

Sutton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	136765
Local authority	N/A
Inspection number	384800
Inspection dates	8–9 May 2012
Lead inspector	Sarah Warboys

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	89
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gaynor Corrick
Headteacher	Peter Box, Paul Whitcombe and Paul Smith (Executive Headteachers)
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Sarah Warboys

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed nine lessons taught by four teachers. Meetings were held with parents and carers, senior leaders, staff and Chairs of the Federation's Board of Directors and Governing Body. The inspector took account of the responses to the online Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, talked to different groups of pupils and listened to them read. The school's safeguarding policies, improvement plans, samples of pupils' work, minutes of governing body meetings and records of pupils' progress were scrutinised. The inspector analysed the questionnaire responses from 54 parents and carers, 47 pupils and eight staff.

Information about the school

Sutton Primary School is much smaller than most schools. It has converted to academy status under the Academies Act 2010 and, as such, is a new school. It is part of Herefordshire Marches Federation of Academies and shares various aspects in partnership with four other schools. The school meets the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The large majority of pupils are White British. Average proportions of pupils come from minority ethnic heritages. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. These pupils predominantly experience specific learning difficulties. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The number of pupils joining and leaving the school at different times during the year is above that normally found. The school holds the International and Silver Eco schools awards and the SEN (Special Educational Needs) Quality Mark.

A privately run Pre-School and a before- and after-school club operate on the school site and are inspected separately.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not outstanding because the quality of teaching is not consistently contributing to outstanding achievement for all groups of pupils. The school is well led and managed by three executive headteachers across a federation of schools. Questionnaire responses indicate that the vast majority of pupils, staff, parents and carers consider that the shared arrangements contribute strongly to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and helps them to prepare effectively for the next stage in their education.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding because pupils’ highly positive attitudes to learning in lessons and their consistently respectful conduct around the school makes a significant contribution to their learning and personal development. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and extremely keen to attend school. Many say that, ‘learning is fun’ and thoroughly enjoy meeting up with friends. As a result, attendance is above the national average.
- Pupils’ achievement, including for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good. Attainment is above average in reading, but it is not consistently above average in writing and mathematics. This nevertheless represents good progress.
- The quality of teaching is good. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and support learning well. In some lessons, pupils are not fully and actively involved. In better lessons, teachers have high expectations and set pupils challenging tasks and, therefore, they make good progress.
- Leadership and management is good. It is not outstanding because the leadership of teaching and management of performance is not yet leading to sustained and above average levels of achievement in all subjects. The headteachers’ drive and ambition have empowered leaders at all levels in the school and across the federation. This reflects the school’s good capacity to

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secure further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics so that it is more aligned with above average standards in reading by:
 - extending to all lessons pupils' active engagement with their learning
 - building on recent successful initiatives to provide pupils with imaginative curriculum experiences that inspire them to write and apply mathematical skills for a purpose
 - sharing the most effective practice in marking pupils' work so that it is consistently effective in helping pupils to identify how they can improve, particularly in mathematics.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - enabling teachers to share the very best practice that exists in the school and beyond
 - ensuring that the impact of staff professional development is consistently demonstrated in classroom practice.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those expected for their age. They make good progress so that they reach broadly average levels overall by the time they join Year 1. Children enjoy learning and demonstrate well developed and independent learning skills. They move freely between indoor and outdoor areas and choose from a range of purposeful activities. All children are highly engaged in meeting the challenges they are set. Adults provide good role models and are skilled in guiding children's play, sharing their achievements and suggesting what they might like to try next. For example, children avidly created a floating boat from aluminium foil and then learnt how to make it capable of holding an increasing number of toy animals.

Standards of reading at the end of Key Stage 1 and, by the time pupils leave the school in Year 6, are the equivalent of two terms ahead of the national average. This is because pupils are taught phonics (the links between letters and the sounds they make) and precise reading skills regularly and systematically, with good support from parents and carers. The attainment of pupils currently in the school fluctuates due to small year groups and is affected by an above average proportion of pupils arriving and leaving the school at different points in the school year. Attainment is not as high in writing and mathematics as it is in reading and is therefore broadly average overall. During their time in the school, all groups of pupils are making good progress because of the consistently good teaching and tailored support they receive. Children new to the school are welcomed and settle in quickly as a result. Disabled pupils and

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those with special educational needs make good and often outstanding progress because teaching in lessons is targeted specifically at the gaps in their knowledge and skills. Consequently, all pupil groups are well prepared for their next key stage. An overwhelming majority of parents and carers comment that their children's learning is progressing well.

In lessons, an overwhelming majority of pupils show extremely positive attitudes to learning. Progress is accelerated when pupils are actively involved and demonstrate high levels of motivation, engagement and enjoyment. In a Year 3 and 4 lesson, for example, pupils' shared working and imaginative teaching strategies enabled wider vocabulary choices in preparing to write a character profile. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson, pupils worked exceptionally well together to solve mathematical problems, found their own criteria to sort numbers into Venn diagrams and justified their answers to others. This paired, collaborative approach helped to clarify pupils' thinking and made a good contribution to their learning and progress.

