

Siddal Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130936
Local Authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	360163
Inspection dates	5–6 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Christine Millett

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 of pupils on the school roll	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Pam Burton
Headteacher	Ms Lynda Johnson
Date of previous school inspection	16 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 11 lessons or parts of lessons taught by eight teachers, spent time in the Early Years Foundation Stage and looked at pupils' work. Discussions took place with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents and carers. Inspectors looked at documents, including policies relating to safeguarding, the school's development plan and self-evaluation records, minutes of governors' meetings and the school's own assessment data. The inspectors analysed questionnaires from pupils and staff as well as those from 40 parents and carers.

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

- Whether there are any differences between boys' and girls' attainment as published data suggests.
- The impact of the Children's Centre on children's attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The provision for the learning of a modern foreign language.
- Clarification that the governing body is carrying out its statutory duties.

Information about the school

Siddal is an average-sized primary school with a 30 place Children's Centre, which is managed by the governing body. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. Very few are from other minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is currently above average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also above average. There have been significant staff changes since the previous inspection.

The school has received several awards including Investors in People, Activemark and Healthy School status.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Siddal provides an outstanding standard of education for all its pupils. The outstanding leadership and management ensure that highly effective strategies for the school's improvement are extremely well focused on high quality learning. The excellent curriculum makes learning enjoyable and relevant and includes the teaching of Spanish. This, alongside the excellent care, guidance and support that pupils receive, enables them to make outstanding progress in their personal development and grow into confident and caring young people. Pupils' behaviour is good and they have an excellent knowledge of how to stay safe and keep healthy. Pupils enjoy school. 'We learn things in a fun way.' commented one pupil. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to both the school and local community. Very effective partnerships with external agencies provide high-quality support for vulnerable pupils. Equally strong links with the Children's Centre and other local schools have supported the curriculum as well as eased transition.

Many children start school with skills and knowledge well below those expected. A number of children start their education in the Children's Centre and this is having a positive impact on their development. They get off to a good start in the Nursery class and do well in the Early Years Foundation Stage, though sometimes they have too few opportunities to develop writing skills. Progress from Year 1 to Year 6 continues to be good. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is average but improving strongly. There has been a noticeable increase in the number of pupils reaching higher levels in mathematics. The school's rigorous systems for tracking and monitoring progress ensure that all groups of pupils, regardless of gender, achieve well. A high priority is given to ensuring work matches need, and appropriate levels of support are in place. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same levels of progress as other pupils. Teaching is good with some examples of outstanding practice seen. The marking of pupils' work provides them with guidance on how to improve. Assessment is regular and frequent analysis of outcomes takes place.

There is substantial evidence that shows the school has an extremely accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses and is very effective in securing improvement. The senior leadership team, all members of staff and the governing body have worked tirelessly to raise standards of attainment and improve provision. This pursuit of excellence accounts for the school's outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage from good to outstanding by:

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- developing the role of key workers so that they intervene at appropriate points in children's play in order to move learning on
- improving writing skills further by increasing opportunities for mark-making both indoors and out.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils develop good attitudes to learning as they move up through the school. Their good behaviour and enthusiasm are in response to the good teaching they receive, which enables them to achieve well. Pupils are polite and friendly in the way they speak to visitors.

Children enter the Nursery class with skills and knowledge below national expectations, and well below in communication, language and literacy and social development. They get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and this prepares them well for learning in Year 1, though literacy skills are still below national averages. Generally, cohorts throughout the school are small and, as a result, standards appear to fluctuate. However, the school's rigorous tracking system shows clearly that by the end of Year 6 the majority of pupils meet their targets and achieve well. Overall attainment is average at the end of Year 6 but continuing to rise. In recent years there has been a whole-school focus on mathematics, which has resulted in a marked improvement in this subject. Results in 2010 show an improvement in English. In lessons, pupils were seen to enjoy the challenges set. Vibrant displays around the school show pupils' good attainment in artwork and demonstrate their good understanding of other cultures. Good quality work was also observed in information and communication technology.

Pupils feel very safe in school and know adults will look after them. Attendance is above average. Pupils make an excellent contribution to school life by taking on a range of responsibilities. For example, at lunchtime, table captains serve their 'family' groups ensuring the youngest children are cared for well. Pupils also make excellent contributions to the local community. Pupils have a very secure understanding of all aspects of staying healthy and keeping fit. This is evident in the enthusiastic way they take advantage of the many opportunities for physical activity. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils have an excellent understanding of right and wrong and benefit from a wide range of cultural experiences. They are well prepared for the next stages in their education.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Lessons observed during the inspection had strong features. Teachers prepare lessons that engage pupils and ask questions that challenge and extend learning. Information and communication technology is used well to support teaching and ensure that the different learning styles of pupils are accommodated. Assessment information is used effectively to plan work and set targets. Pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve their work. Other adults give valuable support.

Pupils' enjoyment of school is enhanced exceptionally well by the rich and varied opportunities with which they are provided. Staff have successfully developed an outstanding curriculum that responds very well to the diverse needs of individuals and groups as well as being creative. Careful planning reinforces the natural links that occur between different subjects. Pupils have the opportunity to participate in an excellent range of extra-curricular activities and visits.

