

Summerswood Primary School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 117182 |
| Local Authority | Hertfordshire |
| Inspection number | 358102 |
| Inspection dates | 18–19 January 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Stephen Walker |

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

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|--|--|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 231 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Maria Kyrillou |
| Headteacher | Elaine Sadler |
| Date of previous school inspection | 15 April 2008 |
| School address | Furzehill Road Borehamwood WD6 2DW |
| Telephone number | 020 89533139 |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons and observed eight teachers. They also held meetings with the headteacher, the chair of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence, including the school improvement plan, the tracking system to monitor the pupils' progress, safeguarding documentation, and the work pupils were doing in their books. They also analysed questionnaires completed by staff, a sample of pupils and 73 parents and carers.

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

- The progress being made by different groups of pupils, especially in English and mathematics.
- The effectiveness of teaching in engaging pupils so that they make at least satisfactory progress in lessons.
- The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage in supporting the development of the younger children.
- The impact of leadership and management in supporting improvements in the school.

Information about the school

This is an average sized primary school situated near the centre of Borehamwood and mainly serving pupils from the surrounding area. The large majority are from White British backgrounds although there are an above average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, particularly from Black African and East European heritage. An above average percentage do not speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average.

A Primary Support Base is run by the school and supports a small number of pupils with behaviour and emotional difficulties who are fully integrated into the mainstream classes. Recent changes in the demography of the local area have led to a rising roll. There is consultation with the local authority regarding a proposed two form entry for the school. There has been a higher than normal turnover of staff during the last two years which has caused instability for some classes.

Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is organised through two Reception classes. The privately run Summerswood Nursery is located on the school site but was not part of this inspection. The school provides a breakfast club and an after school club which were included in this inspection. The school has received the Active Mark award and holds National 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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Summerswood Primary is a satisfactory school. It has some good features. The headteacher has managed a period of high staff turnover well so that there is a continued focus on the achievement of the pupils. There are clear signs of improving standards and better progress during the current academic year. Parents and carers speak highly of the school and the support for their children. One wrote: 'the school has a very friendly and happy atmosphere. We are extremely pleased with the supportive approach and dedication of the teachers.'

Pupils make satisfactory progress given their average starting points and leave with average attainment. Progress has traditionally been good in Key Stage 1 but the rate of staff turnover during the last year has caused instability for some classes. This is also partly responsible for the only satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. The teacher assessments in 2010 for Year 6 pupils indicate overall average or above average attainment in English. More pupils are now gaining the higher levels in English which represents good progress. Attainment is broadly average in mathematics which demonstrates satisfactory progress for most pupils. However, assessment records for the past term indicate that more pupils are now making good progress in Key Stage 2. The developing tracking system is beginning to identify underachieving pupils, who then receive appropriate support through a range of intervention strategies. The school sets challenging targets for pupils so that more now make good progress in relation to their prior attainment but too few have achieved their targets in the past.

The good quality of care, guidance and support is greatly supporting the personal development of the pupils. Pupils enjoy their time at school and develop into friendly and considerate individuals. The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is good and this contributes to a positive atmosphere for learning. They are respectful towards each other so that every pupil feels valued in the school's family atmosphere. Pupils feel very safe in the school and have a good awareness of issues relating to safety. The large majority of pupils have a good understanding of how to adopt healthy lifestyles. They demonstrate this through eating healthily and readily taking part in outdoor and sporting activities leading to the Active Mark award and National Healthy School status. The provision in the Primary Support Base is good and successfully integrates pupils with behaviour and emotional difficulties into the school.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Pupils made adequate and sometimes good progress in the lessons observed during the inspection. In some lessons, teachers are not consistently using assessment information to inform planning and learning. Teaching does not always ensure that pupils' understanding is checked during lessons, or providing guidance on next steps in their learning through their marking. Curriculum provision is

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satisfactory and the school is developing a more creative approach to show the links between the different subjects.

