

# Sledmere Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103772
<b>Local Authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	376961
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 September 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Driscoll

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	451
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jill Snow
<b>Headteacher</b>	Clive Danks
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	07 July 2009
<b>School address</b>	The School Drive Off Buffery Road Dudley DY2 8EH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 818425
<b>Fax number</b>	01384 818426
<b>Email address</b>	info@sledmere.dudley.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	12–13 September 2011
<b>Inspection number</b>	376961

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](mailto: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 information 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'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2011



## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors, who observed 31 lessons taught by 19 teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at records of pupils' attainment and progress, the school's development plan, records of checks on teaching and documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils. They also analysed responses to questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and 139 parents and carers.

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

- How successful are the school's actions to improve attendance?
- Is teaching providing sufficient challenge in Years 1 and 2, especially for the most able?
- Do pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make as much progress as other pupils in Years 1 to 6?

## Information about the school

The school is much larger than average. The number of pupils on roll has risen significantly since the school was last inspected. A high proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is average. The school has a relatively high number of pupils who are in the care of the local authority. The majority of pupils come from a White British background, with around one in three from a wide range of different minority ethnic backgrounds. A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. Many of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English when they start the Early Years Foundation Stage. As the inspection took place in the second week of the school year, children in the reception class were starting their first full day at the start of the inspection. Those in nursery had not yet started, but were visiting in small groups with their parents and carers as part of the school's induction procedures.

**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

The school provides a good education for its pupils, who achieve well and leave Year 6 with levels of attainment that are in line with the national average. Children get off to an outstanding start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where the highly skilled team of staff continuously adapt their teaching in lessons in order to meet the needs of every individual. Children join the nursery with a very low level of skills for their age, but start Year 1 with average attainment as a result of their outstanding progress. The provision for language development is exceptionally effective, especially for those children at an early stage of learning English. Progress is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 make better use of information from assessment to set work that pupils find challenging. In addition, teachers in Years 1 and 2 often talk for too long to the whole class rather than speedily moving pupils on to tasks that are matched to their individual abilities.

Pupils' personal development is also good in most respects. Their behaviour both in and out of lessons is usually at least good and they are polite and respectful to visitors. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and are quick to put their views forward when discussing fair play and equality. Their social development is also good. Good relationships are a strength; there is a very high degree of racial harmony throughout the school. Pupils are keen to take responsibility in school, but are given relatively few opportunities to play a constructive part in the local community or engage with others from further afield who come from backgrounds different from their own. Pupils feel very safe in school and trust the staff to take good care of them.

The school has progressed well since it was last inspected. The staff's accurate self-evaluations have pinpointed those areas most in need of improvement and actions to address weaknesses have proved successful. The school can rightly point to rising attainment, improved progress and higher attendance as evidence of its good capacity to improve.

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

- Ensure pupils in Years 1 and 2 make at least good progress by:
  - making better use of information from assessments to plan suitably challenging tasks for individuals
  - using shorter introductions to lessons, allowing more time for independent

**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

activities that are better matched to all pupils' abilities.

- Provide pupils with more opportunities to participate in projects that benefit the local community and engage with others from backgrounds different from their own.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Achievement is good. Attainment is increasing faster than the national average across the school, as rates of progress are improved. Those pupils who left Year 6 in 2011 made good progress in Years 1 to 6, improving their levels of attainment from well below average to average by the time they left. Pupils are keen to do their best and produce well-presented work. They pay full attention and work hard on their tasks in Years 3 to 6, but their concentration wanders in Years 1 and 2 on occasions when they find work too easy. Lower attainers, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities; particularly enjoy using computers because they find it easier to produce a neat and impressive outcome. All pupils are motivated by a competitive element in lessons, particularly in mathematics. 'No, I can't give you that sum because it's too hard for you' one teacher teased. 'Yes, we want to do it! Give us harder ones!' was the enthusiastic response from the class, who desperately wanted to prove the teacher wrong.

