

Sudbury Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112631
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	357150
Inspection dates	7–8 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Doris Bell

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	40
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Martin
Headteacher	Pam Purdon
Date of previous school inspection	30 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited eight lessons and observed two teachers and one teaching assistant teach. She also held meetings with parents and carers, groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body and staff, including the headteacher. She observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including teachers' planning, the school improvement plan, assessment, monitoring and evaluation records, records for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and safeguarding policies. The responses to the 30 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were also analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Are individual pupils making enough progress, especially in writing, and particularly as they are taught in one of only two mixed-age classes?
- Are all staff with leadership responsibilities clear about how to raise standards and improve teaching and learning, and how successful are they in doing this?

Information about the school

This very small school has an above-average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. While mostly moderate learning difficulties, the needs also include behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The proportion of pupils with statements for their needs is high compared with most schools. An average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Pupils are taught in two mixed-age classes. One class includes Reception children and pupils in Years 1 and 2; the other includes all pupils in Years 3 to 6. The school has achieved national Healthy Schools status. It has the Activemark for its work in promoting physical education, and also holds a bronze Eco award. 'Kids Corner', a privately run pre-school, which is inspected separately, operates on the school site. The headteacher took up her post in September 2009.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. Since her appointment, the headteacher has galvanised teaching and support staff into a cohesive team with a shared sense of purpose, focused on helping each pupil to achieve well. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and well-founded, and the outcomes are used to set challenging targets for staff and pupils. Teaching and learning have improved since the previous inspection and are now mostly good. The well-planned curriculum takes account of pupils' different ages and stages of learning. Subjects are brought together in themes that engage pupils and help them to build on what they already know, while providing support for those who need help to bring their learning up to scratch. Parents and carers praise the school highly for the excellent care, guidance and support it provides for their children, which sets the scene for further, effective learning and personal development. All of this underpins the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

Children's skills on entry vary from year to year because of the small numbers in each year group, which change further as pupils join or leave the school at different times. In the past three years, children have started school with literacy and numeracy skills below those expected for their age. They achieve well and, despite variations in year groups, reach at least average standards by Year 6. Attainment in Year 2, an issue at the previous inspection, has also improved and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make equally good progress. The effective use of outdoor learning provides much inspiration for pupils. They record what they see, hear and smell and use this well to create imaginative settings for their stories. Writing is improving for all pupils because of this and the many opportunities presented to them to write in different subjects. In mathematics, pupils successfully learn to calculate in different ways. They can do this quickly on paper, but they are not always able to calculate so well in their heads. Nor do they have enough opportunities in mathematics lessons to use and apply their calculation skills to solve mathematical problems.

Staff know and treat pupils as individuals, assessing, recording and tracking their progress well. They use the information to adapt work to suit pupils' different learning needs. Pupils respond well to this. They feel very safe in school, their behaviour is excellent, they work hard and they try to do their best in lessons. They report that when any untoward behaviour occurs, 'teachers sort it out quickly so we don't get disturbed'. Older pupils know their targets and can articulate what they need to do to reach them. Younger pupils are not as sure, but they appreciate the dialogue they have with the staff, reporting that it helps them to improve their work. Occasionally in lessons, pupils depend too much on staff to tell them what to do, or staff keep pupils together for too long instead of sending them off to their tasks at an appropriate point. This sometimes results in a small loss of learning time in lessons. Pupils also have an excellent understanding of why it is important

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to follow a healthy lifestyle. This is evident in their healthy food choices and in their comments about why they should walk to school whenever possible.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress in mathematics by:
 - sharpening pupils' mental mathematical skills
 - moving pupils more quickly onto problem-solving work in lessons, that enables them to use, apply and extend their mathematical skills.
- Encourage pupils to take a more active role in their learning by:
 - ensuring they all understand their targets and how to reach them
 - helping them to become more independent in their learning so that they can take it forward without always having to rely on an adult.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils engage the reader well in their writing, using a good range of vocabulary to bring it alive. This was particularly evident in the persuasive writing pupils in Years 5 and 6 produced to help them debate issues to do with the rainforest, and in their letters home in role as Catherine of Aragon. This work demonstrates the pupils' good use of literacy skills in different subjects, and the purpose this gives to their writing. Grammar and punctuation are usually accurate, but there are still weaknesses in spelling and in presentation, which the school is tackling through phonics work and additional support for individual pupils where necessary.

