

# Little Sutton CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111275
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	356886
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Diane Auton

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	127
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms Dot Gosling
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Joanne Pitchford
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 May 2008
<b>School address</b>	Berwick Road Little Sutton, South Wirral Cheshire CH66 4PP
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons and observed seven teachers in their classrooms. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils, and parents and carers. The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including pupils' progress and attainment data, the school's planning documents, policies, procedures and records. They reviewed information provided by parents and carers in 57 completed questionnaires. They also took into account the views pupils and staff expressed in the questionnaires they returned.

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

- Consistency in attainment and progress across the school; whether the gap between outcomes at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2 is starting to close.
- Improvements in the quality of education in the Early Years Foundation Stage since the last inspection, when it was judged to be inadequate.
- How effectively leaders and managers, including the governing body, are working to close attainment and progress gaps and to promote improved attainment, especially in Key Stage 2.

## Information about the school

The school is small in comparison to most other primary schools. It serves a residential district, drawing its pupils from across a wide geographical area. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has increased since the time of the school's last inspection, although it remains smaller than average. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a very small proportion from other heritages. Since its last inspection the school has achieved Healthy School status and the Basic Skills Quality Mark has been renewed for the fourth time. A breakfast club is provided each day during term time. The school experienced some staffing turbulence during the last school year linked to the long-term absence of key staff members and this continues to be the case in the current year.

**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**

**2**

## Main findings

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. Attainment is rising and the rate of pupils' progress is increasing well as a result of strong leadership that has resulted in significant improvement to the quality of teaching and the curriculum.

Children's skills on entry to school vary from year to year because of the small numbers; however, they are usually a little above expectation for their age. The Early Years Foundation Stage gets their education off to a good start. They continue to progress well in Key Stage 1 and attainment at the end of Year 2 is high and has been for the past two years. Previously, this was not the case and so the broadly average attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 represents satisfactory progress from these pupils' average starting points. Most pupils go on to reach average levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2, although the proportions reaching the higher levels have been much smaller in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. The school is working increasingly successfully to ensure appropriate challenge and support for its more-able pupils, so that they reach their potential, although it is acknowledged that there is still more work to be done to achieve this.

Pupils benefit from teaching that is good overall and an imaginatively designed and well-enriched curriculum. Parents and carers express their appreciation of the school's caring ethos and pupils value their school and enjoy the learning activities it provides for them. Initiatives to improve pupils' writing skills are bringing about rapid improvements in the quality of their written work. This is having a positive impact on their enjoyment of learning and on their progress and attainment across the curriculum. Nevertheless, attainment in writing remains lower than in other subjects. Although the quality of teaching was good or better in most of the lessons seen, with some effective strategies now in use, there is a very small residue of teaching that is satisfactory.

There is a strong team ethos, with staff and knowledgeable governors sharing a focus on improvement and a keen resolve to take the school forward. Rigorous monitoring and review mean that the school's self-evaluation is accurate. The effectiveness of both the Early Years Foundation Stage and governance were judged inadequate at the last inspection. This is no longer the case and both are now of good quality, exemplifying significant improvements already achieved by the school's leaders. In addition, attainment and progress are showing marked improvement. All of these factors mean that the school has a good capacity for continued improvement.

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.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Reinforce the ongoing drive to raise pupils' overall attainment and accelerate the rate of their progress by ensuring that:
  - the improvement in attainment in writing seen in pupils' current work is continued
  - in Key Stage 2, more-able pupils are further challenged, so that they achieve as well as possible in English and mathematics
  - the very small amount of satisfactory teaching is eliminated so that all teaching is at least good.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils show interest in their work in lessons and are responsive learners. They enjoy working with a partner or in a group and they share and offer their ideas with confidence. Their study skills are developing well. They listen carefully and present their work with care. In the past, Year 6 pupils' attainment has been broadly average and their progress through Key Stage 2 has been patchy. This has been addressed through effective action by school leaders and currently, pupils in Key Stage 2 are attaining higher standards and progressing more quickly. Writing was recognised as a priority area for improvement last year because progress was slower and attainment was lower than in the other subjects. Although pupils' overall achievement in school is still satisfactory rather than good, the work in their books shows particular improvement in their writing skills, especially in Key Stage 2, and this is adding to pupils' confidence as writers and to their enjoyment of learning. However, writing remains a weaker element of pupils' work. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points and abilities, in line with their peers.

Pupils show a good understanding of issues around personal safety. They form good relationships with each other and with the adults in school and they say they are confident help is on hand if they encounter any problems. Pupils and parents agree that school is a place of safety. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and they participate enthusiastically in the range of activities provided to support their health, fitness and well-being. They enjoy taking responsibility, for example as play leaders and road safety officers. They are enthusiastic fund-raisers for charities at home and abroad. All of this, together with their improving basic skills, contributes to preparing them well for the next stages in their education. Pupils show a good understanding of the sound moral values the school promotes and this is reflected in their good behaviour and considerate attitudes. Attendance is above the national average.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> 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?

Good and sometimes outstanding teaching is contributing well to pupils' learning and helping them to progress more rapidly. Lessons are predominantly planned well to take the range of learners' needs into account. In the small minority of less effective lessons, the pace of learning is too slow and some pupils, especially the more able, find their work too easy. In most lessons, however, learning moves along briskly and the level of challenge is good and this is helping pupils to progress more speedily. Regular assessment means that class teachers have a clear overview of pupils' progress and they use this well in order to identify where extra support is needed. Teaching assistants help to support pupils' learning effectively, especially those who have additional needs.

