

Sutherland Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124016
Local authority	Stoke-On-Trent
Inspection number	380774
Inspection dates	27–28 June 2012
Lead inspector	Judith Tolley

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	484
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kathy Niblett
Headteacher	Garry Boote
Date of previous school inspection	14 November 2007
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Introduction

Inspection team

Judith Tolley
Bimla Kumari
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Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 26 lessons taught by 19 different teachers. The inspectors also made short visits to phonics (letters and their sounds) lessons and guided-reading sessions across the school, led by teachers and trained assistants. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and school staff, including senior and middle managers. The inspectors scrutinised pupils' work, observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school development plan and the school's analysis of pupils' progress. They also analysed 113 parents' and carers' questionnaires and others completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

Sutherland Primary School is much larger than average. Pupils are predominantly of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average but varies from year-to-year. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than average, but again varies from year-to-year. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is low. The school meets current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The school holds a number of awards including Activemark and Healthy Schools status, Geography Quality Mark and the Achievement Award for Excellence.

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 remain some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Pupils' achievement from their starting points is good. By the end of Year 6, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly average. Pupils enjoy reading and most read with fluency and understanding. However, in some lessons opportunities are missed to meet precisely the needs of pupils of differing ability and accelerate their progress.
- Teaching is good. The school provides very effectively for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Recently introduced strategies to ensure that the quality of teaching continues to improve have been successful. Marking is regular but the detailed guidance pupils are given about how to improve their work in English and mathematics is not always mirrored in other subjects.
- Behaviour is good. Attendance is above average. Pupils have very positive attitudes, are keen to take responsibility and are courteous and polite. They say that they enjoy their lessons and that they feel safe.
- Leadership of teaching and the management of staff performance are very effective. Teaching and other aspects of the school's work are monitored closely to provide very clear direction. Action to address weaknesses and raise attainment, such as the emphasis upon speaking and listening across the school, has proved successful and indicates the school's good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress further by:
 - using assessment information more effectively in lesson planning to meet more precisely the needs of pupils of differing ability, especially in group sessions for the teaching of phonics (the letters and the sounds they make) and in group reading

- increasing the opportunities pupils have to work independently and collaboratively with others to solve problems
- ensuring pupils receive the same high quality of written guidance across all subjects so that they know exactly how to improve their work.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers are pleased with the progress their children make. The inspection found that achievement is good. Many pupils join the school with attainment which is low in relation to that expected for their age. In the Early Years Foundation Stage they make good progress overall. They make particularly good progress in developing their communication and personal and social skills because of the emphasis placed upon these skills in all activities. As a result, although they join Year 1 with attainment which is below expectations in mathematics and literacy, they are keen to learn and able to access the Key Stage 1 curriculum. Pupils continue to make good progress as they move through the school in relation to their starting points. By the end of Year 6, all pupils achieve equally well and there is no significant difference in the achievement of different groups. As a result of well-tailored intervention programmes and individual support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, these pupils also make good progress and are able to participate fully in activities alongside their classmates.

By the end of Year 2 pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics and writing is below average. By the end of Year 6 attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly average. Most pupils in Key Stage 2 read a variety of texts fluently and with understanding. They skim and scan for information and write successfully for a variety of purposes, using a good range of vocabulary and structures. As a result of the emphasis on speaking throughout the school, most pupils are confident and articulate in expressing their ideas and explaining their views. Most apply their mathematical skills confidently to solve problems.

In lessons, pupils participate enthusiastically in activities, especially when working with a partner or a small group to carry out investigations and solve problems. They know their targets and older pupils are involved in deciding how they can improve their work.

Quality of teaching

Teachers give clear demonstrations and explanations so that pupils rapidly understand new ideas. Activities are well sequenced so that pupils build effectively on previous learning. Teachers and teaching assistants are skilful in their use of questioning to support and extend pupils' thinking in group work and when they monitor pupils' progress during tasks. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are disabled are well supported in the classroom and through intervention programmes. Opportunities for pupils to explore ideas with a partner or in a group effectively engage pupils while developing their speaking and listening skills and promoting their respect for the views of others, as well as their confidence and independence as learners. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils worked enthusiastically in small groups to collect data to test their predictions about how different factors would affect their results and to work out averages. However, opportunities for them to do this in other lessons are sometimes missed. On occasions, teacher-led activities are too lengthy and this slows the progress pupils make, especially that

of higher-attaining pupils. The school provides good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the approach that teachers take with these areas of learning is effective.

