

Village Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135116
Local Authority	City Of Derby
Inspection number	341619
Inspection dates	26–27 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Trevor Watts

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	569
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Claire Thomas
Headteacher	Ms Jane Green
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 23 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, pupils and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at many documents, policies, records and samples of pupils' work. Responses to 90 parental questionnaires were taken into account.

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

- the actions taken by school leaders to improve teaching skills, in order to raise pupils' standards, especially in English
- whether or not the curriculum is sufficiently broad, balanced, creative and imaginative to motivate learning among different groups of pupils
- the way in which teachers gather information about pupils' progress and use this information to help pupils to learn at a better rate.

Information about the school

This is a large school in an urban area of Derby. It opened in new premises in September 2008, following the closure of three other schools. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is more than double the national average. A majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, and a third do not speak English as their home language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is about the same as the national average, although very few have a statement of special educational needs.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Although the school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory, pupils develop outstanding social and moral awareness and show an excellent commitment to the school and wider community.

In other areas, leaders have been successful in improving pupils' behaviour, attitudes and attendance. Imaginative developments have led to a good curriculum that is enriched by many clubs and extra events, but which is still in need of more motivating activities to encourage boys, especially in their writing.

Well-focused actions by school leaders are producing improvements in teaching. These have raised the pace of learning in many lessons, and improved the rate of progress over the longer term. The teaching is now satisfactory, with some outstanding examples of inspiring and exciting lessons. There is also some teaching that is inadequate because it is slow and unchallenging. At the start of lessons teachers sometimes spend too long explaining to the whole class together, instead of allowing support staff to take groups aside for separate tuition at their own level. Inconsistent marking of pupils' work does not guide pupils sufficiently in what they need to do in order to improve. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress and achieve well. Pupils through the rest of the school are progressing at a rate that is satisfactory, but improving. Although pupils' attainments in national tests in summer 2009 were still below the expected level, current assessments indicate that they are now broadly in line with expectations for their ages.

The leadership team, including the governors, accurately evaluates the strengths and weaknesses within the school, particularly in some aspects of teaching. They demonstrate increasing confidence, effectiveness and willingness to identify difficulties and to set appropriate actions in motion. This shows their sound capacity to further develop the improvements that have already been put into place. The school's action plan and recent interventions such as extra training, additional support for some staff, small group tuition and individual language support, reveal a practical view of what actions still need to be taken, and a satisfactory timescale in which to expect success.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science, and especially the standard of boys' writing in Key Stage 2, by:
 - providing more challenging teaching and more activities to encourage and motivate boys.

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- Increase the proportion of good teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2, by:
 - increasing the pace of lessons and the level of difficulty of work given to pupils, so that more is expected of them
 - reducing over-long introductions and explanations to the whole of a class where there are pupils of widely differing abilities
 - using support staff to work more frequently with groups in the early stages of a lesson.
 - Develop the marking of pupils' work so that pupils know what they need to do to improve and to meet their targets.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

When the school opened, only about a quarter of pupils in Key Stage 2 were attaining at the nationally expected level for their ages. By the end of the school year, however, half the pupils who took part in the national tests were attaining at the expected level. Despite this improvement, standards were still significantly below the national average. Pupils' rate of progress is still improving. Teachers' assessments and pupils' current work show that a large majority of pupils throughout Key Stage 2 are now achieving satisfactorily. The achievement of boys in Key Stage 2 is generally below that of girls, particularly in writing. Differences in the performance of pupils from different economic backgrounds and ethnic groups are minimal. The progress made by pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is satisfactory and improving as additional focused support is provided.

In lessons, pupils are generally well-behaved, attentive and productive in their learning although restlessness does occur in a few slower-paced lessons. Pupils volunteer answers and suggestions, and willingly work together or independently. Pupils mostly respond well to the challenges set by their teachers. They learn at a satisfactory pace and achieve appropriately.

Pupils say that 'teachers make lessons fun.' They enjoy their activities in school and on many visits outside. The great majority of pupils say they feel safe in school and know how to look after themselves in many different situations. Pupils know what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, and most make good efforts to eat and exercise appropriately. Pupils' outstanding contribution to the community includes their active involvement in the school council, raising funds for many charities and environmental projects, and working on local allotments. Recently, they have taken part in a local photographic project, well-dressing and Christmas events with the church. There are regular contacts, exchanges and visits with other schools with different cultural backgrounds, including schools in India and Gambia. Pupils have even adopted an elephant called 'Kuruba' in India. Pupils' development of spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is greatly

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aided by the very positive attitude of staff and parents. Although only average, pupils' attendance is improving despite an outbreak of swine flu.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

There are good features in the teaching throughout the school, particularly in the way teachers use questioning to challenge pupils of different abilities and thus strengthen their learning. Many lessons successfully involve practical activities and the use of information and communication technology to improve learning. Some involve a range of exciting activities that pupils are eager to take part in, and help them to learn outstandingly well. Such lessons are very quick-paced, demanding and have clearly-focused learning aims. Teachers have soundly developed their skills in accurately assessing how well pupils are making progress. They check on pupils' standards regularly and plan for how well pupils should be attaining by the end of the term or the year. They increasingly use this information to plan their lessons. However, the thorough planning is not always carried out in practice, especially when a whole class is taught in the same way at the same level. Some pupils become inattentive and do not

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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concentrate well when they are expected to do their own work. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is inconsistent: too rarely does it guide pupils towards what they need to do to improve their work or achieve their next target.

