



Seaton Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113108
LEA Devon
Inspection number 279094
Inspection dates 6 July 2006 to 7 July 2006
Reporting inspector Anthony Shield AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Valley View
School category	Community		Seaton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Devon EX12 2HF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01297 20922
Number on roll	351	Fax number	01297 625194
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Peter Burrows
Date of previous inspection	3 July 2000	Headteacher	Mr Alan Simpson

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Seaton Primary School is a larger than average size primary school situated in the seaside town of Seaton. It is the only primary school in the town and some pupils are drawn from neighbouring villages. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is close to the national average. Most pupils are White British, with very small numbers of pupils from other ethnic heritages.

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 with a number of outstanding aspects. It provides good value for money. Staff and pupils are thriving in the school. The school's own self-evaluation is realistic, judging itself to be a good school; it knows it has much to be proud of, but is also committed to improving further.

Pupils are enthusiastic to learn and this contributes strongly to the very positive climate for learning. Alongside good teaching, this is leading to above average standards and good achievement for pupils through the school. Quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are good. Standards in Years 1 and 2 have been improving in recent years and are now consistently above average. However, standards are not as high in writing as in either mathematics or reading.

High standards in mathematics and science are maintained through Years 3 to 6 and, while English lags behind, performance is still above average. Pupils' writing in all years is starting to improve because of action to tackle this aspect of pupils' work. Teaching is good and responsive to individual pupils' needs, though sometimes it does not extend or deepen pupils' thinking enough. Pupils, particularly the older ones, are confident about how well they are doing and what they should be aiming for. While the curriculum is well planned, it provides insufficient opportunity for pupils to develop their thinking skills and creativity, or to develop links across different subjects. Pupils themselves commented that they enjoy opportunities to link learning in this way because it makes learning more relevant. The school's strengths include the very good attitudes and behaviour of pupils and their outstanding personal development. Pupils are polite and generous; they speak enthusiastically about the school and are proud of its contribution to sustainable energy. Good relationships and a valuing of each other ensure pupils feel safe. The school's care and support procedures are excellent.

Leadership and management, including the work of governors, are good. The headteacher's leadership is effective and committed staff are working well as a team to make a good school even better. The school's monitoring procedures have proved effective in securing improvements and the school is very well placed to continue to make progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Consolidate the improvements made in writing so that the gap between pupils' writing skills and their attainment in reading and mathematics is narrowed further.
- Extend pupils' thinking skills and their capacity for creativity through improved curriculum planning which links subjects more meaningfully.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average and pupils' achievement is good. Children in the Reception class make good progress, particularly in their social skills. As a result, they are well

prepared for the start of a more formal curriculum in Year 1. Standards by the end of Year 2 have been improving and are now above average, though better in reading and mathematics than in writing. Weaknesses in the attainment of more able pupils in 2005 national assessments have been tackled well. However, there remains a gap between standards reached in writing and those in reading.

Standards in Years 3 to 6 have been significantly higher than average in recent years. Performance in standardised attainment tests in mathematics and science was exceptionally high in 2005 and these standards have been maintained. Results in English are also above average but less good than in science or mathematics. The school has taken determined and effective action to improve pupils' writing skills, and this is leading to higher standards. Challenging targets for writing were set and have been exceeded this year. High standards are also evident in information and communication technology.

Although girls tend to do better than boys in writing, boys outperform girls in mathematics and science. The differences between the achievements of boys and girls are not significant. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress. The school has consistently met or exceeded the ambitious targets it sets for pupils' achievements.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' exceptional personal skills contribute directly to their good achievement. They are enthusiastic about school because they enjoy lessons and the company of their teachers and friends. Pupils take pride in their work and want to do well. Overall attendance is similar to the national average.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding; their social skills in particular are very well developed. Pupils have an exceptionally good understanding of the benefits of adopting a healthy lifestyle, recognised in the school's award of Healthy School status. There are excellent opportunities for sport and physical exercise; healthy eating is encouraged and a strong emphasis is placed on drinking water and protection from the sun. As a result, pupils are making informed decisions about their own lifestyle and diet.

Pupils respond sensibly to opportunities to take responsibility. The school council's contributions are valued and pupils' views on issues such as the design of the new classrooms are trusted. Older pupils speak with confidence on school issues. Behaviour is very good and pupils feel safe and know there is an adult to talk to if needed. They make a good contribution to both the local and wider community. The school's commitment to developing sustainable energy through its own wind turbine and solar power, gives pupils a good understanding of global issues. Pupils' good basic skills and social self-confidence prepare them very well for their future well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well because of good teaching. As one pupil commented, 'The teachers really help you to learn and get your work right.' Very good relationships between pupils and teachers result in good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. A good climate for learning is established because of teachers' high expectations and secure relationships. Tasks set interest and excite the pupils. Planning is carefully managed and the organisation of pupils into sets in Years 3 to 6 for literacy and numeracy enables work to be set at the right level for each child. However, sometimes work set does not fully develop pupils' creative and imaginative thinking, or make meaningful links between subjects.

