



# Somercotes Infant School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 112499  
**LEA** DERBYSHIRE LEA  
**Inspection number** 278945  
**Inspection dates** 12 October 2005 to 13 October 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mr. Andrew Cook LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Victoria Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		DE55 4HA
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 7		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01773602849
<b>Number on roll</b>	256	<b>Fax number</b>	01773 602849
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr. John McCabe
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 November 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs. Sarah Sisson

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 7	<b>Inspection dates</b> 12 October 2005 - 13 October 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 278945
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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

Somercotes Infant and Nursery School is situated in a small industrial suburb in Derbyshire. It serves a mixed community with the percentage of children on free school meals being a little higher than the average for all primary schools. The proportion of children with learning difficulties or disabilities is about the same as all primary schools. Almost all of the children are of white British heritage and there are no children who speak English as an additional language. Many of the children start in the nursery with below average skills, especially in speaking and listening.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

Somercotes Infant School gives the children a secure start to their education and is well placed to make further improvements. The headteacher gives good leadership. She has built up an enthusiastic and dedicated team of staff who have begun to create a positive 'buzz' about what the school does. The recent improvements made by the school have had insufficient time to lead to higher standards. The school has a very clear understanding of what it is good at and the areas where it needs to improve. The school has developed good relationships with parents and involves them in their children's learning. Parents appreciate this and know that their children are making progress. Children make a good start in the nursery and reception classes. In Years 1 and 2, children's progress slows down but is satisfactory overall. Girls achieve better than boys, although the school is working hard to help boys make more progress. Even so, more work is needed to make sure all children achieve as well as they can. The school has recently made effective changes to the way they teach lessons. Teaching is now mostly good but too many children still need to catch up to where they should be. The school needs to keep checking how effective teaching is so that to make sure that all the children do as well as they can. Children enjoy school and like learning. They behave well in lessons and around the school because staff set clear rules and give rewards for good behaviour. Attendance is well below the national average and some children are missing too many important lessons. One of the school's strengths is the good care and support it gives the children. The school has made good progress on the issues raised in the last inspection and provides sound value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

-improve the children's achievement, especially the boys'; -continue to improve attendance; -check teaching carefully to make sure that new ideas are having a positive effect on the children's progress.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

The inspection team agrees with the school that achievement and standards overall are satisfactory and that children enter the nursery with below average skills. The children make good progress in the nursery and reception classes and many reach the targets expected of them for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Progress then slows down and is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, girls' progress is good. Their attainment is at least average and above average in reading and writing. This pattern of progress is not the same for boys. Although their progress is satisfactory overall their attainment at the end of Year 2 remains below average. The school has started to help the boys more effectively by changing the way they teach and making learning more enjoyable for them. This support is improving the standards boys reach but not enough to have improved the test results last summer.

