

Sidmouth Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117816
Local authority	Kingston upon Hull
Inspection number	379475
Inspection dates	22–23 May 2012
Lead inspector	Rosemary Eaton

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Ranby
Headteacher	Teresa Brady
Date of previous school inspection	22 November 2007
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Introduction

Inspection team

Rosemary Eaton
Anthony Kingston

Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 12 lessons involving 11 teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online Parent View survey in planning the inspection and observed the school's work. They looked at samples of pupils' work, assessment information, the school's records concerning behaviour and attendance, and a range of management plans and reports. The 82 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were read and analysed.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. Although the majority of pupils are White British, the proportion from other ethnic minority heritage is much larger than average. Over 20 different languages are spoken within the school population. Far more pupils than average join or leave the school at other than the usual times for entry or departure. Of those in Year 6 last year, less than half had attended the school throughout their primary education. Many pupils join the school in the early stages of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school meets the government's current floor standards, the minimum standards set for attainment and progress. There have been a number of staff changes since the previous inspection. The headteacher became the school's acting headteacher in March 2010 and her position was made permanent in June 2011.

An after-school club is privately managed and is 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	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because there is not enough outstanding teaching to ensure that pupils’ progress is consistently rapid, rather than good.
- All groups of pupils make good progress so that attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6. Attainment is improving and progress is speeding up, year-on-year. Achievement is best in reading. Pupils’ positive attitudes to all aspects of learning begin in the Early Years Foundation Stage where children quickly become keen and independent learners.
- Teaching has improved over the last two years because leaders’ judicious management of performance has led to very effective training and support for staff. Teachers are enthusiastic and plan activities that interest pupils and make them want to learn. In some lessons the pace of learning slows down at certain points. The higher attaining pupils do not always have work that really stretches them.
- Pupils’ good behaviour means that they can concentrate during lessons and have fun at playtimes. Newcomers rapidly make friends and pupils from different backgrounds work and play together in complete harmony. Pupils are confident to report any concerns they may have and know that the school can be relied on to take prompt and effective action.
- The headteacher’s determination to move the school forward has led to improvements in all aspects of its work and in pupils’ performance. Other leaders and staff are just as committed to improving the school in order to give all pupils an excellent start to their education. The rich curriculum attends to all aspects of pupils’ learning and development. They benefit from a wide range of experiences in school and beyond, learn to appreciate cultural diversity and develop a strong moral code.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and hence accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring that work for higher attaining pupils is more challenging than that of other pupils, for example, in writing
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to solve problems involving mathematics and to apply mathematical skills in a wide range of subjects and activities
 - securing a fast pace of learning from start to finish in all lessons
 - consistently using marking to inform pupils exactly how to improve their work.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils say, quite rightly, that they 'learn a lot in lessons'. Because relationships with adults are so positive, pupils tackle work with confidence. They try hard to be independent and do not need reminding to focus on their tasks. Pupils make good use of skills such as reading, writing and information and communication technology (ICT) to help them learn across the curriculum. They have fewer opportunities to practise mathematical skills and they find solving mathematical problems difficult. Pupils' formation of letters and numerals is sometimes untidy and difficult to interpret.

When they join the Nursery, children's skills are typically below or even well below the expectations for their age. They often speak little or no English. Children make good progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in the areas of communication, language and literacy and in their social development. By the end of the Reception Year, higher attaining children use their knowledge of letter sounds (phonics) as they write sentences about pictures of pirates, for example, 'He has a sword'.

This good progress continues as pupils move up through the school. It is currently best in reading, on which the school has focused considerable attention, and in those classes with particularly strong teaching. Progress in writing and mathematics is accelerating as teaching improves and measures such as allowing more time for extended writing and mental mathematics have an impact. The school carefully analyses the progress made by different groups of pupils and looks closely at any apparent disparity. When their starting points are considered, all groups make equally good progress and achieve well. Pupils who join the school in the early stages of learning to speak English and who stay for at least one year make measurably good progress all round. They quickly learn to communicate, helped by individual support, the school's focus on reading, and by other pupils who speak the same first language. Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs also make good progress through well-matched work in lessons and programmes, for example, to accelerate reading skills.

Across the school there is a clear trend of rising attainment. By the end of Year 6, attainment is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics, although more pupils than average reach Level 5 in reading. At the end of Year 2, reading is close to average. Because phonics skills are taught well, pupils confidently tackle unknown words. Many Year

6 pupils read fluently, appreciate nuances in the text, find reading relaxing and say that it helps with their writing.

Quality of teaching

In 2010, teaching was predominantly satisfactory. Good leadership has ensured that it is now largely good and there are some examples of outstanding teaching. The outstanding lessons are characterised by teachers' high expectations for all pupils and the way in which not a moment is lost. For example, in a French lesson, Year 6 pupils learned to compose, speak and write sentences to express their likes and dislikes. The higher attaining pupils used dictionaries rather than resources created by the teacher and were expected to construct complex sentences. Varied activities, changed at just the right time, maintained pupils' enthusiasm and contributed to fast progress all round.

