

INSPECTION REPORT

SEAGRAVE VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Loughborough

LEA area: Leicestershire

Unique reference number: 119948

Headteacher: Mrs J Latham

Reporting inspector: Mr J White
17242

Dates of inspection: 27th –28th June 2002

Inspection number: 250202

Short inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Green Lane
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Loughborough
Leicestershire

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Dr John Tyers

Date of previous inspection: 22nd June 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

With 73 boys and girls on roll the school is much smaller than average. Children are admitted into the reception year at the beginning of the autumn or spring terms and are taught in the same class as Year 1. Eight children are currently in the reception year. The remaining two classes are also of mixed ages. There are no pupils eligible for free school meals. Two pupils are of Indian family background and neither is at an early stage of English acquisition. Eighteen pupils are on the school's special educational needs record, a figure below average, and none has a statement. The number of pupils with special needs has risen since the last inspection. Assessments indicate that the attainment of the current reception children on entry to the school was above average in literacy, numeracy and personal development. However, attainment has been more variable in previous years. For example, about a third of the current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are on the special needs record. Pupils are drawn from both private and local authority housing and the LEA's index of deprivation and advantage ranks the school in the middle range. About 66 per cent of pupils come from outside the school's catchment area. The headteacher has been at the school for less than two terms and only one teacher remains from the time of the last inspection. The school has been rewarded with a School Achievement Award for its progress in national test results.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school continues to be effective. Overall standards in the national tests for pupils in Year 2 have risen considerably since 1998 and were high in 2001. Although standards in Year 6 have been more variable they were high overall in 2001 and pupils had made very good progress from the age of seven. The current Year 2 and 6 have also made at least good progress in relation to their abilities. Much of the teaching is good or better. The new headteacher has started very well and is well supported by governors and staff. Pupils have very good attitudes to their learning and they behave very well. The school is an harmonious community and is viewed highly by parents. Good value for money is provided.

What the school does well

- Considerable progress has been made in the school's results in the national tests for pupils in Year 2; pupils in Year 6 have made significant progress in relation to their attainment in Year 2.
- Much of the teaching is good or better and is helping pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils behave very well and are very keen to learn. Their attitudes are often excellent.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing ought to be higher by the end of Year 6.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1998 and it has improved well since that time. Standards in the national tests for Year 2 pupils have risen significantly over time. Standards have fluctuated more widely in the tests for Year 6 pupils but in 2001 they had made very good progress from Year 2. In the work seen, standards in Year 6 are not as high as at the time of the last inspection but pupils have made better progress. The last inspection's key issues have been addressed generally well. Improvements have been made in leadership, the curriculum and the professional development of staff. Key improvements in the use of assessment findings are imminent. Attendance at the time of the last inspection was satisfactory and is now very good. Value for money is now good rather than satisfactory. The school's capacity to continue to improve, under the leadership of the headteacher, is good.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	A	B	B	C	well above average A above average B Average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	A	B	A	A	
science	A*	D	A	B	

The number of pupils in Year 6 has been small and therefore any comparison of results between successive years should be treated with great caution. Small changes in the number of pupils with higher or lower than average ability have a substantial impact on the grades. These changes have affected the school's trend in performance, which over five years has been below the national trend. However, a key finding is that the results in 2001 showed that Year 6 pupils had made very good overall progress in relation to their attainment in Year 2. Pupils performed better in mathematics and science than in English, when compared with schools with similar eligibility for free school meals. The school's statutory targets were exceeded in mathematics but not met in English. Standards in the Year 2 national tests have risen considerably since 1998 and in 2001 were high overall. In the most recent tests standards were not as high for Year 2 and 6 because the number of pupils with special educational needs has risen. However, pupils have made good, and in some cases, very good progress over time. In the work seen during the inspection, standards in Year 2 were average in English and mathematics and very good in science. Standards are broadly average in Year 6 but standards in writing should be higher. In the work seen, children in the reception year were on course to exceed the expected outcomes for when they join Year 1. They achieved well in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils with special educational needs are achieving well throughout the school. The most able infant pupils are achieving particularly well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and in some lessons attitudes are excellent.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Pupils are willing helpers around the school and enjoy opportunities to take responsibility.
Attendance	The attendance rate is well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Very good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is good overall and is never less than satisfactory. In the lessons observed in literacy and numeracy, in Years 1 to 3, the teaching was good or better. It was satisfactory in the two lessons observed in the class for Years 4 to 6. However, Year 6 pupils' progress indicates that the teaching has been good over time. The very good subject expertise of a technician for ICT is helping pupils throughout the school to make good progress. Very high expectation is a significant feature of the excellent teaching in science in the Year 2/3 class. In the good teaching, teachers' explanations are clear and they ask well-focused questions to challenge pupils' thinking. Most lessons are well structured and have clear objectives for pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and in much of the teaching the most able pupils are suitably challenged. However, there is particular scope to improve the teaching of writing to help raise standards by the end of Year 6. The quality of relationships contributes especially well to pupils' learning. Pupils are very keen and confident and work diligently.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are supported well and pupils' individual education plans have improved.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	A very small number of pupils have English as an additional language and they are succeeding well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. A significant strength is pupils' social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Day-to-day care is good and procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are improving.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has made a very good start and has quickly gained the support of staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Responsibilities are fulfilled well and the governors give good support.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and governors are well aware of the school's strengths and areas for development.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used very well, for example, support staff make a valued contribution to the work of the school.