In the most effective lessons, teachers plan in detail for groups of differing ability within classes. For example, in a Year 2 reading lesson, higher-attaining pupils made swift progress interpreting a story as a result of precise questioning provided by the teaching assistant. However, on occasions, some pupils find work too difficult or too easy; resources provided sometimes lack the guidance some lower-attaining pupils need to complete tasks independently so that their progress is slowed. Similarly, opportunities are sometimes missed to provide further challenge for higher-attaining pupils, or their progress is slowed by lengthy teacher-led activities. Marking is regular but the very effective guidance they are given in English and mathematics is not always mirrored in other subjects.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is good. Parents, carers and pupils are confident that any poor behaviour is dealt with effectively and promptly. Pupils say lessons are fun and are enthusiastic about their learning. They enjoy school and attendance is above average. They have good relationships with each other and are courteous and polite. Pupils display high levels of concentration and, when working in pairs or groups, organise themselves efficiently and without fuss. Pupils know how to stay safe and healthy and have a good understanding of the risks to which they may be exposed, both within and outside of school. Pupils say they enjoy extra-curricular activities, including music and sport. They know the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms that bullying can take, including the dangers posed by the internet and mobile phones, and some take responsibility as playground leaders and as mentors for younger pupils. Instances of bullying are rare and parents, carers and pupils express confidence in the school's systems for dealing with such occurrences. Pupils are proud of their school and their achievements and value the reward system. They take responsibilities seriously, for instance as school councillors, fund-raisers and as playground buddies.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, strongly supported by the senior leadership team, provides leadership with a very clear educational direction, based on a rigorous analysis of pupils' progress, close monitoring and an accurate evaluation of the school's work. The governing body plays an active part in the school's self-evaluation, monitoring and processes for improvement planning. Members of the governing body are very well informed and they are therefore able to both hold the school to account and provide support. As a result of the improved use of assessment information and effective action to improve teaching and learning, attainment has risen and gaps in the performance of different groups have narrowed since the last inspection. The school has been successful in forging a strong partnership with parents and carers as well as improving attendance and punctuality. Strategies to improve the quality of teaching, such as joint planning across year groups, have proved successful in developing good practice. Subject specialists use their expertise to good effect in planning the curriculum and in spreading the best practice in their subjects across the school, although this is at the early stages of development. As a result, minor inconsistencies in teaching remain. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements: policies are regularly reviewed by the governing body and staff are kept up to

date through regular training. Issues from the previous inspection have been tackled successfully.

The curriculum is good, ensures a balance of activities and, overall, meets the needs of pupils well. As a result, the promotion of equality of opportunity for success is good. The adoption of a topic-based curriculum has had a positive impact upon pupils' enjoyment and provides them with opportunities to practise their writing and reading in a variety of contexts. The systematic teaching of phonics and the focus on writing has proved successful in raising attainment in these areas. However, teaching groups in phonics and in guided reading contain a very wide range of ability so that it is difficult to ensure that all pupils get the precise level of support and challenge they need. Visitors and visits, as well as after-school clubs, sport and music are all greatly valued by pupils and enrich the taught curriculum. Pupils also benefit from specialist teaching in music and physical education. The school takes a firm stand on any suggestion of discrimination and pupils learn to reflect on and appreciate their own skills and the skills of others. This, together with opportunities for collaborative work in some lessons, is successful in increasing pupils' confidence and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.

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.



29 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sutherland Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent ST3 3DY

I would like to thank you, on behalf of all the inspectors, for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you all and hearing your views. Your school is a good one. Your behaviour in lessons is good and we were impressed by how courteous and polite you were. You do a lot to help improve the school, for instance, through the school council and as playground leaders.

You make good progress and you reach the same standards as other pupils nationally. You all told us how much you enjoy your lessons. We noticed that some of you sometimes found tasks too difficult or too easy, so we have asked the teachers to make sure you always get the right amount of support and challenge to make sure you can all do your best, especially in your phonics and guided-reading lessons. We saw what good guidance you get from teachers in your writing and your mathematics so we have asked your teachers to make sure you get the same good advice in other subjects, too. You work really well with a partner and in small groups to solve problems so we have asked your teachers to make sure you have more opportunities to work in this way.

The headteacher and staff are working to make your school even better. You can all help by continuing to work hard. We wish you every success for the future and hope that you continue to enjoy your learning.

Yours sincerely

Judith Tolley
Lead inspector