In mathematics, pupils were observed calculating in different ways, for example, setting work out in columns, partitioning, using calculators and working out range and mean across several numbers. They are not as secure as they might be at checking their calculations, and their ability to calculate quickly in their heads is not well developed. Work in other subjects provides some opportunities for pupils to solve real-life mathematical problems, but they do not have enough opportunities to do this in mathematics lessons. Nevertheless, in relation to their starting points, they make good progress in mathematics, and they use a range of mathematical skills, including data handling and measurement, in other subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in basic skills, and in personal development. The additional help they receive from teaching and support staff, including from external agencies, contributes to this. As a result, the pupils learn, for example, to control their behaviour, join in with others, and some also catch up with their learning and reach expected standards by Year 6.

Pupils make healthy eating choices, talk about the importance of 'five-a-day', and appreciate and participate in the good range of sporting and exercise activities provided for them. They make good use of the extensive school grounds to keep physically active at break and lunchtimes. Pupils with packed lunches were anxious to show that they, too, eat healthily, for example, bringing fruit and healthy snacks to school.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. They explain how 'Hector the Protector' helps them in this. They are reflective and caring, show respect

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for each other and for adults, and readily accept responsibility. They make a good contribution to the school community, for example, as school councillors, monitors and, more recently, reading 'buddies' for younger pupils. They talk animatedly about the opportunities they have to learn about the local and wider community. Through the links forged with schools in Derby, London and Zambia, they are gaining a good understanding of the range and diversity of different faiths, cultures and backgrounds in the United Kingdom and abroad. All of this, along with their good progress in basic skills, ensures that they leave the school well prepared for the future.

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	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching and support staff know pupils well as individuals. They make good use of information about pupils' prior attainment to plan for the different ages and stages of learning in their classes. In lessons, staff are skilled at questioning pupils, building on their answers and encouraging them to use subject-specific vocabulary as they do so. The good practice of requiring younger pupils always to answer in full sentences is assisting their writing. Marking encourages pupils to improve their work. It usually praises what pupils have done well and guides them as to how they can improve. Pupils respond well to the advice they receive but in lessons, they rely heavily on adults to tell them what to do after each piece of work. They have not yet gained the confidence or independence to take their learning forward by themselves. Occasionally, pupils are kept together too long at

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the start of a lesson. This sometimes confuses less-able pupils who then forget what they have to do because they have listened to what everyone else has to do. At other times, it affects the progress of more-able pupils because they are not moved on quickly enough to the more challenging tasks planned for them.

The curriculum promotes pupils' health, safety and well-being effectively. It is enriched by a good range of visits, visitors and well attended extra-curricular activities covering various sports and the arts. Much thought has gone into bringing subjects together to enhance learning, particularly in English and mathematics. This does not include systematically ensuring progression in the key skills required in different subjects, although there are some examples of these skills being marked in pupils' homework books. The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, often going beyond the minimum requirements for pupils with statements to ensure their progress and to improve their behaviour. All of this is part of the excellent care, guidance and support provided for all pupils, which supports their good personal development.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has successfully included all staff in the management of the school. Regular, accurate checks are made on teaching and learning, and all teaching staff are involved in them. The headteacher has successfully developed support staff's ability to contribute effectively to assessing and improving pupils' learning. The result is effective teamwork and a shared sense of purpose, with a strong ambition to drive improvement across the school. Targets are challenging but achievable because, given the small numbers in each cohort, they are based on outcomes for individual pupils.

Governance is good. The governing body provides the right balance of support and challenge, and keeps a close eye on pupils' progress. Its members rightly evaluate their own effectiveness, asking themselves at the end of each meeting 'What have we achieved tonight that will make a difference to pupils at this school?' New governors are undergoing training to ease them into their roles. The school focuses well on equality of opportunity, including by planning effectively for the different ages and stages of learning in each class. Keenly aware of its own size and its rural situation, it has reached out to the community, involving it well in school life. It has also established links with urban schools to enable pupils to communicate and, where possible, mix with pupils from different cultures and backgrounds. This and the links with Zambia, underpin the school's good promotion of community cohesion.

