

Dunnington CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125762
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	315307
Inspection date	18 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Ruth Westbrook

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 on roll	
School	109
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sally Sealy
Headteacher	Lynne Russell
Date of previous school inspection	20 April 2004
School address	Dunnington Alcester B49 5NT
Telephone number	01789 772200
Fax number	01789 778202

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small primary school, serving the village of Dunnington and surrounding area. Pupils are arranged in four classes. A very small number of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and none are at an early stage of learning English. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below average.

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 a number of outstanding features. The headteacher sets very clear direction for the school in establishing a caring, Christian community. The school uses its small size to advantage by promoting a strong family ethos. Consequently, pupils are extremely happy within the 'friendly, caring and sharing Dunnington Family' where 'you know everyone and every one knows you'. This strong set of values underpins the school's work and leads to the outstanding personal development and well-being of pupils. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning which they find 'fun' and 'interesting'. They respond well to the school's high expectations and their behaviour is outstanding. Pupils' excellent attendance reflects their considerable enjoyment of school life.

The headteacher has successfully led a transformation from a satisfactory school at the time of the last inspection. Central to this has been improving the quality of teaching and learning by introducing a range of effective strategies throughout the school. Achievement is now good and, overall, standards are above average. They are higher by the end of Key Stage 1 where the full effect of improvements has had a greater impact. Improvements to provision in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection mean that most pupils enter Year 1 with skills and abilities above those expected for their age. This strong foundation is built on in Key Stage 1 and pupils over the last four years have moved to Key Stage 2 with standards in all subjects that are well above average. Improvement in writing in Key Stage 2 has been considerable over the same period, but improvement in mathematics has been slower. Although not yet reflected in improved national test results, the evidence from the inspection is that standards in mathematics have now improved as a result of action taken by the school.

There is usually a careful match between learning and a pupil's needs although occasionally the ablest pupils are not set work that is challenging enough. The school has established good systems throughout to set targets and track progress. These have been a significant factor in raising standards. Pupils' work is marked regularly, but the marking does not always provide sufficient feedback to pupils on the progress made towards their targets.

The curriculum has improved since the last inspection. Considerable developments to the school grounds have provided a stimulating and 'fun' learning environment that is used well by all ages. This and the school's strong link with Ragley Hall are developing pupils' skills as young environmentalists. This link has also widened the experiences of pupils in other areas, for example in art. The school establishes effective links with other external partners to enhance the opportunities that this small school is able to offer. Partnerships with parents are very strong and parents are very positive in their evaluation of the school's work. They value the 'happy and friendly school', and the 'strong sense of belonging' that is promoted.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the Foundation Stage is good and it is outstanding in the area of personal development. Children enter the school with a range of abilities but most are at or above the expected levels. Within a short period, children have settled into the well thought out routines. This smooth transition to school is encouraged by the opportunities for children to spend time in school in the previous summer term. Children soon develop a strong sense of belonging to the school through the many opportunities to join older pupils for some lessons,

for play, assemblies and lunch. Staff make a strong contribution to children's personal development by encouraging children to be independent and to take responsibility. Children effectively demonstrate their independence by the accomplished way in which they automatically tidy up after their activities. The quality of teaching and learning is good and this ensures that children make good progress in all areas of learning. Activities are organised well ensuring a purposeful learning environment. The curriculum is well planned and is strengthened by the development of the outdoor area. The weekly visit to Ragley Hall enhances learning greatly. A love of books and reading is encouraged by the weekly homework that involves children and their parents taking part in a range of reading activities. The headteacher leads and manages the Foundation Stage and integrates it well into the school's planning, monitoring and evaluation cycle. Its current development objective, to develop children's confidence in applying reading and writing skills in the classroom, supports the whole-school initiative to develop writing skills.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that work and teachers' expectations fully challenge the ablest pupils of all ages.
- Improve the quality of feedback given in the marking of work on each pupil's progress towards the learning objective or individual target.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

There has been a major improvement in standards at Key Stage 1 since the previous inspection. They are now well above average in reading, writing and mathematics, the greatest improvement being in writing. Improved planning for pupils to use writing skills across all subjects has led to greater achievement in English at Key Stage 2. As a result, in 2006, Year 6 pupils made exceptional progress. Improving achievement in mathematics over the same period has been slower, but the school has correctly identified the reasons for this and appropriate planning has been put in place. Consequently, pupils currently in Key Stage 2 classes are making good progress in mathematics. All groups of pupils including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. The most able pupils attain above average standards and make good progress. However, there are a few occasions when their work does not fully challenge them and they achieve less than they might.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding because they respond very positively to the many opportunities provided to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They show outstanding social development, for example, in the caring way older pupils help younger ones at the 'family' lunchtimes or in the playground organising and leading activities. Pupils act responsibly without supervision when carrying out a range of duties independently. This makes an extremely valuable contribution to the school community. Pupils are prepared well for their future economic well-being through a range of projects like their work in the harmony garden, which produces vegetables for the school kitchen and for sale to parents. Pupils are confident and articulate and respond well to opportunities to implement their own ideas. Pupils acted on their concerns about a lack of activities at playtimes by developing playground activities and training as play leaders. Pupils have a good understanding about healthy eating and lifestyles. They take part enthusiastically in a wide range of physical