Teachers use interactive whiteboards skilfully to capture the pupils' attention and involve the pupils actively in learning. Teachers' marking is thorough and helps give pupils guidance for improvement while praising them for their effort. Because pupils respect their teachers, they work hard and do their best to please them.

The school's comprehensive range of assessment procedures is used effectively to forecast achievement levels and to target pupils who need more help. In English and mathematics, this is particularly effective. The teaching and support for those with learning difficulties and for pupils who are gifted and talented are good. Teaching assistants are well trained and provide sensitive and well targeted support for pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good, wide-ranging curriculum provides well for pupils and has a particularly strong emphasis on developing their key language and numeracy skills. Although teachers plan for the full range of subjects, opportunities are sometimes missed to make relevant links between each subject. There are, however, some outstanding examples of imaginative curricular planning, such as a well planned Year 4 Jurassic Coast visitors' project that involved pupils in English, mathematics, geography, design and technology and art and design. Pupils were challenged to solve problems, work as a team and to present their ideas clearly and persuasively. The project had relevance, made meaningful links across subjects, and inspired pupils to think creatively.

There is a comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education which provides clear information about keeping safe and how to build good life skills that will help pupils to become responsible citizens. The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and for the most able. There is a very good range of well supported enrichment activities and clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school fully lives up to its vision statement, Caring now, for the future, providing outstanding and committed levels of care and support for its pupils. Well established procedures are in place to ensure that pupils are kept safe and secure. Staff are well trained in child protection and health and safety. The school site is secure and well maintained, offering an attractive and safe environment where pupils can flourish. Pupils are confident that adults care for them. The school works very well with a broad range of outside agencies.

Academic guidance is excellent because teachers track pupils' progress carefully, and intervene successfully if a pupil looks likely to underachieve. The school keeps detailed records of pupils' targets, particularly in English and mathematics. As a result, pupils know how well they are doing and what they should do in order to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good because high standards have been maintained and improved. The school's ethos, simply stated in its vision statement, provides a touchstone for the school's work. This is evident, for example, in the headteacher's personal commitment to exceptional levels of care and pupils' support, and on a different level, to running the school through sustainable energy projects.

Leadership at all levels is also effective. The literacy coordinator, for example, carried out a detailed analysis of pupils' writing and implemented an action plan which is leading to higher standards throughout the school this year. Key Stage coordinators have undertaken 'Learning Walks' through classes, talking to pupils and finding out about how they best learn and whether they know their targets for improvement. The quality of teaching is monitored regularly and teachers given thoughtful guidance on how to improve. Because of these carefully considered approaches to self-review, which also take into account the views of pupils and parents, the school knows itself well and is able to devise plans for school improvement which are both sensible and manageable.

Governors are committed and hard working. Most are well informed and play an effective part in school development planning. However, not all governors are so confident in monitoring the work of the school. The budget is tight and has been carefully managed.

The school has the confidence of the community it serves, and most parents are enthusiastic in their support of the school. 'The decision to send our children to Seaton was one of the best decisions we made' and 'We are fortunate to have such a well run school and highly motivated staff' are characteristic of the many positive comments made by parents to inspectors. An already good school has made further advances in recent years, and as a result, is well placed to improve further.

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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>	School Overall	16-19
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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	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

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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	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	2	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?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	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	2	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	2	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

Thank you for welcoming us to your lovely school. We enjoyed meeting you and talking about your work in school. I know you will be interested in what we thought. Yours is a good school, with some aspects which are outstanding.

What we liked most about your school:

The school is a happy place and you are able to achieve well.

You work hard, take pride in your work and are keen to do your best.

You are growing up into sensible and mature young people, with a particularly good understanding of environmental issues.

Your teachers are good and ensure you know how you need to get better.

You behave very well and are friendly and polite to your teachers and each other. You look after each other well.

The school takes exceptionally good care of you, ensuring you feel safe and helping you with your work.

Your headteacher and teachers are working well to improve your school.

What we have asked your school to do now:

Continue to work hard to improve your writing skills so that they are as good as your reading and mathematics.

Make sure that teaching and the curriculum are planned to make you think more deeply and imaginatively by linking subjects and making learning relate to the real world.

Thank you once again for your help during the inspection. Good luck in the future!