

# Sitwell Infant School

Grange Road, Grange Estate, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S60 3LA

**Inspection dates** 11–12 June 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils' achievement is outstanding and they make excellent progress during their time in the school. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is significantly above average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, until this year, pupils who are supported by the pupil premium funding, have not made the same excellent progress that other pupils make.
- Children make an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the outstanding teaching they receive.
- The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is outstanding. Activities are highly enjoyable and very well planned.
- All staff have very high expectations of pupils. They work very successfully to ensure tasks are matched carefully to pupils' precise needs. However, teaching assistants are not always used effectively to ensure that no learning time is wasted.
- Overall, the marking of pupils' work is of a high standard. Teachers celebrate pupils' efforts and point out how they can improve. However, they pay too little attention to improving pupils' spelling.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and are actively involved in making improvements through the work of the school council.
- Pupils feel safe and behave exceptionally well whilst in school, the playground, the dining hall and on visits.
- The school is exceptionally well led by the headteacher. She is strongly supported by an effective deputy, senior and subject leadership teams and by all staff. Team spirit is strong, morale is high and all are committed to continued improvement.
- The range of enrichment activities provided by the school is superb and contributes significantly to pupils' learning, development and to their above-average attendance.
- The good governing body increasingly contributes to the success of the school.
- The school is continuously striving to improve and there is a very strong focus on checking on how well different groups of pupils are learning so that any who fall behind can be immediately helped to make better progress.
- The highly successful promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of the school's work.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive, many feeling that, in their words, 'The school does an amazing job.' Leaders do a great deal to encourage parents from different backgrounds to become involved so that they can support their children's learning effectively.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 11 lessons taught by eight teachers; two were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- They held meetings with governors, staff, parents and pupils and talked with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to three pupils in Years 1 and 2 read.
- They looked in depth at work produced by pupils in all classes.
- Inspectors studied a range of documents including: the school’s own view of how well it is doing; plans for the school’s future development; outcomes of leaders’ observations of lessons and monitoring records; safeguarding policies and records and the school’s analysis of data on pupils’ progress, including of future projections based on the school’s tracking and attendance information.
- The 35 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were analysed, along with a summary of questionnaires recently completed by staff. Inspectors also obtained the views of a number of parents when bringing their children into school.

## Inspection team

Derek Pattinson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sheila Iwaskow

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well-below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The largest groups on roll are Pakistani pupils and pupils of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is well-below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- There have been some changes of teaching staff since the previous inspection.
- Children enter the school from 22 different settings and over 20 different languages are represented.
- The school holds the Global School Award in recognition of its work to promote diversity. It also holds the Activemark Gold for its work in physical education.

