

Silverstone Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121883
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	363947
Inspection dates	19–20 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Joseph Peacock

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	82
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Hall
Headteacher	Julie Letts
Date of previous school inspection	31 October 2007
School address	High Street Silverstone NN12 8US
Telephone number	01327 857351
Fax number	01327 857351
Email address	Bursar@silverstone-inf.northants-ecl.gov.uk

Age group	4–7
Inspection dates	19–20 May 2011
Inspection number	363947

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited five lessons and observed three teachers. They held meetings with the headteacher, governors and staff, talked to parents, carers and children, and looked at the school's planning and assessment data. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation including minutes of meetings of the governing body, improvement planning and that relating to safeguarding and children's welfare. They scrutinised 49 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, and those returned by staff.

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

- How effective are strategies to raise attainment in reading and writing for boys and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities?
- What is the extent of pupils' knowledge and awareness of cultural diversity in this country?
- How accurate is the assessment of children's attainment from when they enter school and how much progress do they make during their Reception year?

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than the average primary school. Just under 20% of pupils travel to the school from outside the normal catchment area. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average but the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average. Very few are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has been federated to the village junior school, which is on a separate site, for the past seven years. Both schools have the same headteacher and governing body. The junior school was inspected in 2010. This inspection is of the infant school only.

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

This is an outstanding school with outstanding leadership and management and excellent governance. Issues from the last inspection report, such as developing the role of governors, have been dealt with very effectively. The quality of teaching and learning is excellent and this has resulted in most pupils making outstanding progress. Over the last two years, attainment by the end of Year 2 has been high. There has been a strong focus on improving the curriculum to help boys to do better in reading and writing. The outstanding curriculum ensures that by Year 2, there is little difference in attainment between boys and girls. A scrutiny of pupils' completed work and school performance data show that attainment is high in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from the excellent care, guidance and support for them and all other pupils and invariably make the same rapid progress as other pupils.

The improvement from a good school to an outstanding one has largely been achieved through the headteacher's inspirational leadership and management. Parents and carers are very appreciative, as shown in the extremely positive response to the inspection questionnaire. Staff are absolutely in tune with parental expectations and work as one to ensure those expectations are fulfilled. An excellent and very productive partnership with the junior school, other local schools and agencies that offer specialist help to some pupils has also played an important role in driving forward improvements.

Children in the Reception class have a good start to school. This is due to the effective leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the consistently good quality of teaching. Careful planning, following an accurate assessment when children start school, ensures that learning is closely matched to the individual needs of the children. Resources for information and communication technology are used extensively to enhance learning experiences.

When asked about possible improvements, one pupil was quick to say, 'Absolutely nothing! I like the school just as it is.' There are three simple rules for pupils to follow. 'Is it safe? Is it kind? Is it right?' These effectively guide pupils' conduct. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in lessons and around school ensuring all feel safe and respected. The outstanding level of attendance over the past two years reflects pupils' pride in their school and how much they enjoy their learning. Pupils gain a good understanding of cultural diversity beyond the rural location of the school through the curriculum and effective links with urban schools where the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is much higher.

Frequent monitoring and challenging evaluations show that the headteacher and highly effective governing body have a clear ambition to continue improving outcomes and provision. Their self-evaluation of the school's effectiveness is too modest in some cases but generally accurate. Currently, one improvement plan covers both schools and some of

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

the priorities from the long list are more specific to one school than the other. As a result, action to bring about change is not as sharply focused as it needs to be for the infant school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that key priorities for improvement are relevant to the infant school and a more manageable number are identified each year in the school improvement plan.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, benefit from the extra attention the favourable staffing level facilitates. In the vast majority of lessons, pupils make excellent progress and achieve high standards because they listen attentively and are keen to learn. Their concentration rarely wavers and they always try their best to complete whatever they are asked to do by their teachers.

