

South Wootton Infant School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	120903
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	380130
Inspection dates	11–12 July 2012
Lead inspector	Andrew Read

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	175
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Liz Williamson
Headteacher	Joanne Davenport
Date of previous school inspection	13 March 2007
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Age group	4–7
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Introduction

Inspection team

Andrew Read

Additional Inspector

Tricia Pritchard

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 14 parts of lessons taught by seven teachers, listened to pupils read, looked at a sample of pupils' work from all year groups, scrutinised school documentation including policies, action plans, safeguarding information and data about pupils' attainment and progress. Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, English and mathematics subject leaders, the Early Years Foundation Stage teachers, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. Inspectors looked at questionnaires completed by 58 parents and carers, 14 staff and 115 pupils.

Information about the school

South Wootton Infant School was redesignated from a first school at the end of the 2010–11 academic year. It is now an average-sized two-form-entry infant school with six classes. Two teachers share the teaching of pupils in one of the Year 2 classes. The headteacher was appointed in September 2011. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and of those with special educational needs supported at school action plus are also below the national average. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The school has Healthy Schools status. There is a breakfast club on site. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not yet good because there are too many pupils who are only making satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points, particularly in writing. There is insufficient good teaching, and aspects of the assessment and the monitoring of pupils' achievement are underdeveloped. Schools whose overall effectiveness is satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, this good rate of progress is not maintained in Years 1 and 2 where, overall, pupils make satisfactory progress. In writing, pupils are not making fast enough progress in relation to their starting points. Their work is not well presented.
- Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where the curriculum is well planned to meet the children's needs. In Key Stage 1, the teaching sometimes lacks pace and is not sufficiently well matched to pupils' different abilities. The analysis of pupil progress data is not rigorous or regular enough to allow teachers to adjust their lessons and accelerate pupils' progress.
- The behaviour and safety of the pupils are good. There is a strong ethos of collaboration and respect for others. Pupils demonstrate good attitudes to learning. Pupils feel safe at school, and any potentially disruptive behaviour is dealt with rapidly and sensitively.
- The governing body and senior staff have successfully led the school through a period of structural change and uncertainty but they have not taken enough action to improve the quality of teaching. Performance management and the monitoring of lessons, is not focused sharply enough on identifying weaknesses to inform priorities for improvement planning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good teaching and accelerate pupils' progress in Key Stage 1, particularly in writing, by:

- providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy skills across the curriculum and to write for a range of purposes and audiences
 - ensuring that learning is well planned to meet the needs of pupils with different abilities
 - providing good opportunities for independent learning and extended writing
 - increasing the pace of lessons across the school.
- Improve the use of assessment by:
- ensuring the accuracy of assessments and marking across the school
 - increasing the regularity with which pupil progress data is collected and analysed on a whole-school basis
 - ensuring that all teachers set high expectations for all groups of pupils, particularly in relation to the presentation of their work.
- Strengthen the management and the monitoring of teaching and learning by:
- ensuring that lesson observations are suitably focused on the progress that pupils make
 - increasing the regularity of the monitoring of teaching by subject leaders, and their use of pupil assessment data to inform improvement planning
 - giving subject leaders better access to targeted professional development related to their leadership roles
 - ensuring that the governing body provides challenge in those areas that have an impact upon pupils' rates of progress.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Most parents feel that their children are making good progress. Children's attainment on entry to the Reception class is in line with expectations for their age. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, children have indeed made good progress in all areas of learning and their attainment exceeds national expectations. However, the schools' own data and evidence from the inspection indicate that this good level of progress is not consistently maintained in other year groups.

By the end of Year 2 attainment is above average. It is higher in reading and mathematics than in writing. The quality of pupils' writing and presentation varies within year groups and classes because teachers' expectations are not high enough and they do not create enough opportunities for pupils to write for a range of purposes. This results in their progress being slower in writing than in reading and mathematics. The pupils made good progress in a mathematics lesson where Year 1 pupils used the segments of a caterpillar to explore counting in hundreds, tens and units. The teacher worked in parallel with a member of support staff who made timely interventions, accelerating the progress of less able pupils. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well and, in some cases, their attainment at the end of Year 2 exceeds national expectations. This is because they are supported effectively through well-structured interventions.

The progress of girls and boys varies within each year group, with boys achieving less well in writing across Years 1 and 2, and girls achieving slightly less well than boys in mathematics. Attainment gaps for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals have narrowed as a consequence of well targeted intervention and the provision of additional resources to improve access to learning opportunities.

Overall, there is a picture of inconsistent achievement across the school within subjects, year groups, classes and by gender. The schools' own data shows this, with a sizeable number of pupils being assessed as not making better than satisfactory progress by the end of Year 1. This is a situation which improves, but is not fully resolved, by the end of Year 2.

Quality of teaching

Most parents and carers feel that their child is well taught and that their needs are met. Conversations with pupils indicate that they agree. However, the teaching overall is satisfactory rather than good.

Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, it is well planned and responsive to the particular needs of groups of pupils. Teaching ensures that children have ample opportunities to develop their skills in all areas of learning. There is a good balance between child-initiated and adult-initiated activities. The indoor and outdoor learning environments are set up well to promote maximum progress in learning. Children have very good opportunities to develop their language and communication skills through role play; for example, they were seen having fun dressing up and taking on the roles of various circus characters.