There are no major differences in progress between different groups of pupils in Years 1 to 6, with all making satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in later years. The school has deployed an extra teacher in most year groups, which has reduced class sizes and allowed pupils to be grouped more accurately according to their ability. This has particularly benefitted the most able pupils and those with special educational need and/or disabilities in Years 3 to 6, where they make good progress. This approach has now been implemented in Year 1, to meet the needs of the most able pupils and those with special educational need and/or disabilities more effectively. Currently, the progress of middle ability pupils in Years 1 and 2 is better than that of others because the work is often pitched at their level, with the more able finding it rather easy and the least able not always keeping up.

Pupils know well what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, but the contents of their packed lunches do not always show that this knowledge is put into practice in their daily lives. Pupils get on very well with one another and there are few incidents of poor behaviour. The rate of exclusions is well below the national average. The good relationships help pupils to feel safe and secure. There were no concerns about bullying raised by any pupil, parent or carer. Pupils said that even the smallest incidents of name calling were very swiftly dealt with by staff.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

**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

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

## How effective is the provision?

All teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach and answer unexpected questions with confidence. In the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6, teachers take careful account of pupils' prior attainment when planning lessons and set appropriately challenging tasks. In the best lessons there is outstanding learning; teachers quickly and accurately assess pupils' progress and adapt individual tasks as the lesson progresses. This was most commonly observed in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In Year 1, teachers are not using the accurate assessments from the Reception classes to help them plan effectively, so some pupils have got off to a slower start to the year. Some of the biggest improvements have been made in reading, especially in Years 1 and 2. Teachers across the school choose books that interest pupils and motivate them to read for themselves. Pupils are becoming keen readers by the time they leave Year 2. The curriculum has also been adapted well to promote learning in English and mathematics using other subjects. Year 6 were re-enacting the War of the Roses, for example, making stirring speeches to the troops. Later, one boy stood sadly to the side. 'I'm Richard III' he said 'I'm dead', and eloquently explained the outcome of the war. The school provides a very wide range of extra clubs and activities, which are well supported by pupils of all ages.

Parents and carers are very pleased with the welcoming environment and the quality of care offered by the school. Induction procedures are outstanding. The numerous home visits carried out by staff from the Early Years Foundation Stage, together with a very well planned series of visits to the nursery ensure children settle remarkably quickly. Children in the care of the local authority are very well cared for and supported. Strong links are maintained with their carers so that any concerns can be

<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

**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

addressed at the earliest possible stage. This contributes effectively to all such pupils and they make good progress, both academically and in their personal development, and are on track to meet their challenging targets. The school’s actions, including phoning parents and carers on the first day of absence, installing a dedicated telephone line for them to call and producing booklets in their home language, have proved successful in improving attendance. Attendance has risen significantly since the school was last inspected and is now average.

*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’s calm and decisive leadership, supported by other managers, provides good drive for improvement. There is a strong team spirit amongst staff, all of whom are keen to improve the school’s performance. Checks on teaching are thorough and accurate. They provide very clear guidance on how even the best lessons can be improved further. Members of the governing body now play a much more significant role in monitoring and evaluating the school’s work. They identify areas for improvement themselves and are quick to ask what is being done to address them. They check the results by working with teachers and so play a good role in helping to driving the school forward. Statutory requirements are met, including those for safeguarding. There is good support for children in care, together with very strong links with agencies to support pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Other partnerships are more limited. There is a productive link with a local secondary school, but the school’s own audit of provision for community cohesion has identified the need for better links with schools in other areas, both home and abroad, to provide pupils with more opportunities to learn about people from backgrounds different from their own.