Self-evaluation is accurate and the school is clear about the improvements needed. The school improvement plan sets challenging targets aimed at raising standards. The governing body is fulfilling its statutory duties and is aware of the areas for development. Governors are increasingly monitoring progress although they are not fully involved in strategic planning for school improvement. The subject leaders are developing their roles but they are not yet all fully effective in their supporting and monitoring roles. There is scope to agree and share more of the best practice in teaching and learning across the school. However, the clear leadership of the headteacher, the developing systems of tracking pupil progress and the evident indications of improvements in pupil progress show the school's satisfactory capacity to improve.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the attainment and achievement of pupils throughout the school, especially in English and mathematics, by:
 - continuing to develop tracking systems to identify and provide additional support for underachieving pupils
 - ensuring that staff and pupils are working to achieve challenging progress and attainment targets based on pupils' previous performance.
- Raise the quality of teaching and learning by making sure that all teachers:
 - use assessment information more consistently to inform planning and learning
 - check pupils' understanding of their learning during lessons
 - regularly discuss individual progress with pupils and agree how to take the next steps in their learning.
- Improve the consistency of leadership and management and its impact by:
 - developing the roles of subject leaders so that they provide effective support for teachers, and agree and share the best practice in teaching and learning
 - ensuring that the governing body develops the skills it needs to be fully effective in supporting school improvements.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Most pupils enjoy learning and make satisfactory progress. A growing number of pupils are making good progress due to more effective teaching which is focused more clearly on learning. Gender differences in achievement vary between the year groups and the school is presently providing additional support for girls in Year 6 so that they can gain the higher grades in mathematics. Inspection evidence confirmed that pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities, including those linked to the Primary Support Base, make satisfactory progress. Many are presently making good progress in mathematics and reading in Key Stage 2 due to effective support provided by teaching assistants. Pupils

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from minority ethnic backgrounds also make satisfactory progress, in line with other pupils in the school. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language make the same progress as other pupils in their classes, particularly when they gain confidence in their language skills.

Pupils display interest and want to do well particularly when activities are interesting and clearly matched to their learning needs. For example, Year 6 pupils made good progress in a well structured lesson in literacy when working on their autobiographies, developing their skills in sentence construction and the use of imaginative vocabulary. However, the pace of learning and concentration drops in some lessons when teachers talk too much and the work does not fully challenge pupils.

Pupils are proud to be part of the school and develop positive personal characteristics. Pupils raise money for a range of charities such as Save the Children and make a good contribution to the local community by taking part in events such as the Borehamwood Carnival. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to take responsibility such as acting as members of the school council and helping the younger pupils with their reading. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and they show respect and sensitivity towards each other. Pupils from different social and ethnic backgrounds feel welcome and quickly integrate into the school. Attendance is improving and is now in line with the national average. Pupils' basic skills and ability to work with others are developing satisfactorily. As a result, they are adequately prepared for their secondary education.

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 | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |

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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How effective is the provision?

The warm relationships between teachers and pupils ensure that there is a positive environment for learning in lessons. In the best lessons teachers plan a range of interesting activities which motivate and engage the pupils in their learning. As a result they display enthusiasm and sustain high levels of concentration. These teachers have high expectations and plan a range of interesting activities that closely match learning needs. However, in a number of lessons pupils lose concentration when teachers' expectations of work are too low or the tasks are insufficiently challenging. There are also times when the teacher does not fully check the understanding of the whole class. Marking of work is supportive but does not always inform pupils of how they can improve their work.

The emphasis on the development of core skills in literacy and numeracy is gradually raising standards across the school. The recent 'Words in the Wood' project has supported greater interest in writing among the pupils. The new creative curriculum is bringing learning to life but it is too early to evaluate the full impact of the changes in the curriculum on pupil motivation and progress. All pupils have lessons in information and communication technology at least once a week which develops their computer skills adequately. Physical education is supported effectively through the Sports Partnership. The residential visits to Cuffley Camp and Isle of Wight, as well as various educational trips, provide enrichment for the curriculum.

The pastoral care for the pupils is good because the effective systems provide individual support for all pupils. Pupils are well known as individuals and they emphasise that there are always members of staff to talk to if they have a problem. There are clear procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance and following up absences. The school is successful in supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as pupils who speak English as an additional language. Good working relationships between the school and external agencies benefit pupils, ensuring their social and learning needs are met through effective support programmes. The breakfast and after-school clubs provide a good standard of provision for the pupils. Good arrangements are in place to support a smooth transition to the local secondary school.

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 | 3 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 2 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides clear and collegiate leadership so that staff work together on the continuous improvement of the school. She is very aware of the areas for

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development and is supporting the staff in raising standards in the school. She has demonstrated considerable professionalism in managing the high staff turnover so that there is stability and continuity for the pupils. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher who has acted as a catalyst for some of the improvements in the school. The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory. The robust procedures for safeguarding meet statutory requirements and underpin the school's very caring approach. Members of the governing body regularly check that all practices and procedures fully meet health and safety requirements. There is a very clear commitment to inclusion and equal opportunities for all which ensures that the school is inclusive in integrating pupils from different ethnic and social backgrounds as well as those with behavioural and emotional problems.

