staff with effective training on how to use assessment information to track the progress of individuals and to plan work that accelerates the progress of pupils who are falling behind.

The school sets challenging and realistic targets although these are not always recorded in a format that they can be easily checked. The school uses staff well to keep class numbers small so that pupils are able to receive more individual help.

The governors work very hard on behalf of the school. Their accurate interpretation of assessment information enables them to challenge the school rigorously over the quality of education it provides.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

30 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Doxey Primary and Nursery School, Stafford, ST16 1EG

Thank you for being so polite and friendly when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit, especially having the opportunity to talk to some of you and to see you in lessons and at play. You are rightly proud of the school's happy atmosphere where you all get on so well together. Like you, we think Doxey is a good school. Here are some of the things we found out.

- You make good progress in your lessons.
- The good teaching helps you to reach average standards in English, mathematics and science.
- You really enjoy school and feel very safe and secure.
- You behave well and your attendance is satisfactory.
- You have good relationships with your teachers and you work hard for them.
- The curriculum provides you with many exciting extra activities including visits out of school.
- Adults look after you very well and it is good to know they will always help you.
- The headteacher and teachers are working hard to make sure the school gets better.

We have asked the school to do three things to help you get even better in your learning.

- Help you to improve the accuracy of your spelling and punctuation skills.
- Make sure teachers plan work that makes everyone think hard.
- Give you more opportunities to practice your English and mathematics skills in other subjects.

You can help the school by continuing to behave well and trying your best in lessons, and improving your attendance.

We wish you all success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Gerald Griffin Lead inspector

Annex B



30 April 2008

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Gerald Griffin
Lead inspector