

Sefton Park Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108961
Local Authority	City of Bristol
Inspection number	377855
Inspection dates	21–22 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Michael Merchant

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Bremner
Headteacher	Jan Lonsdale
Date of previous school inspection	12 November 2008
School address	St Bartholomew's Road Ashley Down Bristol BS7 9BJ
Telephone number	0117 377 2555
Fax number	0117 377 3292
Email address	sefton.park.j@bristol.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Sixteen lessons or part lessons were observed, taught by nine different teachers. Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, staff and the headteacher. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including the school's records of pupils' attainment and progress, and school policies, including safeguarding documentation and the school development plan. In addition, questionnaires from 107 parents and carers, 100 pupils and 26 staff were analysed.

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

- The effectiveness of strategies to improve pupils' attainment, particularly in mathematics.
- The accuracy of teachers' assessments, and the use made of the resulting information to plan further steps in learning.
- The impact of actions taken by school leaders and managers to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Information about the school

This school is similar in size to most other primary schools. It is part of a federation with an infant school on the same site. The federation has a single governing body and the headteacher leads and manages both schools. Most pupils live locally and just over a quarter of the pupils are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being of Asian or Asian-British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than average. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Their needs relate mainly to moderate learning difficulties. However, an above-average proportion has a statement of special educational needs. The school has a breakfast club and an after-school club on the site, but they are not managed by the governing body and are subject to a separate inspection. In 2009, the school gained Healthy Schools status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Sefton Park Junior School provides its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education. Pupils are happy in this caring school. As a result, pupils enjoy learning and are eager to participate in all activities. A very positive atmosphere permeates the school and relationships are strong, behaviour is good and pupils have a high regard for their classmates and the adults who work with them. Parents and carers are very supportive, and even those who have some criticisms recognise that their children love coming to school. One wrote, 'Sefton Park offers a stimulating education to our children who both love their learning and are really happy.'

Pupils typically make the transition from the infant school very smoothly. By the end of Year 6, pupils have made satisfactory progress and their attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average. Attainment has risen steadily over recent years but results in national tests in 2011 fell. The school lost a number of experienced teachers during the preceding year and the monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress were not as consistent as they should have been. The systems to check pupils' progress are now more reliable, and show that the progress of the majority of pupils through the school is improving. All groups, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make at least satisfactory progress in all years. However, pupils continue to do relatively less well in mathematics, mainly because their mathematical problem-solving skills, although improving, remain a weakness.

Achievement is no better than satisfactory because there is still not enough good teaching to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress. In many lessons pupils spend too much time listening to the teachers' talk, with limited opportunities to work with each other or on their own. Activities are not always closely matched to the capabilities of different pupils. The curriculum provides a solid foundation for a variety of activities across the age range. It matches pupils' needs well in some respects, but links between subjects have yet to be fully exploited to ensure that pupils regularly practise their number skills, or their research and enquiry skills.

Good care, guidance and support for pupils, and, when required, their families, enable all pupils to feel safe, happy and valued as individuals. Pupils' personal skills are good, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. By the time pupils leave in Year 6, they are confident, well-rounded young people, ready to play their full part in the world beyond school.

The school is satisfactorily led and managed. School leaders have empowered the

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many new teaching staff, who know what is expected of them and feel confident that they are part of a successful future. Middle leaders, many of whom are new to their posts, are enthusiastic, although their responsibilities have not been developed well enough for them to be fully accountable for pupils' attainment and progress in their respective areas. The school has a wealth of data from tracking pupils' progress but many of the judgements in its self-evaluation are overly optimistic. The governing body supports the school and plays a key role in promoting safeguarding and links with parents and carers. It is well placed to play an increased role in reviewing developments and in challenging the school to improve further. The steady rise in pupils' attainment and progress in recent years and other improving outcomes for pupils reflect satisfactory capacity for sustained 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise rates of progress in mathematics for all pupils by:
 - ensuring that effective techniques to teach number and mathematical problem-solving skills are employed consistently
 - ensuring that swift and effective interventions are implemented to address underperformance
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their number skills across the curriculum.

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better in all year groups by:
 - making sure that there is a sharper match between work set and the different abilities of pupils
 - giving pupils more responsibility for their own learning by encouraging them to be more active and inquisitive in class.

- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of subject and phase leaders are clear, and that they are consistently accountable for pupils' attainment and progress in the areas for which they are responsible.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Most pupils behave well in lessons, enjoy learning and are keen to do their best. The quality of learning in all the lessons seen was at least satisfactory, and it was often good or better. When tasks are engaging, pupils' application is good, they persevere well in order to find success, and they develop very positive attitudes to learning. In one excellent Year 6 English lesson, for example, high teacher expectations and

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Careful planning led to pupils producing some high quality descriptive writing. However, when activities are less engaging some pupils lose concentration and their behaviour can deteriorate.

Pupils’ attainment when they join the school in Year 3 is broadly average. The work seen by inspectors in lessons confirms the overall picture of satisfactory progress and broadly average attainment by Year 6. Progress was seen to be good in English. This is because teachers explain complicated ideas well and have rightly focused on encouraging pupils to explain their ideas after reading a text, which in turn develops their ability to write well. Progress is slower, though satisfactory, in mathematics because of the difficulty many pupils have in solving written number problems. Pupils’ achievement overall is satisfactory. Boys and girls make similar progress, despite the uneven numbers in some year groups. As a result of good support and well-targeted interventions, the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that of their peers.

Pupils report that they feel safe and well cared for in school and have a high degree of trust in, and respect for, the staff who work with them. They have a good knowledge and understanding of what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle, reflecting the Healthy Schools status the school has attained. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of right and wrong and an appreciation and enjoyment of the wonders of life around them. Pupils are offered some opportunities to exercise leadership roles within the school, but these, along with opportunities to engage with the wider community, are not well developed.

