

# South Street Community Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108326
<b>Local authority</b>	Gateshead
<b>Inspection number</b>	377734
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 June 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Gordon Potter

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

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<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>	319
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Wilkinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Julie McGrow
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Cramer Street Gateshead NE8 4BB
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Gordon Potter  
Janice Gorlach  
Wendy Richardson

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 32 lessons taught by 16 teachers, including joint observations of several classes with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The inspectors held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff, pupils, parents and carers, and spoke to the school's local authority education development partner. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of school policies and documentation relating to safeguarding and strategic planning, examples of pupils' work, assessment data and monitoring records. They also scrutinised the 120 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as questionnaires from pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

This school is larger than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. However, a significant proportion of pupils is from other cultural backgrounds, most of whom speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils who are supported by School Action Plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. More pupils than is normal enter or leave the school during the course of their education. The school meets the current floor standard which sets the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Award and Activemark.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not yet a good school because, while there is some good and outstanding teaching which challenges pupils and helps them to make good progress, teaching and progress are inconsistent across the school. The monitoring of teaching by leaders and managers requires greater focus on the impact that teaching has on pupils' learning. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit from an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. From starting points that are generally well below age-related expectations, pupils make satisfactory progress to attain standards at the end of Year 6 that are average in mathematics and below average in English. There are good outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, teachers make it clear to pupils what they will learn, model learning well, use probing questions and offer engaging activities. Teachers do not always plan work that is well-matched to the learning needs of individual pupils, especially the most-able. Teachers offer too much help and progress slows. The curriculum offers too few opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in investigative activities or to write at length.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils from different cultural backgrounds play and learn well together and say they feel very safe in school. They enjoy school and say that misbehaviour is uncommon. The school offers very well-focussed care for its pupils and strongly promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- School leaders offer clear direction based upon accurate evaluation of strengths and weaknesses. There are agreed procedures to track pupils' progress and to monitor the quality of teaching. However, there is too great a focus on what teachers do at the expense of a clear analysis of pupils' learning and progress.

The governing body supports senior leaders well and offers increasingly focussed challenge.

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

- By the summer of 2013, increase the proportion of teaching that is good or outstanding, so accelerating the rates at which pupils make progress and raising attainment, by:
  - providing pupils with more opportunities in lessons to work independently or together in a range of open-ended, investigative activities which develop independence, resilience and confidence
  - providing pupils with more opportunities to write at length in subjects across the curriculum
  - ensuring that all work is matched accurately to the needs of individual pupils so that all lessons have appropriate pace and challenge and extend the learning of all pupils, including the most-able.
  
- Improve the support given to teachers through observation and analysis of lessons which make a clear link between the quality of teaching and its impact on the learning experience for pupils and the progress they make.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils enjoy lessons most when they are finding things out for themselves and are actively engaged in challenging activities. In those lessons they make good and occasionally outstanding progress. For example, in a mathematics lesson in Year 6, pupils were fully engaged in working together to interrogate data and generate their own research questions.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and they make good progress from their starting points. Attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is typically below average in English and average in mathematics and pupils have made satisfactory progress from their starting points and their achievement is satisfactory. Lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's own tracking show that currently more pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 than has been the case recently are now on track to attain age-related expectations. Attainment in reading, which has typically been below average by the end of Years 1 and 2 and by the time pupils leave school in Year 6, is rising rapidly as a result of a clear focus on developing pupils' reading skills.

At the end of Year 6 pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals attain below similar pupils nationally, although inspection evidence shows that progress for those pupils currently in school is good and the gap is closing overall. Pupils who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. While the school accurately identifies their

needs and there are skilled teaching assistants, not all work is well-targeted at their needs.

Almost all parents and carers are of the opinion that their children are making good progress. Inspectors judge that pupils make satisfactory progress overall.

### **Quality of teaching**

In the best lessons, teachers are skilful at modelling learning so that pupils know exactly what they are to learn. They allow pupils the opportunity to engage with challenging tasks and make learning fun by helping pupils to apply their skills in imaginative scenarios. For example, pupils in Year 6 enjoyed investigating and researching a creature newly-discovered in the jungle. Extremely skilful teaching enthused them and allowed them to question one another in drama activities, talk together, gather and organise their ideas and write their descriptions. However, this approach is inconsistent across school. Teachers sometimes offer too much help and provide too few opportunities for pupils to engage independently with their learning or explore together in open-ended investigative activities which develop independence, resilience and confidence. While teachers generally plan work which is matched to the learning needs of groups of pupils, it is not always finely focused on the needs of individual pupils or sufficiently challenging, especially for the most-able. Teachers spend too much time checking that pupils understand what they are to do at the expense of allowing them to engage with tasks. Marking is done well and helps pupils understand how well they have done and how to improve their work. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well when work is clearly focused on their needs. While there are skilled teaching assistants, there is too much diversification in provision and opportunities are missed for pupils to learn with their peers under the guidance of their teachers.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers plan work which is well-matched to children's individual learning needs in counting and calculation and there are opportunities for creative play and social interaction. Skilful teaching of how to link sounds and letters (phonics) ensures that children make increasingly rapid progress in reading and writing. Clearly-targeted initiatives are helping pupils make satisfactory progress in reading across school.