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The school adopts recommended good practice in safeguarding, including child protection. All training is up to date and the school is vigilant in ensuring the best possible outcomes for pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable. Good partnerships with parents, and excellent partnerships with external agencies and other schools, contribute effectively to all of this. Therefore, pupils work and play in a safe, secure environment, and settle into school well at whatever age they join. They are also well supported as they move on to high school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children flourish in a happy, settled learning environment that presents them with many exciting opportunities to explore and learn about the world around them, whether on their own or with pupils in Years 1 and 2. They make good progress, become increasingly confident in their dealings with others, and learn and play well together or on their own. Their progress is assessed, tracked and recorded well and the information is used effectively to plan the next steps in learning. The good practice seen in all of this is the result of effective leadership and management, good links with parents and carers, and a well-developed understanding of how young children learn. The good balance between adult-led activities and those that children can choose for themselves contributes to all of this.

Children show initiative and demonstrate good ability to organise their own work as, for example, they take on roles in the 'café', or perform nursery rhymes using, for example, their spider hats. They show a developing understanding of how to read and write, and they construct simple sentences with capital letters and full stops. Number work, though developing well, is less secure. Children enjoyed hunting for numbers in the sand and matching them to those displayed along the wall but not all are entirely secure in counting

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objects one by one. They made good progress in doing this as, trying to contain their excitement, they counted the legs on the bugs they had collected outdoors. The school makes good use of the outdoor area to promote learning but, because of its location, children do not have spontaneous access to it. The school has plans to resolve this.

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

With only 32 families represented in the school, the response to the parents' and carers' questionnaire was particularly high. The vast majority of parents and carers, including those spoken to during the inspection, are very satisfied with the school. Comments such as 'we are more than happy with the school', and 'the school is extremely friendly and approachable', staff 'really care about the children' and 'help them to make good progress' are typical of those received. Parents and carers are also very pleased with what the school does for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Inspection findings are that parents are justified in all of these views. A number of parents and carers did not answer the question about preparation for the future, commenting that they have not yet had any experience of this.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sudbury 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 inspector received 30 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 40 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	80	5	17	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	27	90	2	7	1	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	73	6	20	2	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	67	8	27	1	3	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	24	80	6	20	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	70	8	27	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	90	2	7	1	3	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)	18	60	7	23	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	77	4	13	1	3	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	73	6	20	1	3	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	60	10	33	2	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	25	83	4	13	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	87	3	10	1	3	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	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.



9 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sudbury Primary School, Sudbury, DE6 5HZ

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school and for talking to me about all the exciting things you do there. As you know, I came to see how well the school is doing and how you are all getting on with your learning. You are obviously very proud of your school, as are your parents and carers, and rightly so, because it is a good school. You clearly enjoy what you do there because your attendance is above average, and you join wholeheartedly in everything the school has to offer you. You told me your teachers 'do a good job' and you are right. All staff care deeply for each one of you. They do everything they can to make sure you are happy and settled, and can learn well. This includes teaching you how to keep yourselves safe, fit and healthy, and what you told me shows you have a good understanding of how to do this. It was good to see how much you appreciate all of this, that you trust the staff to help you with anything, and that your behaviour is excellent. This all helps you to learn well.

I very much enjoyed reading some of your writing and I can see that it is improving. You are also getting better at using different methods of calculating in mathematics. It was good to see that you use these skills in different subjects as well. Mrs Purdon certainly has everyone focused on helping you to learn as much as you can while you are at this school. I am asking her to give greater priority to some things to help you make even faster progress. They are to:

- help you to speed up mental calculations and give you more opportunities to use your mathematical skills to solve real-life problems
- encourage you to become more independent, so that you do not always have to rely on an adult to show you what you need to do to move your learning on.

You can help by continuing to work hard and by looking for ways in which to extend your own learning without having always to ask an adult what to do next. I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Doris Bell

Lead inspector

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