When teaching is not outstanding, it is often because there is not enough difference between the tasks set for middle-ability groups and for the pupils who should be working at higher levels. This is especially evident in writing. As a result, there are uneven rates of progress during these lessons. From time to time, other factors also put a brake on progress. For example, when activities are too similar, pupils' interest wanes. Again, teachers do not always notice quickly enough when some pupils are not producing as much or as well as they should. Marking has improved but there are still times when teachers' written comments do not provide enough guidance to help pupils improve their work. Features such as this prevent teaching being outstanding, because it is not promoting rapid and sustained progress.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are taught well as are the pupils learning English as an additional language. Teachers almost always make sure that work is matched closely to their capabilities and teaching assistants are often deployed to provide additional support. On occasions, pupils are withdrawn from the classroom to follow well-chosen programmes, which give their learning a particular boost.

Pupils say how much they enjoy lessons and appreciate the help given by teachers. They like working within topics, such as the Second World War, especially when these involve visits. 'They bring it to life', explained one Year 6 pupil, 'I'll remember how hard it was for evacuees, sent away from their parents'. This comment illustrates the effectiveness with which teaching promotes pupils' personal development.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Most parents and carers have positive views about standards of behaviour at the school. A few believe that lessons are disrupted and have concerns about how bullying is dealt with. Inspectors' observations and the school's meticulous records indicate that interruptions to lessons are unusual. Pupils' good behaviour and ability to cooperate together contribute well to learning, as when Year 2 pupils worked in pairs to carry out research during an ICT lesson. Pupils report that bullying is rare and records confirm this. They are quite clear about how they should respond if they have worries on this or any other score. Completed 'Worry Slips' show that pupils are ready to inform staff if, for example, they think a friend is being unkind and that all comments are followed up thoroughly by staff or the headteacher.

Pupils explain that if their behaviour 'affects or upsets others, there'll be consequences'. They believe that this is right because, as one remarked, 'if they write a "sorry letter" they'll

learn from it'. There is clear evidence that pupils with identified behavioural difficulties usually respond very well to the school's approaches and their behaviour improves over time. Year 6 pupils are keen to become 'JAMs' (Just Ask Me) who are trained to mediate at playtimes and encourage others to make friends and play together. Pupils' exuberance and the small playground lead to some minor bumps and knocks. Leaders are currently strengthening the lunchtime supervision arrangements in order to reduce the number of such incidents.

Pupils feel safe in school and have a good awareness of how they can take some responsibility for their own safety, for example, when using the internet or when out and about. Attendance has improved greatly and is now average.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has successfully expanded the senior leadership team and the school benefits from the strong contributions made by the deputy headteacher and others with leadership responsibilities. A rigorous and systematic programme of monitoring activities, including observing lessons and analysing assessment information, results in a detailed and accurate evaluation of the school's performance. The information gathered enables leaders to target professional development opportunities precisely and to plan actions designed to move the school forward. This successful management of performance has led directly to improvements in teaching, achievement and attendance and provides convincing evidence of the school's clear capacity to improve further. Improvement is accelerating as new and less experienced staff are developing leadership skills, for example, by shadowing established leaders and sharing tasks such as scrutinising pupils' work. The role of the governing body is also developing apace as, through individual links with particular classes, governors gain more first-hand knowledge of the school's work. The governing body is well organised and helps to ensure that safeguarding meets government requirements. Children's safety and well-being underpin all management decisions.

Ensuring equality of opportunity is central to all aspects of the school. Any possibility of discrimination is tackled vigorously. For example, leaders ensure that pupils learning English as an additional language have every opportunity to achieve in line with others and are fully involved in all aspects of school life. By enthusing pupils, enhancements to the curriculum have improved attendance; children want to be at school. A host of experiences such as cooking meals together, adventurous pursuits during residential visits, and growing prize-winning vegetables on the allotment expand pupils' horizons and promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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.



24 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sidmouth Primary School, Hull, HU5 2JY

Thank you for being so friendly and polite when we inspected your school. We would particularly like to thank the pupils who spent time talking to us about the school and to those who let us hear them read. We have decided that Sidmouth is a good school. These are some of the reasons for our decision.

- You all make good progress in your learning. Reading is the subject that you do best in.
- Teaching is good at your school. Teachers make lessons interesting and they give each of you the help and support you need.
- You behave well in lessons and work and play together very happily indeed. This is especially important because children at your school come from so many different backgrounds. We noticed that there are quite a few accidents on the playground, so try to be a bit more careful when you are playing.
- The school makes sure that you have plenty of exciting opportunities, such as visits, residential, clubs and visitors to school.
- Attendance has improved a lot this year, so 'Well done!'
- Your headteacher and other leaders have made sure that your school has improved in many ways. They want it to be even better.

To help the school to improve, we have asked it to make more of the teaching outstanding, so you make even faster progress, particularly in writing and mathematics.

You can help by continuing to try hard in lessons and to come to school as often as possible. We send each of you our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Rosemary Eaton
Lead Inspector

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