Almost all parents and carers believe that pupils are taught well. Inspectors observed some good and outstanding teaching, but because it is not consistent across the school, teaching is judged to be satisfactory.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils enjoy school. They are highly respectful of each other and extremely polite to adults. Pupils from an increasingly wide range of cultural backgrounds play and learn well together and are tolerant of, and understand, the importance of their different faiths. Most parents and carers responding to the inspection questionnaires agree that, overall, there is a good standard of behaviour at the school. Good behaviour was evident in lessons observed during the inspection and around the school. The inspectors analysed the school's records of behaviour over time and talked to many pupils during lessons, at break times and more formally in group discussions. Pupils

are aware of different forms of bullying and say that racism or cyber-bullying, in particular, are uncommon. They say that behaviour is good in their lessons and has improved because behaviour strategies, including rewards and sanctions, are used effectively. As a result, the few pupils who find managing their own behaviour difficult respond well to clear guidance and a consistent approach. Pupils feel safe and know that older pupils, as well as the teachers and other adults in school, will help with any problems if they arise. The school council and the 'buddies' work very hard on behalf of other pupils. They are very proud of the actions they have initiated to improve aspects of school life, including their input into improvements to the environment and school meals, and the money they raise for charities. Attendance has improved rapidly, is average overall and above average for older pupils in school.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher is committed to driving school improvement. She, the deputy headteacher and phase leaders have focussed their efforts on improving the quality of information about pupils' progress and attainment and the quality of teaching to raise attainment. They have ensured that teachers are aware of, and accountable for, the progress pupils make in their lessons and there is a consistent application of the school's procedures to create, monitor and evaluate the impact of initiatives. They have a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They identify the correct priorities and seek appropriate external advice to support their initiatives, to develop programmes of continuing professional development and to share good practice. Accordingly, the school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement. Data are used well to measure pupils' attainment and to enable the swift identification of groups and individuals who need additional support to close any gaps in their learning. However, such information is used less well to plan work which is well-matched to the learning needs of individual pupils. Teaching and the curriculum remain satisfactory because when leaders monitor lessons, observations are focussed on the mechanics of teaching at the expense of analysing the learning experience for pupils and the progress they make. Accordingly, some teachers require more support in understanding the link between teaching and its impact on learning.

The school is particularly proud of its commitment to an inclusive ethos and the support it offers to pupils who have a range of learning, emotional and behavioural needs, and their families. It has effective systems for promoting equality of opportunities and it tackles discrimination firmly. However, the learning needs and abilities of the most-able pupils are occasionally underestimated. Safeguarding procedures meet the current government requirements. The school has a range of effective partnerships, for example to provide opportunities in music and sport. Members of the governing body are highly supportive of the school. They have appropriate procedures to monitor school effectiveness and offer satisfactory challenge.

The focus on improving the curriculum has led to a strong emphasis on developing basic skills in English, mathematics, and the use of technology. While there are some opportunities for pupils to develop writing skills in other areas of the curriculum, this approach is inconsistent across school. Pupils enjoy history, geography and science, but teachers offer too many low-level activities which limit the development of skills

in these subjects. Across the school, there is a coherent and systematic approach to teaching reading, with a balanced emphasis on letters and sounds and comprehension. As a result, standards in reading are rising. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through well-planned enrichment activities, including visits to museums, and visits from artists and faith leaders. These help to develop pupils' clear understanding of other faiths and cultures. There are many popular extra-curricular clubs which promote learning and enjoyment in sporting, music, technology and environmental activities.



## 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](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.

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 up 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.**



25 June 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of South Street Community Primary School, Gateshead, NE8 4BB**

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school. We particularly enjoyed talking to you about your school and your work and reading your views in the questionnaires some of you filled in. We were impressed with your good behaviour and by your politeness and the care you show for one another. Your school takes good care of you so that you feel very safe in school. Most of you attend school very regularly – well done!

You go to a satisfactory school and your headteacher and the governing body know how to make it better. You told me that you look forward to coming to school because you like your teachers, lessons where you are actively engaged, after-school clubs and visits. Your parents and carers like the school very much.

In order to help you reach higher standards and make faster progress, I am asking your teachers to improve teaching so that:

- you always have enough opportunities to find things out for yourselves and then use what you have learned to improve your skills, including your writing
- all the information that teachers have about how well you are doing is used to plan work that is at the right level for all of you, including the most-able
- they check that the things they are doing to improve the school are making your lessons better.

You can help by continuing to do your best and continuing to attend regularly. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Gordon Potter  
Lead Inspector

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