Quality of teaching

A very large majority of parents and carers, who completed the questionnaire, are confident that their children are taught well and that the school is meeting their children's needs. Inspection evidence confirms that the quality of teaching is consistently good, outstanding at times and promoting learning well in lessons for all groups of pupils.

Good relationships support pupils' learning as adults regularly recognise and praise them for their efforts. In the most effective lessons, teachers have high expectations and learning proceeds at a brisk pace. Assessment information is used well to set tasks that closely match pupils' needs and abilities. Interesting texts and varied approaches, modelled by the class teacher, capture pupils' imagination and adults ask searching questions that consolidate and extend pupils' thinking. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson, for example, pupils made rapid progress in creating an exciting and captivating start to a piece of writing linked to The Battle of Marathon in a history project. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support different groups of pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in lessons. Intervention programmes are personalised for individuals and tailored to specific needs. In other lessons, these features are not always evident and pupils spend too long listening to the teacher and are not as actively involved as they could be. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is not as effective in mathematics as it is in English, where it more consistently provides clear indications about what pupils have done well and what they can do to improve their work.

Recent developments to the school's curriculum have been successful in providing pupils, and boys in particular, with increased opportunities to apply their writing skills in other curriculum areas. Opportunities to apply mathematical skills in other subjects are less well developed. Time for reflection and joint working to solve problems collaboratively are making a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and helping them to develop important skills for future life.

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

A strong sense of community and mutual respect underpins much of the school's work in how it manages and promotes a high standard of behaviour. Adults help children to make the right choices and actively teach them how to keep themselves safe. A particular strength is the way in which pupils of all ages, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are developing extremely well into responsible young people who are increasingly taking ownership of their own learning.

The excellent behaviour of almost all pupils makes a significant contribution to their learning in lessons. In and around the school, pupils are extremely polite, courteous and helpful to adults and to each other. Parents, carers, staff and pupils hold highly positive views about the standard of behaviour in school. Very few expressed concerns that lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour. Inspection evidence found that pupils' outstanding behaviour is ensuring that learning proceeds without interruption. In addition, pupils say that they feel extremely safe and secure in their surroundings. Pupils say that incidents of bullying, such as name-calling are extremely rare. In discussions, the inspector found that all pupils are entirely confident that any issues they raise are taken seriously by staff and dealt with quickly.

Most parents and carers report that their children are excited and, 'cannot wait to come to school each morning'. They say that the staff are caring, approachable and, 'go above and beyond' to support their children, especially through difficult times. As a direct result of the school's close working with families, attendance is above average and levels of punctuality are excellent.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management and the school's capacity to secure further improvement are good. Senior leaders have founded a cohesive team across the partnership of schools and established a vision and direction for Sutton Primary clearly focused on improving pupils' personal and academic outcomes. The Board of Directors and the governing body provide a good level of challenge, support and strategic direction to the school's leadership. They ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met.

Leaders at all levels have benefited from the wide variety of skills, knowledge and expertise of staff across the federation. As a result, of shared and effective professional development, leadership is widely distributed. Leaders and managers know the school well and regularly monitor and evaluate the school's actions for their effectiveness. Leaders at all levels have ensured that the quality of teaching remains good and continues to lead to pupils' good learning, personal development and well-being. However, the impact of staff development has not been effective in securing consistently outstanding teaching and in maximising pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics.

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Most parents and carers expressed positive views about the federation and feel that the current arrangements enable the school and their children to widen their horizons. Leaders and managers place a high priority on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum that is increasingly focused on pupils' interests and which builds on prior knowledge. Through the federation, it provides a range of additional curriculum experiences that enable greater interaction with other pupils from a range of different backgrounds. Parents and carers comment positively about the successful transition to secondary education of their children as a consequence of joint federation activities.

The school is fully inclusive. It takes decisive action to tackle any form of discrimination and is committed to equality of opportunity. The performance of individual pupils is meticulously analysed so that those in danger of falling behind are identified early and provided with additional support. Year groups are very small and this enables staff to personalise learning to ensure that the needs of individuals and groups of pupils are fully met. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive very specific and targeted intervention. As a result, they make good and often outstanding progress from their starting points.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



10 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sutton Primary School, Hereford, HR1 3SZ

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed meeting you and listening to your views. I particularly enjoyed spending time in your lessons to see how well you are learning. I found that your school provides a good education. You clearly enjoy coming to school because you take very few days off and you learn well. You have excellent attitudes to learning in lessons and your behaviour and respect for others around the school is exemplary. Your school is led and managed well. Those in charge know how well you are doing and what needs to be done to make the school even better.

As I am sure you know, there is always room for improvement. So I have asked your headteachers to build on the work they are doing in school and make sure teachers help you to:

- reach just as high standards in your writing and mathematics as you do in reading
- spend more time being active in lessons
- make sure you know exactly what you need to do to improve when teachers mark your work
- use your literacy and numeracy skills more in learning about different subjects.

You can help by continuing to work hard and do your best every minute of every day. Keep up your good attendance and that excellent behaviour around the school and in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Warboys
Lead inspector

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