



Simmondley Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112706
LEA DERBYSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 278999
Inspection dates 23 May 2006 to 24 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Andrew Cook LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Pennine Road
School category	Community		SK13 6NN
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01457 852 721
Number on roll	318	Fax number	01457-850974
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Richard Jenkins
Date of previous inspection	2 October 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Claire Grafton

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 23 May 2006 - 24 May 2006	Inspection number 278999
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

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

Description of the school

The school is slightly larger than the average primary school. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2005. The percentage of children eligible for free school meals is 1%, and therefore much lower than the average which is 16%. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and disabilities is much lower than average although the proportion of children with statements of special educational needs is just above the average. There are just fewer than 3% of children who do not have English as their first language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that knows it could be even better. The headteacher is successfully building on what the school does well. Her good leadership and management have helped the school to make robust evaluations of how well it is doing. This process has correctly identified that there are areas for improvement, leading the school to conclude that it should not yet judge its overall effectiveness as good. This school has high expectations and action is being taken to improve the consistency of good practice. Governors are effectively involved in this work and hold the school to account. Children enjoy school. Their behaviour is very good; they are enthusiastic about their work. In Reception, they make a sound start and reach average standards. By the end of Year 6 the overall standards in mathematics and science tests are well above average. In these subjects children make at least good progress. In English the rate of progress children make is improving and most children now make good progress and reach the standards expected. Teaching is good and leads to children learning well. Although teachers assess the progress children make, the way they use this information to help children know how well they have done and what to learn next is not always effective. In some lessons more could be done, to match work to children's differing abilities, especially the more able, so that they are all effectively challenged. The school gives good value for money. Improvement since the last inspection helped by the recent drive led by the headteacher is good, proving the school has a good capacity to improve even further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that work in lessons appropriately challenges children of different abilities, especially the more able children. - Use strategies that give children more information on how well they are doing and how they can improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Most children start school with broadly average abilities though there are some with above average abilities. By the time they reach the end of the Reception year the overall standards they reach show they have made at least satisfactory progress. Over the last three years the standards children reach by the end of Year 2 have fluctuated and for some children the progress they made was satisfactory. However, there is now evidence in children's work, and the school's assessments that children are making good progress and reaching the standards expected. By the end of Year 6, test results in mathematics and science show children have continued to make good and sometimes better progress, and overall standards are well above average. In English the picture is different. Since 2002 the standards children reach at the end of Year 6 have fallen and in 2005 were broadly average. The school has rightly identified weaknesses in writing as key to this fall and as a result of the school's drive to improve standards,

more children are making good progress and are meeting the challenging targets set for them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school makes a good contribution to children's personal development. Children enjoy learning and playing together. They form good relationships with one another and with the adults who work with them. Their behaviour is very good. A sign of children's enthusiasm for school life is their above average attendance. Children feel safe and secure in school and are confident that there is always an adult to support them when they need help. They value the encouragement they receive to adopt healthy lifestyles. Children make a satisfactory contribution to the school and wider community, taking responsibility for aspects of school life and raising funds for charity. The school recognises the need to extend children's awareness of the wider community, including improving their understanding of life in a diverse cultural and religious society. The development of language, mathematics and computer skills, together with activities that help them understand the needs of others, makes a sound contribution to children's preparation for adult life. In all aspects of school life children are encouraged to work together and this makes a good contribution to their social development. Good work has been undertaken, both in assemblies and in lessons, to improve the contribution made to children's spiritual development. Assemblies, personal and social education and other lessons also make a good contribution to children's growing awareness of moral issues. Sound steps are taken to promote children's cultural development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall, enabling children to achieve well. In the Foundation Stage, teachers get to know the children quickly and this helps them to make satisfactory progress. Throughout the school, teachers are well organised. Many lessons move at a lively pace and this helps children become enthusiastic and engaged learners. Teachers ensure that children know what they are doing and what it is intended they should learn. The teaching of writing has improved in response to the need to arrest the decline in standards in this aspect of English. The school has accurately identified the need to improve the teaching of extended problem solving skills to enhance the overall provision for mathematics. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are ably supported by teaching assistants who work effectively with teachers. However, teachers do not always take enough account of the different needs of all children in the class. Where this is the case, the most able children, particularly, are not always stretched enough for them to progress as far as they might. Teachers mark work regularly and the best marking gives children a clear indication of how their work can be improved. Some marking, however, does not provide enough