activities throughout the day. They feel safe at school and are confident that adults will help them with any problems that arise.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations of work and behaviour. Lesson planning is thoughtful and includes a wide range of activities which sustain interest. Good partnerships in classrooms between teachers and assistants lead to effective support for pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Teachers set clear learning objectives so that pupils are aware of what they are learning and why it is important. These are reinforced effectively in well-judged reviews throughout the lesson. Teachers assess pupils' progress well and use their findings to plan lessons to suit the varying needs of groups and individuals within the class. However, there are a few occasions when tasks do not fully challenge pupils of higher ability and this slightly hinders their progress. On other occasions, questioning does not always reflect the mixed ages and abilities of the classes. This means there are occasions when not all pupils are sufficiently engaged in the openings of lessons. Pupils have a clear idea of their targets and the level they are working at. However, marking of their work does not always give a clear view of what they need to do to improve. Pupils have welcomed the arrangements for homework to be completed electronically. This has improved motivation and interest.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good because it provides a rich and well-balanced experience within mixed-age classes without repeating themes. Pupils' personal, social and health education is well planned across all years through circle time and contributes directly to the very positive outcomes in personal development. The school has recently introduced an international curriculum to provide a wider dimension to learning by increasing the opportunities to promote cultural development. Although not fully implemented, the school has carefully mapped the activities alongside those of the National Curriculum. Take up for extra-curricular activities is high. The children's university scheme acts as an excellent stimulus to promote extended learning. The school's recent improvements to information and communication technology (ICT) equipment are leading to rapid acquisition of associated skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The effective care and support provided for pupils are rooted in the strong relationships between staff and pupils. Parents speak highly of the school's caring atmosphere, 'all staff have one thing in common, they care about pupils'. The inspection findings support their view. There are secure procedures to keep pupils safe and healthy and these are regularly reviewed. There are good systems to set targets for pupils and track their progress towards them. This leads to effective additional support when pupils are not meeting their targets. It does not always lead to additional challenge being made quickly enough to the small number of pupils who are comfortably reaching their targets. There are good links to help transition to secondary school. This includes a joint residential activity with another primary school so that pupils can widen their circle of friends.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads very effectively with a clear focus on raising standards and improving achievement within a caring environment. She has implemented a number of initiatives that are having a significant effect. For example, providing each classroom with a teaching assistant has improved the quality of teaching and learning by providing appropriate additional support for those who need it. The school's planning is well focused and built on effective evaluation of strengths and areas for development. This is well informed by regular monitoring of the school's work. This, and the good rate of improvement since the last inspection, indicates that the school's capacity for further improvement is good. The recent strengthening of senior leadership is providing additional direction for the school in the next stages of its planning. Governors give good support. They ensure that they know the school's strengths and priorities well by forging strong individual links with different areas of the curriculum. This enables them to contribute effectively to the evaluation and development process.

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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	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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
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	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
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

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?	2
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for welcoming us so warmly on our recent visit to your school. I would like to share with you what I learned about the school.

- It is a good school with some outstanding features. It has improved a great deal since it was last inspected.
- You make good progress in your work and reach standards that are above average.
- Your headteacher leads the school very well which is the main reason why the school is improving so quickly.
- You are very happy at school and enjoy being part of the 'Dunnington Family'. Older pupils care for younger ones particularly well and make a valuable contribution to the school community.
- Your attendance and behaviour are excellent.
- All staff care for you well and support you to do your best. As a result, you feel safe in school and that there is always someone to help you should you need them.
- You welcome opportunities to serve your school and local community and have many ideas of your own which you are able to act on responsibly.
- You enjoy the interesting lessons that are taught and taking part in the activities that are on offer. You eat healthily and know how to keep fit.
- You find the targets in the front of your books helpful and most of you know what level you are aiming for. We think some of you could manage more of a challenge to achieve higher levels in some of your work so we are asking teachers to make sure this happens. We are also asking them to give you more information when marking your work on what you need to do to improve.

I hope you will help your headteacher and her staff to keep your school as good as it has become and to put in place the plans which will make it even better. Remember, 'The Dunnington Family works together to achieve its best'.

19 October 2007



Dear Pupils

Inspection of Dunnington C of E Primary School, Dunnington, B49 5NT

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Ruth Westbrook
Lead inspector