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

- Raise pupils well-above average standards even further by;
  - ensuring that pupils in receipt of the pupil premium consistently make the same excellent progress that most other pupils make
  - ensuring teachers give greater emphasis to improving pupils' spelling
  - making sure that teaching assistants are always used effectively so that no learning time is wasted.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those typical for their age, especially in language, literacy and communication. Due to high-quality teaching and the warm, caring and supportive approach of all adults, they make rapid progress in developing knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through the Reception Year. As a result, by the time they enter Key Stage 1, a significant number of pupils have exceeded the typical expectations for their age.
- In the most recent national checks in Years 1 and 2 on pupils' ability to link letters to the sounds (phonics) almost all groups of pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs, met the expected standard. Indeed, they performed considerably better than the national picture. These highly positive outcomes are reflected in pupils' love of books. Many are avid readers, reading widely, confidently tackling new sounds and keen to improve and to talk with adults about their reading. This provides clear evidence that reading is taught exceptionally well and is a strength of the school. In addition, trained volunteers come into school regularly to read with pupils who need extra practise.
- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of the key stage has been above or well above the national picture for the past four years. In 2013, for example, attainment was above national levels in reading and mathematics and well above the picture nationally in writing. Furthermore, the school's rigorous checks on how well pupils are doing, clearly show that this year's end of key stage assessments are likely to show even higher attainment, in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The achievement of the most able pupils is also excellent from their individual starting points. This is because they are usually set increasingly challenging work that allows them to make outstanding progress. Indeed, half the pupils in Year 2 are likely to achieve the higher Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they move to the junior school.
- In 2013, the relatively small number of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium did not do as well as their national counterparts or as well as all other groups of pupils. However, this issue was very quickly identified and has been successfully addressed by leaders through timely action and support. As a result, gaps in attainment for the current Year 2 have now closed. These pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, are now making the same excellent progress as all other groups, indicating that leaders are promoting equality of opportunity particularly well.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve very well compared to their peers nationally. This is due to the high-quality support they are given to develop their learning.
- Discussions with parents and their responses through Parent View show an overwhelming agreement that their children achieve very well at this school.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- The quality of teaching has improved from good to outstanding since the last inspection and parents are in full agreement, believing rightly that 'most teaching is superb'. Teaching over time is outstanding, with pupils' books providing clear evidence of the excellent progress they are making. Furthermore, the well-above average standards predicted for this year, together with the above and well-above average standards over recent years, provide further evidence of the continuing improvement in teaching.
- Strong relationships between staff and pupils underpin learning in all classes and pupils experience much encouragement. Pupils enjoy coming to school, are very keen to learn and are respectful. As a result, activities in class run smoothly.
- Highly successful provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage involves children in conversation, stimulates their curiosity, extends their knowledge, develops important skills and nurtures their

independence. For example, children make three-dimensional models of animals, taste different vegetables and engage in imaginative play in the class Wildlife Park, while others learning outside, learn to skip and experiment with musical instruments.

- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and ask pupils thoughtful and highly effective questions to help them learn. For example, in Year 2, pupils were writing a description of what it would be like to live in the jungle, and a pupil commented, in response to a question posed by the class teacher, 'There are enormous, long, green leaves in the jungle which are the size of boulders.' The wide range of exciting resources ensured that pupils were totally captivated and absorbed in their learning, making excellent progress.
- Planning is very good and the pace of most activities is brisk. Regular checks are made to assess pupils' understanding. These strong features in teaching were observed in mathematics in Year 1 when pupils solved addition problems. Tasks were very well matched to pupils' precise needs and abilities and, as a result, all made rapid progress.
- Pupils' work is marked on a regular basis and overall feedback given through the school's 'stars and a wish' approach is very helpful and constructive. However, very occasionally in literacy too little attention is given to improving pupils' spelling to help ensure that pupils make best possible progress.
- Teaching assistants are a very valuable asset around the school. They are particularly effective when overseeing pupils working on their own or together because they use a range of strategies to ensure that they make rapid strides with their learning. However, they are not always used to best effect when the teacher is talking to the whole class. As a result, there are missed opportunities to promote learning.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- It is underpinned by excellent relationships at all levels. This is confirmed by school records, observations and discussions with pupils.
- Standards of behaviour around the school, in the dining hall, in assemblies and in the playground are exemplary. Pupils are polite and courteous to adults and each other, such as by holding doors open for other pupils and adults. They walk along corridors sensibly and in an orderly manner, many chatting happily together and holding hands. They take turns and wait patiently to be served at meal times. They are kind and respectful at all times and wear their school uniform with pride.
- They show very good levels of concentration and perseverance when in the classroom, especially when inspired by their learning, such as when Year 1 pupils were engaged in 'follow up' work to a story called 'the Monkey with the Bright Blue Bottom'.
- Pupils relish the times they spend outdoors in the large, attractive and very well resourced playground, swinging on the beam, doing 'flips' on the wooden stage and sliding happily down the fixed slide. They have excellent awareness of the need to keep the playground free of litter. Some use the quiet areas very sensibly for rest and relaxation.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. This helps to explain why most arrive on time and attendance is above the national average. They say that many lessons are fun and like working to achieve their targets in literacy and numeracy.
- They relish the responsibility they are given. For example, school councillors played a prominent part in securing fixed play equipment for the playground and contributed to the school's policy on behaviour management. All are proud to be at Sitwell Infant School and strive constantly to fulfil the school mission statement 'To be the best we can be.'
- Pupils are aware of different forms of bullying but say that 'it hardly ever happens' but that when it does happen they tell a teacher who, in their words, 'would deal with it'.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- They know about the need for fire drills and of the dangers posed by the internet. They feel safe in all parts of the school and comment on the visitor badges, that 'doors are locked to stop