The broad and balanced curriculum is brought to life by frequent visits to interesting places such as the seaside and a Buddhist temple, close work with other organisations and schools, and many visitors who come into school. Regular topic work helps pupils to apply their literacy, numeracy and information, communication and technology skills, as well as adding variety and interest to their learning. A wide range of additional activities and daily clubs out of school time enriches the learning for a large majority of pupils. There is not enough adaptation of the curriculum to meet the needs of some pupils, particularly boys in Key Stage 2, who are not always highly motivated by the lesson content. Pupils who have difficulties in specific aspects of their learning, such as their number skills or learning English, have regular and effective support from specialist staff in small groups.

The good care for pupils and support for their personal and social development begins particularly well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is close liaison among staff, families, carers and outside agencies. Pupils in the care of their local authority are well supported and guided, as are pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils say they are confident that staff would help them if they had particular problems. Pupils joining the school at any stage have effective and well-managed support that helps them to settle in quickly. When they leave for their next school, the arrangements for supporting and guiding them are equally effective. The increasing number of pupils who do not speak English at home are provided with much additional help both from within the school, and with some support from outside.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

School leaders are demonstrating increasing effectiveness in the way the school is led and managed. They have encouraged most teachers to believe that they can aim high for their pupils. Their analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses when it opened led to a clear set of priorities to improve pupils' attainment in the core subjects. The leadership team has bonded together soundly, complementing each others' skills under the incisive guidance of the headteacher. The curriculum has become creative and well-enriched. Improvements to the care and support for pupils have been effective.

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Early training helped staff to develop strong and consistent approaches to behaviour management. Consequently, pupils' behaviour has improved greatly and exclusions are rare. Well-focused training in lesson planning, assessment and use of resources such as interactive white boards has developed other teaching skills. Leaders' actions have thus largely been effective in raising the quality of teaching and the pace of learning, with pupils' attainment rising. Governors' sound support is developing as some members are becoming increasingly involved in matters such as the curriculum and pupils' standards. Thorough safeguarding procedures ensure the health, care and support for pupils.

All pupils have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum, to trips out and to extra clubs. Those with particular difficulties have additional support that enables them to learn equally as well as their classmates. Parents, carers and other agencies are well engaged in their support for pupils' learning, from helping with reading and going on trips, to encouraging better attendance by some pupils. School leaders encourage community cohesion very determinedly. In such a culturally diverse area school leaders have recognised and developed the school's central role in promoting understanding and awareness of diversity. The community action plan is based on a widespread analysis of needs and the effectiveness of measures that have already been taken. It is reviewed regularly, with purposeful steps to develop links within the immediate neighbourhood and much further afield.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with skills that are well below those expected of children

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their age. They make good progress in the Nursery and in the Reception classes. In aspects of language and number skills they still attain below what is expected when they leave the unit, but in other areas, they attain broadly in line with expectations. The teaching is confident and many lessons have well-focused learning aims. Groups often engage in lively activities across all the expected areas of learning. When children are independently exploring their environment and their own skills, the activities often do not have the same level of purpose. Staff often miss good opportunities to automatically encourage children to respond actively, such as by saying 'thank you', 'yes', 'this one', and so on. The outdoor area is imaginatively designed with a good selection of equipment to develop children's creative and physical skills as well as their social and language skills. The two units are well led, and are managed effectively through good teamwork and planning by all staff involved.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents who responded to the questionnaire are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, how it is led and what it does for their children. 'The teaching of everything that life can offer is full and round,' wrote one parent, continuing, 'My children love the school and the staff are brilliant.' Many other parents echoed this sentiment. A very small minority raised some concerns about bullying and how well it is dealt with. Staff and pupils agree that some bullying does exist. Although pupils are happy that staff deal with it well, the school has agreed to review its practice. Other concerns raised had already been settled, such as teachers carrying hot drinks in the playground, because they use cups with spill-proof caps. A few parents thought that their more able children could make better progress, and the inspection team also found that this was the case in some instances.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Village 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 90 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 569 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	73	22	25	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	55	62	34	38	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	42	47	38	43	1	1	3	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	53	37	42	3	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	51	57	35	39	0	0	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	51	37	42	4	4	3	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	45	51	39	44	3	3	1	1
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)	36	40	43	48	1	1	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	47	42	47	1	1	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	47	39	44	4	4	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	43	43	48	3	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	44	49	38	43	2	2	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	57	64	31	35	0	0	1	1

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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:	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. ■ 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.



29 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Village Primary School, Derby, DE23 8DF

I am sure that you will remember when the inspectors visited your school recently. Thank you for helping us, talking with us, showing us your work, and being so polite and friendly.

We found that you go to a satisfactory school, which has been improving well since it opened. The teaching and your learning are satisfactory at the moment. You mostly enjoy your lessons and behave well. Teachers plan your lessons carefully, often in interesting ways that help you to learn. You reach standards that are about the same as most children your age across the country. You are looked after and supported well by all of the staff in school. The headteacher and other senior teachers have done a lot to improve things and they have put many new actions in place. The inspectors are confident that these have started to make things even better. You have an extremely good sense of belonging to a community with many different cultures, and are involved in many different events inside and outside school.

Although your standards of work have improved since the school opened, we have asked the school to raise your standards even more. To do this, we have asked teachers to make some of your work harder, and to use the other adults in class to teach groups more often. We would also like teachers to tell you how to improve your work, or meet your targets, when they are marking your work. To develop your writing better, we have suggested that the school should think of some new topics that you will be particularly interested in learning and writing about, especially the boys.

Yours sincerely

Trevor Watts

Lead inspector

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