Children with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress and in some cases their individual needs are well met.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. Behaviour in lessons is satisfactory overall. When they are actively involved in learning, and there is direct adult support, children's behaviour is good and supports learning well. However, when children are not sufficiently challenged or there are too few adults supporting, some lose concentration. Children are very well supervised at break times and they enjoy using the plentiful playground equipment. Behaviour on the playground is good and children say there is very little trouble at these times. They recall no incidents of bullying. Attendance levels remain well below average and, although there has been an improvement over the last year, too many children are missing lessons. Children say they enjoy coming to school and their friendships with each other and their relationships with adults are important to them. The school is a friendly community and children say that it is a pleasant and comfortable place to be in. Children learn to understand others' feelings and look after those who have no-one to play with or feel lonely. Children have a good awareness of how to stay fit and healthy. They enjoy eating healthy food and snacks and take part enthusiastically in activities to improve their physical fitness. In some lessons children are taught important life skills through learning about co-operating and working together.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching is satisfactory overall, and in the nursery and reception classes it is good. Teaching has recently improved in Years 1 and 2 and now is often good, helping children to make at least satisfactory progress. However some children, especially the boys, need to make better progress than this to catch up to where they should be. In the best lessons, teachers have good relationships with children, they have high expectations and make learning fun. Teachers manage children's behaviour well by using very clear instructions and constant praise. As a result, children listen carefully and start work quickly. When teaching assistants are involved in children's learning they mostly provide a good level of support. They help those with learning difficulties to feel confident to have a go so that they learn well. Teachers plan lessons clearly. They are beginning to make better use of assessment than previously to ensure that children are provided with tasks that match their learning targets. This includes paying good attention to basic skills, especially those relating to speaking and listening. The learning targets are shared with parents and many enjoy getting involved with their children's learning. The school has improved the way it teaches reading and writing and this has started to raise standards.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall, and it is good in the nursery and reception classes. In these classes, records of what children can do are used well to make sure that the activities are adapted to the right level for the children. Improvements made to planning over the last year for the children in Years 1 and 2 are leading to signs of improved standards. The curriculum builds upon the children's skills year on year so that they feel confident and enjoy learning. The playgrounds provide a safe haven in which children can play. The extensive games and equipment encourage healthy exercise and help the children to develop their skills at taking turns or being a member of a team. Visits, such as to the zoo, the local church and teddy bears' picnic all contribute well to their enjoyment of learning. The arts days provide exciting opportunities to learn about art in a range of cultures. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are identified early and given appropriate individual learning programmes that are satisfactory. Many of these children receive effective help with speaking and listening.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The staff of the school show good levels of care for all children. They consider the emotional and physical well-being of children to be as important as caring for their academic needs and this is highly reflected in their work. To this end staff have created an environment in which all children feel safe and secure and in which they feel comfortable. Staff know the children well and are fully aware of children's circumstances and the care they need to take. Child protection procedures are fully in place and all staff take appropriate action when required. Children are encouraged to raise personal issues, confidentially if they need to, and someone is always there to help. Children's health is promoted very effectively. They are taught about healthy lifestyles and are provided with fruit each day and water to drink throughout the day. During the inspection the kitchen staff received an award for providing healthy alternatives on the menu. All children, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, are given good quality guidance on how to improve their work. Teachers set the children challenging targets and clearly explain how well the children are doing and what they need to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. Since the appointment of the current headteacher there has been an effective focus on improving the school. For example, the headteacher has set clear expectations for teaching and has made sure these are met by regularly checking lessons. This has improved teaching throughout the school. There have also been improvements to the buildings and new resources which have had a positive influence on children's learning. Although these improvements are good,

there has been insufficient time for them to lead to higher standards. The headteacher is very well supported by a good deputy headteacher and management team. This new team has successfully identified what the school does well and what it needs to get better at. They are rightly involving children, parents and governors in improving the school. The management team have effectively ensured that the improvements they have made are consistent across the school, but further evaluation is needed to make sure children's progress is more rapid. The school should keep checking that changes to the way they teach help children learn more quickly. The school has rightly identified the need to improve boys' achievement and attendance. In these areas the leadership and management still need to do more. The governors of the school are supportive and make a good contribution to helping the school improve. Governors have focused visits to school to find out how well it is doing. There is a new revitalised working relationship with the headteacher and together they have exciting plans for the school's future. The school's accurate evaluation of how well it is doing and the staff's determination and commitment to make well thought-out changes show that the school has a good capacity to improve further.





## 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	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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	3	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	3	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	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>	2	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>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	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	2	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	NA
<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**

Thank you for being so friendly when we visited you on inspection. We enjoyed talking with you and we thought your school is a place that is getting better and better. Here is a list of the things we liked about your school: - How teachers help you to have good behaviour. - The way adults care for you and keep you safe. - You enjoying using the play equipment. - The targets that help you know what to learn next. - The healthy dinners you have. - The way your headteacher and all the other adults in school work so hard to make the school a better place for you. - Your mums and dads when they come and help you with your work in the mornings. These are the things that we think need to improve. - You all need to do your best, especially boys. - All of you need to go to school everyday. You should only miss school for very important reasons. - The headteacher and the teachers should keep checking that the new things you do are helping you to learn.