Overall attainment by the end of Year 2 is high. This high level of attainment has been evident in the school's national test results almost every year for the last five years. Last year, attainment in reading and writing was above rather than significantly above average. This was linked to the higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in this year group. Staff have employed a range of effective strategies such as involving parents and carers to promote reading skills at home and daily sessions to promote a better understanding of letter sounds. Particular attention has been focused on boys because their attainment was generally lower than that of girls. These measures have brought about an improvement and almost closed the gap between girls' and boys' attainment by the end of Year 2. Currently, attainment is high in reading, writing and mathematics and all pupils are making excellent progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same excellent progress as other pupils. They often have individual support. Detailed lesson planning ensures that their specific learning needs are being met successfully.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and take full advantage of the many opportunities offered to them by, for example, attending many of the clubs and sporting activities that the school organises. Most have an excellent understanding of staying fit and healthy, and keeping themselves and others safe. They also develop an excellent understanding of responsibility through the 'Responsibility Chart' which lists a range of jobs to be undertaken. The school is an integral part of village life and pupils are often involved in community events such as recycling and charity fundraising. Taking on additional responsibilities in school and the local community considerably extends their social development. Outstanding attendance, excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning, and competent skills when using computers further enhance skills that will be of benefit for pupils in later life. Topics include lessons about different cultures and faiths and most have a good knowledge about Judaism, which was the latest religion studied.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
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?

The highly effective teaching and learning ensure all pupils enjoy school and make excellent progress. Most lessons make good use of technology. In Year 2, pupils used computers to find information about plants and took photographs of trees and plants that they found in the school grounds. In one lesson, where teaching and learning were outstanding, pupils were highly motivated by their teacher dressed as a pirate and successfully created a dance sequence. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed showing how they thought a pirate would skip. Pupils' work is carefully marked, and teachers make helpful comments about how the work can be improved. These helpful comments are not always followed up by pupils.

The excellent curriculum is not only ensuring consistently high standards in literacy and numeracy but also that pupils are excited about their learning. Memorable experiences recently include visiting a castle, the theatre and a butterfly farm. Groups of pupils enjoy working in their 'forest school' which is an area within the grounds or nearby woods. They study themes with a link to nature and these develop literacy and creative skills as well as increasing their scientific knowledge and ecological awareness. Staff expertise in music and information and communication technology ensures that skills in these subjects are taught effectively as part of the wide and varied curriculum. The curriculum is also enhanced by visits, visitors and extra-curricular clubs, such as French and sporting activities.

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

Pupils are exceptionally well cared for, guided and supported in a very positive atmosphere that enables them to feel safe and confident. Parents and carers are equally positive about how well their children are cared for and looked after by staff. Provision to help the few pupils who may be more vulnerable is outstanding, ensuring that they successfully overcome barriers to learning, improve their behaviour, and achieve their true potential. Transition arrangements into school and with the federated junior school are a strength and ensure pupils settle quickly and make friends. Excellent attendance is successfully promoted by staff and extremely well supported by parents and carers who value what the school provides each day for their children.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
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 effectiveness of leadership and management is well illustrated by the reputation the school enjoys with parents and carers. This reputation is fully justified. Staff work as a team to give their full support. Their drive and determination to continue to improve is reflected in the frequent highly effective assessment of teaching and learning which underpins the improvement since the previous inspection. The governing body is extremely well informed and has a very clear view of the school's strengths because most governors visit often and are keen to find out for themselves how effective teaching and learning are. The current school improvement plan reflects governors' excellent commitment and has a long list of areas they wish to develop, monitor and evaluate. Some of these, such as the use of computers, are more relevant to the federated junior school, rather than being specific to the infant school. Governors use their considerable expertise to help the school evaluate how effectively it is meeting its targets.

The tracking of the pupils' progress is thorough, and analysis of provision is detailed. This provides valuable background for the headteacher's and subject leaders' discussions with the staff and individual pupils about progress. Detailed evaluations of how well boys, girls and those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are doing illustrate well the school's successful work to promote equality of opportunity. The school has excellent relationships with parents and carers. Their views are regularly sought and acted upon. Many were keen to let inspectors know how highly they rated their close involvement with the school and the 'best' education it provides for their children.

The school has good arrangements for making sure that the pupils are as safe as possible. The teachers develop the pupils' knowledge of staying safe by using the specialist knowledge of visitors such as the local police. The school is a cohesive community within a village community that successfully promotes a strong sense of belonging for all. Pupils

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

are proud of their school and the community, which is famous for its motor racing circuit. However, its size and location present challenges in developing the pupils' understanding of communities beyond their own. To counter this, the school has developed effective links with other schools in this area and abroad. These links are giving pupils good opportunities to mix with and learn about those from different backgrounds.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

The effective leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensure children are happy and enjoy coming to school. Parents and carers are particularly appreciative of the close relationships they have with staff and the good start their children have in Reception.