people getting inside' and that 'teachers are always about when we are playing on the field or on the playground'. There are good levels of supervision at all times when pupils are outside.

- Parents agree that their children are kept very safe and are very well looked after at school.

## **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- Since the previous inspection, the school has gone from strength to strength. This is due to the impressive leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, ably supported by other senior members of staff. Staff are very proud to be working at the school, team spirit is excellent and morale is high. All are committed to continued improvement in order to build further on the school's success. All staff, governors and almost all parents have a very high regard for the headteacher and agree that the school is exceptionally well led and managed.
- All staff contribute to the school's priorities for development, which are the right ones and are being rigorously pursued and often rapidly achieved. For example, the wide gap in performance between pupils who are supported by the pupil premium funding and other pupils, evident in 2013, has been eliminated due to a relentless focus on accelerating their rate of progress.
- The quality of teaching is rigorously monitored and outstanding practice is shared so that all staff can make further improvements to their practice. Furthermore, there is a strong commitment to ongoing training to ensure that staff members' knowledge and skills are up to date. These factors help to explain just why senior leaders judge teaching as outstanding and to be still improving. Teachers' pay is securely linked to their effectiveness in the classroom and the progress that pupils make. Arrangements to manage teachers' performance are sharply focused so that they are held fully to account for pupils' progress and improving their teaching with regular checks carried out by the headteacher to ensure that all are 'on track' to reach their rigorous targets.
- Subject leadership teams know what works well and what still needs improving. This is because clear procedures are in place to ensure that leaders effectively monitor their subject areas and the progress that pupils are making.
- Equality and diversity are exceptionally well promoted. With over 20 languages represented, the school strives to understand and promote the diversity of the world in which their pupils live. For example, the school holds a Global Schools Award, pupils enjoy a 'Who do you think you are?' week to help celebrate cultural diversity, and they take part in samba drumming workshops.
- The school's outstanding achievement is underpinned by a curriculum that provides many rich and varied activities and experiences. For example, in work on France, pupils try chocolate brioche, taste brie, enjoy eating a croissant and draw pictures of the Eiffel Tower. Themes, such as a Pirates Day, successful film-making projects and visits to a butterfly house and the local farm, help enthuse pupils with a love of learning. Awards, such as the Activemark Gold for its physical education curriculum, provide further evidence of the school's vibrant and innovative curriculum. A varied range of out-of-school clubs are available for pupils to enjoy such as Urdu, sewing and cricket.
- Excellent financial management ensures that the new primary sport funding has been used wisely, such as to appoint coaches to support teachers' professional development. As a result, pupils are developing healthy lifestyles, better physical well-being and are steadily improving their performance.
- Safeguarding and child-protection arrangements meet requirements. For example, arrangements to access the building are very secure to ensure that pupils are safe.
- The local authority provides 'light touch' support to this outstanding school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The highly committed governing body contributes increasingly well to the success of the school. Governors are well informed about all aspects of the school's work, especially the quality of teaching and the progress pupils are making. They know that pay increases for teachers are linked securely to pupils' performance. They are not afraid to ask searching

questions and are increasingly effective in both supporting and challenging the headteacher. The governing body ensures that pupil premium funding is spent appropriately and they are fully aware of its impact.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106858
<b>Local authority</b>	Rotherham
<b>Inspection number</b>	443798

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	219
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	C Burgess
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Skupien
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 February 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01709 531855
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