The school has an ethos that promotes equality and tackles discrimination. Pupils are successfully taught to respect and value differences between people. The high degree of racial harmony and lack of incidents of discriminatory behaviour are testament to the school’s success in this area. Gaps in performance, such as gender differences in English apparent in 2010, have been eliminated, because the school’s leaders have analysed data well, drawn up precise priorities for improvement and implemented successful actions to address them. These have been well supported by the specific targeting of funds, such as the provision of extra teachers to boost progress and increasing social worker time to raise attendance.

**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 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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a stimulating and exciting environment in which all groups of children flourish. Inside and outdoor areas are constantly being adapted to provide something new for children to discover. Outstanding leadership ensures that provision continues to go from strength to strength, using a detailed and highly focused action plan. Data on children’s achievement is analysed exceptionally well. Language development has been made a top priority and this is just one aspect where the setting excels. Staff are highly knowledgeable about how to promote speaking, listening, reading and writing, and take every opportunity to do so. They model language consistently and repeatedly, ensuring children make rapid gains in learning their letters and spelling words. All is done with humour that promotes a sense of fun and enjoyment of learning. There is a strong emphasis on learning through investigation and creative activities that ensures children leave reception as confident, curious, independent learners. Children have their own healthy café, for example, where they decide what to eat, when to eat it and how it is managed. Expectations are high, including for behaviour, which is outstanding. Attainment is average in all areas of learning, because all aspects of development are given the same level of attention. All children are known very well by their key workers and their welfare is given an equally high priority.

All staff plan short, sharp activities as a team using the accurate results of high quality assessments. These plans serve as a starting point for each child, with amendments made for individuals as lessons develop so that progress is optimised. Provision for community cohesion is strong, children visit other schools to play and learn with others from backgrounds different from their own. Parents and carers are rightly very pleased with the education and support their children receive. Classes



**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 provided for parents and carers of children who speak English as an additional language so they can find out how best to help their children at home. Reports are detailed and comprehensive.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are very pleased with the quality of education the school provides. They hold views that are similar to those of the inspectors. A very few parents and carers were concerned about behaviour at playtimes. Inspectors observed break and lunchtime, as well as analysing records of incidents and talking to pupils. They found that behaviour was good at playtimes.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sledmere 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 139 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 451 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	80	58	56	40	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	75	54	62	45	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	64	46	73	53	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	67	48	63	45	5	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	76	55	62	45	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	74	53	58	42	4	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	59	42	70	50	6	4	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)	54	39	74	53	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	58	42	67	48	8	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	53	38	71	51	8	6	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	55	40	71	51	5	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	66	47	67	48	2	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	86	62	48	35	2	1	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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 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"> <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.**



14 September 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Sledmere Primary School, Dudley, DY2 8EH**

Thank you for all the help you gave us when we visited your school. We found you to be polite and well behaved. You are now coming to school more often, so you learn more quickly. You told us that you go to a good school where you learn a lot of new things. We agree. The youngest children get off to a fantastic start in the Nursery and Reception and the majority of you make good progress as you move up the school. Progress is good in Years 3 to 6. Progress in Years 1 and 2 isn't quite as good as in other classes, because sometimes the work is too easy or too hard. We have asked your teachers to make sure they know what you can already do, and then plan work that builds on this. We have also asked them not to talk for so long at the start of lessons so that you have more time for your own work. We were impressed by how well most of you concentrated in lessons and on producing your best work. Well done!

You told us that you all get on well with one another, and we could see this was true from the way you all worked so well in pairs and groups. You learn about how your friends live, but not so much about the lives of those from other areas of the country or other countries. We have asked your teachers to give you more opportunities to meet children from other places, and also to let you take part in projects that will help your own community. Perhaps you could come up with some ideas about how to improve your local area?

Your school is getting better and better every year. The headteacher and others who help him to run the school are good at working out exactly what needs to be improved, and what to do about it. All of the staff are working together to help you get the best possible education. They take good care of you and make sure you all feel safe and secure in school.

With all best wishes for your future

Yours sincerely

David Driscoll  
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](http://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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**