



# Sledmere Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 103772  
**LEA** Dudley  
**Inspection number** 276991  
**Inspection dates** 22 February 2006 to 23 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Jacqueline Wordsworth HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	School Drive
<b>School category</b>	Community		Dudley
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		West Midlands DY2 8EH
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 818425
<b>Number on roll</b>	450	<b>Fax number</b>	01384 818426
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Jill Snow
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Clive Danks

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 22 February 2006 - 23 February 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 276991
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Sledmere school is a larger-than-average-sized primary school. Its pupils come from diverse social, economic and ethnic backgrounds. A very high proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also very high. Some pupils join the school at the early stages of learning English. In addition, a high proportion of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education. This is also the school's own view. When the children join the Nursery they have exceptionally low attainment, especially in their language skills. Satisfactory teaching enables children, including those who are at an early stage of learning English, to make a good start. However, the school does not make sure that all staff in the rest of the school are fully aware of how to meet the specific linguistic needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The pupils make satisfactory progress overall. However, the pace of progress is significantly slower at Key Stage 1 than at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1 their reading and writing lags behind their mathematical development. The pupils' good attitudes and positive social skills, including a keen awareness of others, stand them in good stead for their next stage of education, although their attainment in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) is not as high it could be. Teaching is satisfactory, with areas of strength. Assessment is thorough, but the analysis of the information and the tracking of the pupils' progress are not sufficiently detailed. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The leadership team is committed to the school's improvement. Monitoring of the school's effectiveness is regular but evaluation is not rigorous enough. The school has responded reasonably to most of the key issues from its previous inspection report. There have been improvements to ICT and in promoting the independence of pupils in the Foundation Stage. The school provides satisfactory value for money and has the capacity to make further improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards at the end of Key Stage 1 by ensuring that data about the pupils' progress is used effectively to plan the next steps in the pupils' learning.
- Sharpen the school's improvement planning to raise standards by ensuring that the outcomes of monitoring are evaluated rigorously and lead to appropriate action.
- Cater better for the needs of all pupils who speak English as an additional language by ensuring that support is systematically provided across all year groups.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. When they start in the Nursery, children's knowledge and skills are extremely low. In particular, their personal, social, emotional and communication skills are underdeveloped. Nonetheless, they make satisfactory progress through the Foundation Stage but the standards they reach at the end of the Reception year are still well below the national expectations for their age. Most pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress from Year 1 to Year 6. However, there is a dip in performance at Key Stage 1, where standards have been exceptionally low for the last three years, with too few pupils attaining at the highest level. This is particularly

true in writing. The pupils did not achieve as well as they could in writing because there were insufficient opportunities for them to write at length; this is being addressed through the new curriculum. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 make better progress, especially in mathematics, where pupils make sound gains and generally meet challenging targets. Children with learning difficulties and most of the vulnerable children throughout the school are well supported and make satisfactory progress. Tests and assessment records show that by the time pupils leave in Year 6, standards in literacy, numeracy and ICT are broadly average. However, these basic skills are not as high as they could be throughout the school because of variations in progress in the different key stages.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Children's personal development and well-being are satisfactory, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The attractive display of Faith City in the main entrance celebrates diversity within the school and the local community. The pupils' attitudes to work and each other are good and are seen in their enthusiasm in the classrooms and their good behaviour. However, a significant minority of parents have expressed concerns regarding the behaviour of some of the children. Attendance rates are slightly below the national average but they have improved since the last inspection, with increased numbers of pupils receiving 100% attendance certificates. The pupils are clear about the need for a healthy diet and physical activity. This was ably demonstrated in a Physical Education (PE) lesson where the pupils explored the effect of exercise on their heart rates. An active school council makes a very good contribution to school life; those involved are proud to explain how their ideas have led to improvements in playground equipment and in the wider publicity of the school's motto, 'Strive, Progress and Succeed'.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some good features. In some instances the teaching does not build well enough on what the pupils already know and does not always take sufficient account of individual learning needs. For example, the higher-attaining pupils are not supported well enough or given appropriate levels of challenge, especially in English. As a result, the pace of learning is often slow in these lessons. Where the teaching is good, teachers have a detailed knowledge of what the pupils already know. In the best lessons, teachers' expectations are high and the work is pitched at the right level and builds on what the pupils know and can do. The teachers are clear about what they want the children to learn and make it clear to them. As a result, the pupils are motivated, try hard and make progress in their learning. One young boy in the Reception class commented that, 'he was on the ball today,' after he realised that he had met his target for the lesson. The teachers assess the pupils' work carefully and regularly, but not all give sufficient help to show the

children how or what to improve. Support for pupils speaking English as an additional language has weaknesses because the teachers do not make the best use of information about these pupils' specific needs. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning because they are well informed and usefully employed.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall, with some improvement in ICT through its integration into other subjects. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) are well supported by the work in their individual plans. The support for pupils who speak English as an additional language focuses on the years between Nursery and Year 3 and is less systematic and frequent in Years 4, 5 and 6. The school has changed the way in which the curriculum is taught to make it more relevant to children's needs. This has resulted in more first-hand experiences for pupils through visits, particularly in the local area. There is a broad range of after-school activities and clubs which provide added enjoyment to the pupils' learning.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Throughout the school, pupils are well cared for, with good support for most groups of the vulnerable pupils and those who have learning difficulties and disabilities. As a result, their self-esteem is high and they feel safe and have confidence in their teachers. Guidance is satisfactory. A system for making pupils aware of their learning targets and involving them in knowing how to reach these targets has been introduced but is not the same in each class or year group. This means that pupils in some Key Stage 2 classes are more aware than others of what they need to do to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The school reviews its own performance and has a reasonable grasp of its strengths and weaknesses. However, monitoring and evaluation of the work are not focused enough to secure rapid improvement. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall, with systems in place to track pupils' progress. However, this information is not shared or understood well enough by the staff and the governors. This is one reason why the school has not yet reversed the declining trend in Year 2 results. The school improvement plan demonstrates the school is taking appropriate actions. However, the plan's timescale lacks the necessary urgency to ensure that there is rapid improvement in standards by the end of Year 2. All staff are well motivated and keen to improve the school: they have responded well to the new curriculum arrangements, in particular the new approach to teaching writing. The newly established and good leadership of the Foundation Stage has encouraged staff and has begun to bring about better outcomes

for pupils. The school is well regarded by the local community. A committed governing body supports the school. There are strong partnerships formed with support agencies that help and support the children.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Children Thank you very much for being so welcoming and friendly towards us during our recent visit to your school. We very much enjoyed the opportunity to talk to you and your teachers about how well you are doing. We thought you would like to know what we have said about your school. You behave well and you are kind and considerate to each other. In lessons we think you listen carefully to what your teachers have to tell you and you try hard. You have told us you feel safe and secure. We think you know the importance of staying healthy and taking regular exercise. Your teachers look after you well and listen to what you have to say. They work hard to help you learn. We noticed that you are now taking more tests and assessments, which means that your teachers know more about how you are doing in lessons. We have asked the school to make this information a bit simpler so that all of your teachers will know what to plan next to help you improve further. The inspectors have also asked your teachers to think about how they can give better support in lessons to those of you who speak languages other than English. Finally, we have recommended that Mr Danks, the teachers and the governors should keep a more detailed check on how well the school is doing, to help them make things better still. There are many things that are good about your school and you together with your teachers can make the school even better. Please keeping working hard and doing the best you can. All the inspectors wish you well in the future. Kind regards Jacqueline Wordsworth Her Majesty's Inspector