Attainment on entry is broadly in line with that expected for children of this age. Most children make good progress and enter Year 1 with attainment that is above that normally expected in each area of learning. The latest assessment on entry shows that children's skills in writing and their personal, social and emotional development are not as well developed as other aspects. Staff focus strongly on improving these areas. The very favourable ratio of adults to children ensures all have the support they need to do their work and develop strong relationships with staff and other children. As a result, progress is accelerated in children's social and emotional development. Progress is rapid in developing writing skills despite staff sometimes missing opportunities to include writing during some indoor and outdoor activities.

The children play and work well together, displaying independence that allows them to pursue their own learning through the activities that are led by adults and those they choose themselves. Most concentrate well on a task until it is complete. Teachers' expectations are high and carefully planned learning links are made between different

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

areas of learning. Children enjoyed painting butterflies, for example, and making symmetrical patterns on each wing. All were excited about the forthcoming trip to a butterfly farm.

There is a free flow of activities from inside the classroom to the spacious and stimulating outdoor area, where there are many opportunities for learning and adventurous play. Adults are constantly developing conversation, encouraging and helping the children to develop their skills. Speaking skills were promoted effectively when children wore minibeast masks to encourage role-play activities. Staff are particularly effective in promoting the children's knowledge of letters and sounds in daily phonic sessions. Using modern technology such as cameras, mobile programmable toys and computers to enhance learning is a strength because of the expertise of the class teacher. Children concentrated intently when examining minibeasts which were magnified onto a computer screen. The choices the children make are carefully monitored and the staff routinely and accurately record children's progress.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers who returned their questionnaires clearly hold the school in high regard. There was full agreement on 10 of the questions. Almost all of those who made additional comments were extremely pleased with the work of the school, particularly the approachability of staff and the way they are involved in supporting their children's learning. Others commented on how much their children enjoy school. 'Staff are completely dedicated at every level' and 'best education possible' are typical comments. Inspectors endorse the positive views of parents and carers. A very few in their written comments want more feedback on progress. This was investigated and inspectors found that staff do all that can be reasonably expected to keep parents and carers informed about how well their children are doing at the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Silverstone Infant 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 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 82 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	82	9	18	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	44	90	5	10	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	35	71	14	29	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	65	16	33	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	39	80	10	20	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	78	10	20	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	78	11	22	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)	39	80	9	18	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	35	71	14	29	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	59	15	31	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	76	7	14	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	73	11	22	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	86	6	12	0	0	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



23 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Silverstone Infant School, Silverstone, NN12 8US

I really enjoyed my visit to your school. You go to an outstanding school. Seeing you at work in lessons, and looking at your finished work and the information the teachers collect, it is clear that you are all making excellent progress. Your headteacher and teachers have worked very hard since the last inspection and made many improvements. The really interesting things planned for you to do in lessons make sure every day is enjoyable and challenging. I can see why your attendance is so high and none of you want to miss a single day with your friends at school. All the extra time you are spending practising your reading and writing seems to be paying dividends because your attainment is high in these areas as well as in mathematics.

The youngest of you do well in the Reception class and have many activities to enjoy in the classroom and outside. I was impressed with how well you all use computers and cameras when you are working. Those of you in the Bug Research Lab had fun using the computer-linked magnifier. I hope you enjoyed your trip to the butterfly farm and learnt a lot about butterflies.

All of you get on superbly well at your school. Those of you I spoke to told me that you feel safe at school, and that you try very hard to keep the three simple but very special school rules. In the lessons I visited, everyone behaved brilliantly. Most of you were quick to tell me how patient and helpful your teachers are and about all your school awards. Your parents and carers seemed to enjoy your celebration assembly as much as I did!

I have asked staff and governors to concentrate on just a few things to improve each year rather than trying to improve so many things. These may or may not be the same as for the junior school. I do hope you continue to enjoy school, and help it to stay outstanding by working just as hard as you do now in all your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Joseph Peacock

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.