The headteacher is sensibly building on the effective practice of her predecessor and making improvements where they are needed, for example, in the use of assessment findings. The principles of best value are applied well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children like school and are making good progress.• Behaviour is good.• Children are expected to work hard and achieve their best.• Children are being helped to become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of activities outside lessons is not interesting enough.• Information about how well their children are progressing.

The inspection team endorses parents' positive views. The inspectors' view is that the range of extra-curricular activities is good for a school of this size. Most of the parents who expressed a view stated that, although they found the school's meetings with parents to be useful, they would like more information on how their children are getting on. The inspectors' view is that it would be helpful for the school to consult parents over this issue.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Considerable progress has been made in the school's results in the national tests for pupils in Year 2; pupils in Year 6 have made significant progress in relation to their attainment in Year 2

- 1 Although only one teacher remains since the time of the last inspection, it is clear that effective teaching over time has ensured that standards in the national tests for Year 2 pupils have risen considerably. In 1998, the year of the last inspection, the standards reached were well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. This means that pupils' results were within the range of the bottom quarter of schools across the country. Pupils' average points score was more than a point less than the national average and this equated to almost a two-term deficit in their progress. However, since 1998 standards have risen in each successive year and since 1999 have been better than the national trend. In 2000 and 2001 standards were well above the national average and in mathematics in 2001 they were within the range of the top five percent of schools. Although caution is needed when interpreting results in small schools the progress over time represents a considerable achievement on the school's part. Results in the latest test are not as high as in 2001 because there is a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in this year's Year 2. However, the quality of teaching is very good and as a result pupils have made good progress especially in mathematics where a quarter have attained above the average National Curriculum level. The performance of Year 6 pupils in the tests in 2001, indicated that their progress since Year 2 had been very good in English and science and excellent in mathematics. The most recent test results for Year 6 have not yet been validated. The signs are that standards in comparison with all schools are not as high as last year's standards because there are more pupils with SEN. However, in the work seen during the inspection, standards in Year 6 were broadly average. This means that since the age of seven (in 1998) pupils have made significant progress.

Much of the teaching is good or better and is helping pupils to achieve well

- 2 There are several strengths in the good teaching that are helping pupils to achieve well. Objectives for lessons are shared with pupils at the start of lessons and consequently they know what is expected of them. In the most effective teaching the teacher revisits the objectives at the end of the lesson to ascertain how much has been learned. For example, at the close of a literacy lesson in the Year 2/3 class the teacher's well-focused questions showed that not all pupils had fully understood their work on conjunctions and so she introduced an extra task to help them. Challenging questioning is a feature of the good teaching. In the reception/Year 1 class, at the beginning of a numeracy lesson, the teacher posed a good range of number questions and encouraged pupils to explain their "working out". This ensured that all pupils were suitably challenged. At the beginning of a literacy lesson in the Year 4/5/6 class the teacher's questions about the language used in a poem helped pupils to improve their awareness of word play. Some of the teaching is very good and in one lesson it was excellent. Very good subject knowledge contributes significantly to the very successful teaching. In a highly effective science lesson, Year 2 pupils made excellent progress in their knowledge and understanding of forces because the teacher used her expertise to set very high expectations. The quality of learning in this lesson was excellent because all pupils participated fully and their interest and

concentration were sustained throughout the lesson. Pupils also used the appropriate scientific terminology very well when they explained their work. Good pace and a sense of urgency often accompany high expectations. In a very good numeracy lesson pupils in Year 2 were expected to use time productively as they constructed and interpreted information from tally charts. They had to work quickly but their understanding was checked thoroughly and as a result they achieved very well. All the teachers, including the headteacher, foster very good relationships with pupils and manage them successfully. Consequently, pupils generally know they are expected to give of their best.

- 3 The school benefits from the considerable expertise of a technician for ICT who is shared with the family of small schools. The technician is a trained nursery nurse and relates very well to the pupils. Very good use is being made of the technician who teaches separate year groups drawn from the mixed aged classes. In three of the lessons observed, pupils worked in the school's computer suite and the quality of teaching was very good. ICT skills are taught very clearly and infant pupils in particular are making speedy progress. For example, pupils in Year 2 quickly grasped how to access a programme and open a file. They also improved their word processing skills as they wrote a postcard home from India as part of their work in geography. Year 6 pupils also achieved well in the lesson seen because of the clarity of the technician's explanations. Pupils combined different forms of information from a range of sources as they improved the layout of their WebPages about Romans. In a successful numeracy lesson in the reception/Year1 class, the class teacher worked with Year 1 pupils whilst the technician taught the reception children. This arrangement enabled pupils to work at an appropriate level. Both groups achieved very well not only in their knowledge of number facts but also in their confidence in using the mouse and keyboard. The reception children's knowledge and understanding showed that they are well on course to exceed the expected early learning goals in mathematical development. In several lessons class assistants were helping pupils with SEN. The quality of support was good and helped pupils to be fully aware of what was expected of them and to make good progress, for instance in ICT, literacy and numeracy.