of this sort of guidance to be effective. Older children are beginning to be involved in assessing their own work, but this is not yet a common feature of many classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory with some good features. Displays of children's work and teachers' planning indicate that there is coverage of the full range of subjects although the lack of space in some classes and the outdoor environment places constraints on the range of activities that can be offered. For example, although the curriculum for the youngest children is satisfactory, the lack of an outdoor play area inhibits the provision for their physical development. Skills in art and design are developed well. Children learn how to stay safe, keep healthy and develop their understanding of citizenship through a well planned programme of personal and social development. The curriculum is enriched by a wide ranging programme of visits and visitors to school, such as theatre groups. The school also offers a good range of out of class activities, including music and various sports clubs. These attract many pupils and make a strong contribution to pupils' learning and enjoyment, providing good opportunities for children to exercise and learn to work together and in teams.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Teachers know the children and their families well. Parents are rightly confident that their children are well cared for and that their needs are effectively attended to. Children are consulted about their views of school life, both in classes and through the work of the school council. Members of the school council are, for instance, involved in the interviewing of candidates for teaching posts in the school. Procedures for ensuring that children are safe and well protected are securely in place. Effective steps have been taken to promote students' healthy lifestyles. Systems for assessing and recording how well children are doing, and for tracking their progress over time, are being developed. The school recognises that this information is not yet used as much as it could be to give children more detailed guidance on how well they are doing and how they can improve their work. Children who have identified difficulties with their learning are supported and guided well so that they are able to progress in their work at similar rates to other children.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of leadership and management is good. The headteacher is still in her first year at the school but has made a very good start. She has brought a fresh pair of eyes to the school and has identified what should be improved. This has led to a robust and honest evaluation of the school's work which has been driven by her high expectations for what the school should achieve. Using this picture of the school and with the sound support from the deputy headteacher, improvements have

already been made. Teachers with responsibility for leading and managing curriculum areas are developing their roles. They use good systems to review their work which highlight priorities and action not done. Good leadership and management, for example in English, have led to better teaching. The school has successfully begun work on making the monitoring of pupils' standards, teachers' planning and teaching part of the ongoing work of subject leaders. The Governors provide satisfactory support and appreciate working with the headteacher. They understand that although high standards are reached in some areas of the school's work, things could be even better. They actively seek the views of parents through questionnaires and make good analyses of the results. The Governors now hold the headteacher to account and use the good school improvement plan to measure the progress the school is making. The school has good capacity to improve further.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	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

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	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	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	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

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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

As I drove through some beautiful Derbyshire countryside I was hoping that I would enjoy my visit to your school - and I did. Mrs Rogers, Mr Knights and I all agreed that you are polite, well behaved children who enjoy learning. We saw some good work and found out about all the extra clubs and activities that you do. As we visited your classrooms we saw your teachers doing a good job. They are helping you make good progress. When we talked with your headteacher Mrs Grafton we knew she had already found out lots of things about your school and she has some good plans for the future. Every school can get better and we found some things that we thought your school should try to improve. So we have asked Mrs Grafton to focus on these two tasks: 1. Make sure that the work your teachers give you is always making you work really hard so that it helps you learn. This will mean that different children get different work. 2. Make sure that children know how well they have done and what they can do to get better. Your school has an exciting future. You are having an extension built and you will have two new teachers in September. I hope you continue to enjoy school and appreciate all that is done for you.