The curriculum promotes pupils' learning and personal development well. Pupils enjoy an increasing number of opportunities to practise and develop their basic skills, especially in writing, through work across the range of subjects. This is a significant factor in the accelerated progress currently being made in writing. Topics that are relevant for pupils are helping to make learning more interesting. The curriculum is enriched well by opportunities for pupils to develop skills in sports and the arts and to learn a modern foreign language. A good range of visitors and visits helps to promote pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education.

Good teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensure they enjoy full access to learning and are included in everything on offer. Pastoral

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care is good and the school works sensitively to support its more vulnerable pupils and their families. This is helping to break down barriers to learning and progress that pupils sometimes encounter. Attendance and punctuality are promoted effectively. Good links with local high schools benefit pupils at transition. The school collaborates well with a range of agencies that support pupils' health, welfare, social and learning needs. The popular breakfast club is appreciated by pupils and parents and starts the school day off happily.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides clearly focused leadership and staff assist her in assuring the good quality of provision. Effective teamwork has helped to ensure continuity of provision and smooth day-to-day management of the school during a period of staffing turbulence, including the absence of key senior staff members. Leaders have brought about significant improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the governing body has successfully developed its ability to combine effective support with strong challenge to the school to continue to improve. Members of the governing body have a wide range of relevant expertise and are actively involved in the daily life of the school. Assessment and review systems are firmly embedded and leaders have a clear understanding of what the next steps need to be to ensure further improvement. The school's actions to raise attainment and increase progress have proved effective and the information from termly progress reviews is used well to plan interventions and to provide support. Through their rigorous monitoring leaders are aware that there is still a very small amount of teaching that is only satisfactory and are working to address this.

Parents and carers appreciate all that is done to support their children's welfare. The school complies well with statutory requirements for safeguarding, health and safety and child protection through well-managed procedures and through ongoing review of their effectiveness. Its inclusive ethos supports the promotion of equal opportunities and access to educational entitlement satisfactorily. The school contributes well to community cohesion through a range of partnerships and activities in the community and with the church and parish, and also through the developing international dimension in its curriculum.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children make good progress and gain positive attitudes, becoming happy, interested learners, so that by the end of the Reception Year, most are working above expected levels for their age. The quality of teaching is good and children are provided with a good balance between activities they choose for themselves and those led by adults. This supports the development of independence skills well. Assessment is informed by evidence gathered through observations of the children in their activities and staff use this information well to help them plan the next steps in learning. The setting is effective in identifying and supporting children with additional learning needs. Children interact well with each other and enjoy warm, trusting relationships with the caring staff; as a result, they grow in confidence, they are happy and secure and ready to learn. They settle quickly because induction procedures are sensitive and the staff establish the positive relationships with parents and carers that prevail throughout the school. The setting is led and managed well and the staff team work together well; good leadership and management have been sustained through a period of temporary change in leadership. Staff have created a stimulating and supportive learning environment both indoors and in the outdoor area. Provision is monitored regularly and this supports ongoing improvements. For example, a current priority is to ensure that children progress as well as possible in developing early writing skills. Procedures to ensure children's welfare are good and meet all requirements.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

Most of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire said they agree or strongly agree that they are happy with their children's experience at the school. This is in line with the inspection team's judgement on the good care, guidance and support that the school provides and on the good overall quality of provision. Several parents and carers commented on how eager their children are to come to school each day and on their confidence in the staff team. Others remarked on the good home&school communications, saying how they appreciate the fact that the school consults and supports them regularly through questionnaires, newsletters, meetings and workshops. Many of their responses indicate that parents and carers place a high value on the school's caring ethos. Most parents and carers said they feel that behaviour is managed well and this is in line with the inspection's findings. A few responses indicated concerns about the amount of progress their children are making. The inspection team shares some of the concerns, and inspection findings on progress are given in the report and reflected in the areas for improvement that have been identified.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Little Sutton CofE 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 57 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 127 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	61	22	39	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	63	21	37	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	24	42	29	51	4	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	46	21	37	9	16	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	51	25	44	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	39	31	54	3	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	49	27	47	1	2	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	42	28	49	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	40	29	51	5	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	26	32	56	9	16	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	39	27	47	7	12	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	26	46	26	46	4	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	54	20	35	4	7	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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



23 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Little Sutton CofE Primary School, South Wirral, CH66 4PP**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. As you know, we came to see how well the school is doing and how you are all getting on with your learning.

We found that Little Sutton CE Primary is a satisfactory school and that it is a happy place for you to learn and grow together. You are well behaved and polite young people. Your attendance is good. You work hard in your lessons, you enjoy your work and you get on well with each other and with the grown-ups in school. They look after you well. They have been working hard, too, to make sure you are taught well and that lessons are really interesting for you. Your progress in learning has improved and standards are rising, especially in writing. Keep up the good work!

These are some things I have asked the school's leaders to do, because I think they will help your school to carry on improving.

- Continue the good work to help you become confident and able writers.
- Make sure that those of you who could work at higher levels are given plenty of challenge to help you to do as well as you possibly can.
- Make sure that teaching is always good or better.

You can help by continuing to do your best and by continuing to be happy learners.

With my very best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Diane Auton

Lead inspector

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