Pupils behave very well and are very keen to learn. Their attitudes are often excellent.

- 4 Pupils behave very well in classrooms and in and around the school. They are expected to show self-discipline especially at lunchtime, which is a very sociable occasion. Pupils respond very well to the opportunity to choose activities during the lunch break either inside or out. For example, reception pupils were observed using computers sensibly and infant and junior pupils played well together, for instance in skipping. During lessons behaviour is often excellent. Reception pupils have to move through the school and climb the stairs to the computer suite; this is done with the minimum of fuss. In the Year 2/3 class pupils quietly and regularly thank their teacher, for example, when she praises their performance. In a very good numeracy lesson they quietly cheered when the teacher told them how well they had worked. Pupils' behaviour and their very positive attitudes contribute significantly to the quality of their learning. It is very evident that they come eagerly to school and in their discussions with inspectors many indicated how much they enjoyed their school life. Infant pupils are especially enthusiastic.
- 5 The quality of relationships is a strong feature of the school's harmonious community. Pupils are polite and friendly and many respond cheerfully when they are greeted in the morning by the headteacher and staff. In the computer suite, classrooms and the

playground, pupils were observed co-operating very well with each other and with adults. They responded very well during assembly and listened attentively. Most pupils are keen to learn and talk readily about their work. They listen well and express their views confidently. Year 1 pupils responded very well in a mental arithmetic session and confidently explained how they had calculated $13+9$. Year 2 pupils talked enthusiastically about their reading and read well to the inspectors. Although many pupils in the Year 4/5/6 class showed some reluctance to discuss a poem, despite the teacher's attempts to capture their interest, they nevertheless settled quickly to work in the ensuing activity. At the end of the lesson, pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 readily shared their work with the rest of the class. Year 6 pupils behaved very well in the computer suite, they helped each other well and showed very positive attitudes.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Standards in writing ought to be higher by the end of Year 6.

- 6 Pupils in Year 6 have undertaken a satisfactory range of writing for different purposes that include stories, poetry, reports and explanations. Punctuation is often used accurately especially in narrative. Some of the writing is interesting and captures the reader's interest, for example, in a modern version of the story of Cinderella or in arguing a point of view in writing about smoking. There are examples of pupils writing precisely, for instance, in explaining the findings from scientific experiments. In their work in history pupils have shown imagination in writing "letters" home from Romans at Hadrian's Wall. They have also written well-expressed letters to the local planning officer about problems with traffic in a local street. However, whilst progress over time is good in the use of punctuation it is too erratic in other elements of writing especially in presentation, handwriting and the development of vocabulary. On occasion, pupils show that they can write fluently and legibly but too often they do not take enough care in the presentation of their work and in their handwriting. There is too much untidy work. Pupils are not developing their use of vocabulary sufficiently and, although they undertake spelling regularly, there is little evidence of them adding interest to their writing by the progressive use of new vocabulary. In a literacy lesson pupils enjoyed writing a poem but ideas and the use of vocabulary were rarely above average. Some pupils talked about planning and drafting their work but they were unconvinced about their importance. Planning, drafting and editing skills are not taught systematically. Word processing skills are under-developed and pupils have had little experience of developing their writing on screen. Marking of pupils' writing is not good enough. Comments are occasionally evaluative but not enough suggestions are made to help pupils' improve, for example, no targets are set for future work.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

7 The governors and headteacher should:

(1) Raise standards in writing by the end of Year 6 by:

- having higher expectations of pupils' handwriting and presentation;
- systematically teaching pupils the skills of planning, drafting and editing their writing;
- ensuring pupils develop and use a wider range of vocabulary;
- ensuring that marking is regular and indicates how pupils can improve their performance.

(Paragraph 6)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	9
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	6

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	3	3	2	-	-	-
Percentage	11	33	33	22	-	-	-

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than eleven percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	71
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	18

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

National Curriculum test results are excluded from inspection reports where the year group is ten or fewer.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	-
Black – African heritage	-
Black – other	-
Indian	2
Pakistani	-
Bangladeshi	-
Chinese	-
White	61
Any other minority ethnic group	-

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	-	-
Black – African heritage	-	-
Black – other	-	-
Indian	-	-
Pakistani	-	-
Bangladeshi	-	-
Chinese	-	-
White	-	-
Other minority ethnic groups	-	-

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Average class size	23.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	63

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	201,364
Total expenditure	197,089
Expenditure per pupil	2,775
Balance brought forward from previous year	10,028
Balance carried forward to next year	14,302

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	71
Number of questionnaires returned	32

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	44	53	0	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	38	0	3	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	44	0	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	53	9	0	0
The teaching is good.	50	41	3	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	47	13	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	25	6	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	34	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	44	41	3	0	13
The school is well led and managed.	53	31	0	0	16
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	53	0	3	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	53	16	3	0