Pupils develop good social and interpersonal skills and relish working collaboratively, having highly developed skills of listening, taking turns and giving and receiving positive criticism. This, together with good key skills in English and information and communication technology, and their above average attendance, means that pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their lives.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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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

How effective is the provision?

Care, guidance and support are strong features of the school's provision. The school has a caring ethos in which all pupils, especially those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, receive good support. Parents and carers agree that their children are looked after well. Child protection procedures are rigorous and effective. Good links with specialists help pupils with their learning, social skills and emotional development.

Teachers are good at telling pupils exactly what they are expected to do in lessons and this helps them to make sense of their learning. In many lessons, pupils benefit from teachers' high expectations for their learning, and here pupils make good progress. Teachers' secure subject knowledge and their positive relationships with pupils are common features in most lessons. In the less successful lessons, work is not matched sufficiently well to pupils' needs and capabilities. It is too teacher-directed and there are few opportunities for pupils to learn independently. These weaknesses in the teaching are inhibiting pupils' progress from being good in too many lessons. Assessment procedures to check pupils' progress have improved recently. Consequently, teachers are more aware of the progress made by different groups of pupils, including those who need to make up lost ground. Pupils have targets in English and mathematics, but their knowledge of these is variable. Pupils are at a very early stage of evaluating their own progress towards these targets.

The school has recently revised its curriculum to make it more exciting and creative. The new themed approach involves effective links across a range of subjects. The school has not fully evaluated the impact of this on the pupils' learning and has not ensured, for example, that enough opportunities to develop number skills are built into all topics. The federation has facilitated joint planning across the two schools and this has, for instance, strengthened literacy across the curriculum. The well-supported creative and educational activities outside normal lessons make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, levels of enjoyment and personal development.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3

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The effectiveness of care, guidance and support

2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher’s thoughtful leadership has given the school a clear direction and staff are eager to take responsibility for their respective areas. They have responded with enthusiasm and initiative and there is a complete understanding by all leaders that only consistently good teaching will ensure that all pupils make better than satisfactory progress. Well supported by senior staff, the middle leaders, many of whom are new to post, are increasingly taking on the role of monitoring the quality of provision and tracking pupils’ progress within their phase or subject. However, a lack of clarity in the roles of subject and phase leaders means that they are not fully effective in ensuring that pupils’ progress accelerates. At the time of the inspection, there was no evidence of any discrimination. Progress for all groups of pupils, regardless of their different starting points, was broadly similar, indicating that the school’s commitment to equal opportunities is translated effectively into practice.

The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory. Although it has not developed its monitoring and evaluation role fully, it is making an increasingly important contribution to improvements by holding senior leaders to account for the school’s performance. It has ensured, for example, that safeguarding requirements are secure and that relevant policies and procedures are regularly scrutinised and consistently applied. Good practice in safeguarding and child protection is evident in all areas of the school’s work. For instance, checks on the suitability of adults to work with children are thorough.

In this inclusive school, every child matters and individual needs are considered very specifically. The school works well in partnership with external agencies to secure extra support for those pupils who need it. Community cohesion is good. The school develops pupils’ understanding of the religious, ethnic and socio-economic aspects of the community well, although more so in the local and global context than nationally. Leaders have ensured that pupils are developing into caring citizens who respect and value the views of others and that a set of common, shared values is embedded in every pupil.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	3

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The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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	3

Views of parents and carers

The school clearly enjoys the confidence and support of the parents and carers who returned the questionnaire. A number of individual comments praised the high quality care, support and guidance given to pupils, particularly to those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those new to the school. The few criticisms were followed up by the inspection team during the visit. For instance, a small minority of parents and carers felt that the school did not sufficiently encourage their children to lead healthy lifestyles. However, discussions with a wide range of pupils, the observation of pupils at break time, lunchtime and during after-school activities, together with a scrutiny of school policies and its curriculum, show that pupils have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles. The views of the parents and carers interviewed informally at the beginning and end of the school day confirmed the positive responses in the questionnaires.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sefton Park Junior 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 107 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 235 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	69	64	31	29	3	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	79	74	24	22	3	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	39	36	61	57	7	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	51	48	45	42	6	6	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	62	58	38	36	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	51	48	43	40	8	7	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	40	41	38	13	12	2	2
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)	57	53	37	35	8	7	2	2
The school meets my child’s particular needs	50	47	46	43	5	5	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	45	42	48	45	6	6	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	33	55	51	8	7	4	4
The school is led and managed effectively	44	41	53	50	5	5	3	3
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	68	64	31	29	5	5	1	1

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 8 April 2011 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 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sefton Park Junior School, Bristol BS7 9BJ

Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave to us when we visited your school recently. What a lovely two days we had. We enjoyed meeting and talking to you and were impressed with the pride most of you have in your school. We have found that yours is a satisfactory school, where you reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6, and make satisfactory progress thanks to satisfactory teaching. Here are some of the things we particularly liked.

- Most of you feel safe at school and you have good knowledge and understanding about how to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- Staff at the school care for you, guide and support you well.
- Your headteacher and the governing body have good plans for how your school can get even better.

The headteacher agrees with the inspection team that you all could achieve more at school and we have asked her to do three things.

- Improve attainment in mathematics and make sure that you make faster progress in your number skills.
- Make sure that teachers plan your work more carefully so that it is better matched to your different abilities and you all learn more by yourselves.
- Ensure that the teachers who are responsible for subjects check more closely on how well you are all taught and how well you are all doing.

I am sure that you will all help them by always working hard and aiming really high.

Yours sincerely

Michael Merchant
Lead inspector

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