Such good practice is not always present in other classes where teachers' planning is not always detailed enough to reflect the specific needs and abilities of the pupils. In topic work, pupils are not given enough opportunities to complete a piece of extended writing. Too often, the tasks set lack challenge, especially when pupils are asked to complete whole-class activity sheets which require short, easy answers.

The subject knowledge of teachers is generally secure and teachers use well-focused and challenging questions in whole-class situations. However, the pace is sometimes slow in some lessons, and lengthy time spent 'on the carpet' listening to the teacher restricts opportunities for pupils to extend their thinking through independent work.

The teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) is good. Most children read well and adopt appropriate strategies to tackle more difficult words. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed well through collaborative work.

Assessment data is not analysed frequently enough. Consequently, teaching approaches are too infrequently adapted to respond to changing needs. While marking in books is extensive, it does not provide pupils with enough information to enable them to understand their next steps in learning.

On scrutinising pupils' written work in books, inspectors found that the assessment of writing is sometimes overgenerous. This is most evident in the work of middle-ability

children, where assessments are not detailed enough to identify particular gaps in pupils' understanding. This lack of rigour limits the extent to which teachers can make a secure statement concerning the standards reached by pupils.

Teaching in moral and social areas of learning is good, and in cultural and spiritual aspects, it is satisfactory. The deployment of support staff to support disabled pupils and those with special educational is good, providing intervention that accelerates these pupils' progress.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Most parents and carers see this as a strength of the school, and the inspection confirmed that behaviour and safety are good. Attendance has improved this year following an inconsistent pattern in previous years, so that it is now in line with the national average. Attendance tracking is good and strategies to address lower attendance have been effective.

Pupils show respect for each other and for adults, and they are keen to learn. They have a positive view of the school in terms of behaviour and of the quality of pastoral support provided. The pupils say that they feel safe at school. They say that incidents of bullying are rare and, when they do occur, they are dealt with firmly and quickly by adults. Pupils' awareness of cyber-bullying is less well developed, despite the fact they regularly use computers. A Year 2 child described the school leadership as 'fair, nice and kind'. The good pastoral support for staff and pupils has enabled the school to adapt well to its re-structuring as an infant school. Year 2 pupils have good opportunities to take on responsibilities as the new senior pupils of the school.

The school provides good opportunities for the development of social skills through collaborative approaches to learning. For example, this year, all Year 2 pupils camped in the school grounds with the staff where they participated in well-organised and enjoyable activities to develop teamwork.

Leadership and management

The new headteacher is successfully managing a period of change and has brought improvements, for example, to the Early Years Foundation Stage, where provision is good. Support staff are now more effectively deployed and their work is having clear impact on the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This illustrates well that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

Leadership and management at other levels are satisfactory rather than good. The monitoring of school performance by all managers is too heavily based on attainment rather than progress. Consequently, improvement planning is not linked closely enough to accelerating pupils' progress. For example, the success criteria recorded in the school development plan are not linked strongly enough to improvements in pupil progress at a subject or group level.

There is a satisfactory understanding of the broad strengths and weaknesses of the school but not enough focus on identifying with precision the specific areas for

improvement. For example, the frequency and rigour of the use of monitoring data across year groups is inconsistent. This applies to the collection and analysis of pupil progress data, and the ongoing monitoring of the quality of teaching.

Leaders have good specialist subject knowledge but the impact of this expertise is yet to be fully realised through widespread improvements in classroom practice. There has not been enough professional development focused on bringing about change through middle leadership. For example, information from lesson observation and assessment data are not always collected frequently enough to allow the teachers to adjust their plans.

The governing body ensures that safeguarding procedures meet regulatory requirements and that the school works well with outside agencies to support pupils. It has shown resolve in leading the school through a period of uncertainty and structural change but it has not challenged leaders enough over improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' rates of progress.

The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra activities that pupils enjoy but it does not provide pupils with enough opportunities to write in different contexts. The school works well with parents and communication is good. The school's strong provision for social and moral learning demonstrates its promotion of equality and diversity, and tackling of discrimination. For example, in preparation for a forthcoming end-of-term camping event, pupils were able to describe with maturity the kind of collaborative working that would lead to an inclusive experience.

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.



13 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of South Wootton Infant School, King's Lynn, PE30 3LJ

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your happy school and being so friendly and helpful. We were pleased to hear how much you enjoy coming to school.

We agree with you that your teachers take good care of you and ensure you are safe and secure at school. Your behaviour around the school is good and you get on very well with one another, which is very important.

Your school is satisfactory. Teachers and other adults help most of you to obtain good standards in reading and mathematics by the time you leave Year 2. To improve your school further, we have asked the headteacher and staff to:

- make sure that the work provided for you always matches your learning needs
- help you to always present your work neatly
- make sure that teachers give you sufficient time for writing during the lessons so that your writing gets better
- write helpful things in your books so that both you and your teachers are clear where you need to further improve your work.

Improving your writing is going to require you to work in partnership with your teachers. You can help by writing neatly, and always saying if you are finding your writing too hard, or that you want more time to record your thoughts on paper or on the computer.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Read
Lead inspector

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