The care, guidance and support pupils receive are exemplary. Very great care is taken to ensure that pupils are given high quality guidance on how to stay safe. Parents appreciate the caring ethos of the school. The individual needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well met through close liaison between teachers, support staff and outside agencies. The Children's Centre provides the same high levels of care for the youngest children and their families.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The school is exceptionally well led and managed. Rigorous monitoring of pupils' performance and constant self-evaluation are the foundation of the school's success and demonstrate leaders' high aspirations. All teachers are involved in the tracking of pupils, which has led to continuous improvement. Members of the governing body know the school well and have contributed effectively to improvement since the last inspection. They are very involved in the life of the school. The school demonstrates a deep commitment to equal opportunities for all. This is seen in the harmonious and inclusive atmosphere. The rigorous monitoring of pupils ensures that any unevenness in academic performance or personal development is addressed immediately. Extremely strong links exist with cluster schools, external agencies and local services. The school enjoys a very positive relationship with parents and carers who are kept well-informed. Many parents and carers value the support that they and their children receive from the school. Safeguarding procedures are extremely thorough and risk assessments and health and safety procedures are meticulous. The school promotes community cohesion exceptionally well. Pupils from all backgrounds get on well with each other and there are regular celebrations of other cultures. Pupils are very aware of the diversity of society within the United Kingdom and they understand and accept difference with great maturity.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and children thrive in a stimulating and thoroughly enjoyable environment. Children from the school and the Children's Centre work and play happily alongside each other. The very youngest of them benefit from the positive role models of those in the Reception classes. Children settle in quickly as they start school due to the warm relationships that adults quickly establish with them. Adults encourage children to be independent, make choices in activities and develop social skills that ensure good behaviour. However, occasionally, adults are slow to intervene to ensure children are usefully occupied.

Children start the Nursery class with skills and knowledge that are generally below age-related expectations and well below in communication, language and literacy. Good teaching and a well-organised curriculum ensure the gap is closing by the end of Reception. Whilst the children are presented with many positive learning experiences, they sometimes have too few opportunities to develop writing skills through mark-making as part of their play.

Thorough assessment, which begins in the Children's Centre, ensures that individual children's progress is tracked regularly and well-targeted support given. Achievements are recorded as attractive 'learning journeys' which provide parents and carers with an ongoing record of their child's development. The bright and attractive learning environment enables children to have fun while making choices about their learning, such as whether to join in with role play at the cafe or explore the world of dinosaurs. Learning moves easily between the indoor and outdoor areas giving all age groups the opportunities to have fun and learn from each other.

Good leadership is focused strongly on continuous improvement. Staff are vigilant and children's welfare has a high priority. The unit is fully incorporated into school life, which

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ensures smooth transitions from Children's Centre to Nursery and Reception into Year 1. Good links are developed with parents and carers, who speak appreciatively of the, 'friendly, helpful staff'.

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

An extremely small number of the school's parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Some did not respond as their child had only been in school a very short time and they felt unable to comment. However, of those who did respond almost all agreed that their children enjoyed school, were kept safe and were very happy overall. A large majority believed that the school kept parents and carers informed about progress being made. A very small minority felt they would like more help in supporting their children's learning and that their concerns are not taken into account. Inspectors found that relationships between the school and parents and carers are strong. The school is working hard to engage parents and carers and is happy to meet with them to discuss any matter. A few parents raised individual concerns and these were followed up by the inspectors. It was found that the school has effective procedures in place in relation to the issues raised.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Siddal 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 40 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 221 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	53	18	45	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	53	17	43	2	5	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	18	45	15	38	6	15	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	12	30	18	45	9	23	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	13	33	24	60	2	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	10	25	23	58	6	15	1	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	40	23	58	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)	11	28	24	60	4	10	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	11	28	23	58	6	15	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	30	13	33	11	28	2	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	30	18	45	7	18	1	3
The school is led and managed effectively	13	33	19	48	4	10	3	8
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	38	18	45	5	13	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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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 pupils' 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.



7 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Siddal Primary School, Halifax, HX3 9DL

Thank you for all your help when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you. You were very polite and helped us to understand how you feel about your school. You told us how much you enjoy school and how special you think it is. We agree with you and think that Siddal provides you with an outstanding education.

- You get off to a good start in the Nursery class and make good progress during your time in the school.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 are average but improving.
- You enjoy coming to school, are keen to learn and attendance is above average.
- Your behaviour is good both in the classroom and around school.
- Adults look after you extremely well and make sure you are safe.
- Teaching is good and teachers try to make lessons interesting.
- You show a very good understanding of healthy lifestyles and know how to keep yourselves and others safe.
- You contribute extremely well to the life of the school and the local community.
- Your school is helping you prepare for the next stages in your education.

To make your school even better we would like the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to have more opportunities to practise their writing skills both indoors and out and for adults to sometimes help them choose what to do next.

We know that you are proud of your school and will do your best to help your teachers make it even better. Very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Christine Millett

Lead inspector

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