Parents are given regular information about school events and the progress of their children. There is a high rate of parent participation in consultation evenings and school activities such as the recent 'Stories at Bedtime' event. The school has good partnerships with a range of external services, the local secondary school and the local consortium of schools which support the improving achievement and well-being of the pupils. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. The governors have undertaken a community audit and there are plans to develop a range of activities to further enhance cultural awareness but these are still at the early stages of development.

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 | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 3 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make a good start to their education because of the well-planned provision, high quality of care and the consistently good teaching. They make good progress and most enter Year 1 with skills and knowledge which are in line with the expected levels. The school has successfully absorbed increasing numbers this year because staff in the

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Reception classes provide a secure and nurturing environment where children can settle and be ready to learn quickly and happily. Structured activities are having a significant impact on their personal development as well as encouraging number and language skills. They show tremendous curiosity and enthusiasm as they enjoy the different activities including a visit from the police during the inspection. There is an increasingly good balance between adult-directed and child-initiated activities which is encouraging more independent learning.

Staff keep detailed records of children's skills and use this information to match the activities well to the full range of learning needs. The calm and purposeful atmosphere is created by good organisation and leadership. The teachers and teaching assistants work well together so that there are clear expectations of the children in both classes. The accommodation and outdoor area are used effectively to support the learning of the children. The positive links with the Children's Centre, Summerswood Nursery and other pre-school settings ensure a smooth transition to school. There is regular liaison with parents and carers, who speak highly of the care and support the school provides for their children.

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 average proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires. Most are very positive about the work of the school and its impact on their children's learning. Responses to the questionnaire included a number of detailed comments emphasising the caring approach of staff towards their children. A minority of respondents suggested that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. During the course of the inspection the few pupils who sometimes displayed challenging behaviour were supported very effectively. A few parents and carers mentioned that the school did not take account of their views and suggestions. Inspectors found that the school regularly asks parents and carers for their views and ensures that these are used to inform important decisions about school improvement. For example, they were fully consulted about the proposed expansion to two-form entry.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Summerswood 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 73 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 231 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|----|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 51 | 70 | 20 | 27 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 45 | 62 | 25 | 34 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 34 | 47 | 35 | 48 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 32 | 44 | 36 | 49 | 5 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 39 | 53 | 31 | 42 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 33 | 45 | 35 | 48 | 5 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 36 | 49 | 37 | 51 | 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) | 24 | 33 | 46 | 63 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 31 | 42 | 37 | 51 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 26 | 36 | 32 | 44 | 7 | 10 | 8 | 11 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 25 | 34 | 36 | 49 | 8 | 11 | 4 | 6 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 34 | 47 | 33 | 45 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 41 | 56 | 26 | 36 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 3 |

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 | 59 | 35 | 3 | 3 |
| Primary schools | 9 | 44 | 39 | 7 |
| Secondary schools | 13 | 36 | 41 | 11 |
| Sixth forms | 15 | 39 | 43 | 3 |
| Special schools | 35 | 43 | 17 | 5 |
| Pupil referral units | 21 | 42 | 29 | 9 |
| All schools | 13 | 43 | 37 | 8 |

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



20 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Summerswood Primary School, Borehamwood, WD6 2DW

Thank you for making us so welcome and for sharing your views during the inspection. We really enjoyed watching your lessons and looking at your work. It was also good to see you during playtime and lunch. We were very impressed by the standard of your singing in the assemblies.

Your school is a satisfactory school and has some good features. We found some positive things about your school.

You enjoy coming to school and your attendance is improving.

You try hard in lessons and want to do well.

You are friendly and get on with each other.

You have a good understanding of issues related to safety and healthy lifestyles.

The teachers and the support staff care greatly for you as individuals.

The headteacher is making improvements in the school.

We have asked the headteacher, staff and governing body to do the following things to make the school even better.

Help all of you make better progress in English and mathematics.

Ensure that teachers always have high expectations for you and check your understanding of your work.

Ensure that the governing body and subject leaders are fully involved in plans for school improvement.

You can help by behaving well and working hard. Keep enjoying the many things you do at Summerswood Primary School. We would like to wish you success in your future education.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Walker

Lead inspector

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