



South Green Infant and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115039
LEA ESSEX LEA
Inspection number 279504
Inspection dates 13 March 2006 to 14 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs. Alison Pangbourne LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Ganels Road
School category	Community		CM11 2TG
Age range of pupils	3 to 7		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01277 651478
Number on roll	191	Fax number	01277 651506
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Julian Horspole
Date of previous inspection	20 November 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Stephanie Ireland

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by a team of two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized infant school. Most pupils come from White British families with a few from minority ethnic heritages. Very few are at an early stage of learning English. There is a very small number of pupils from traveller families. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties or autism. The number of pupils taking a free school meal is below average. When children start school, standards for most are below those typical for 3-and 4-year-olds, particularly in social development.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school rightly thinks of itself as an improving school that gives pupils a satisfactory education and inspectors agree. Parents and pupils hold the school in high regard and this is reflected in pupils' good personal development. When children enter the Nursery, standards are below those typical for 3-year-olds, particularly in social development. After recent re-organisation of staffing and the curriculum, children now get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes and make good progress. In the last two years, standards have been a little below average for 7-year-olds in reading and mathematics but above average in writing by the time they leave the school. Overall, children make sound progress through Years 1 and 2. This year, the school expects standards to be higher because many things put in place to raise standards, such as improved resources and extra support programmes are beginning to have an impact. However, the number of pupils who exceed the level expected for their age is below average in reading. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers use questions well to encourage pupils to think but pace could be improved in some lessons and not all teachers encourage the minority of pupils who find concentration difficult, to pay attention. The headteacher provides sound leadership and has taken appropriate action to ensure that the issues from the previous inspection have been suitably addressed. This shows that the school has a sound capacity to improve. Although governors and subject leaders monitor the work of the school, this needs to be more rigorous in order to raise standards still further. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to raise standards in reading, by improving the proportion that exceeds the expected level for 7-year-olds. - Raise the quality of teaching by improving pace and ensuring that teachers encourage all pupils to pay attention. - Ensure that all subject leaders and governors use information about pupils' achievements more rigorously to plan how to raise standards further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school that achievement and standards are satisfactory overall. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes now make good progress because of the good teaching and the interesting things to do. In spite of this, by the beginning of Year 1, many children have not quite reached the level expected for their age, particularly in social skills, because they still have a lot of catching up to do. In recent years, standards have been somewhat below average in reading and mathematics for 7-year-olds. Nevertheless, this represents satisfactory progress from their starting points in Year 1. Standards in writing have been above average because the school places a strong emphasis on teaching writing in other areas of the curriculum. Here, pupils make good progress. The school has been working hard to raise standards,

particularly in reading but there is still room to improve the proportion that exceeds the level expected for their age. Pupils are on course to meet the challenging targets set for them. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, those who speak English as an additional language and those from traveller backgrounds make sound progress because they are given tasks that meet their needs and they are suitably supported by teachers and teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Attendance is satisfactory and the school works hard with parents to keep absences to a minimum. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy being at school. Pupils know how to keep safe. Behaviour is often excellent in the playground because they are supervised well by adults and have many activities to keep them occupied. In class, most behave well and lessons proceed smoothly. However, a small number of pupils are inattentive or do not listen well. There is no evidence of any oppressive behaviour between pupils and they trust adults to sort out any problems. The school places an effective emphasis on activities that enable pupils to be healthy. They have regular access to exercise, fresh fruit, water and milk. Most pupils take advantage of opportunities to try foods they do not usually eat, such as when they tasted mango and pineapple as part of a multicultural day during the inspection. They learn how to stay safe, for example, on the roads. They contribute soundly to the school community through the school council that values and acts on their ideas and in their jobs as monitors. They are also aware of the part they can play in the wider community, such as when performing music for senior citizens or raising funds for charity. Their satisfactory skills of literacy and numeracy, coupled with their developing social skills, give them an effective grounding for the next stage of their education and the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teaching is good in the Nursery and Reception classes where children have a wide range of interesting activities and their skills are developed well. Teachers plan activities well and most lessons stimulate pupils' enthusiasm and foster a desire to learn. In good lessons, teachers show an awareness of the different learning styles of pupils, for instance, tailoring activities to the separate interests of boys or girls. They use questions well to extend learning. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, it is typified by a slower pace to lessons and the inattentive response of a few pupils is not tackled urgently enough to ensure their full attention. Teachers mark work regularly and are developing effective systems for setting targets for further improvement with individuals and classes. These would be improved by linking teachers' written comments on pupils'

work more regularly to their targets, to make it clear what they need to do to improve. The school has developed good systems for tracking pupils' achievements in English and mathematics. These assist teachers in planning the next stages of pupils' work, as well as ensuring that all areas of the curriculum are covered. As a result, all groups of pupils, including those who are identified as having learning difficulties, make at least satisfactory progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and improving. All the required subjects and areas of learning are taught and there is an appropriate emphasis on practical activities. Teachers are currently reviewing all programmes of work and developing further links between subjects to ensure that pupils' learning is relevant, interesting and purposeful. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities has developed well since the last inspection, when it was a key issue for improvement. However, some of the individual plans written for these pupils would benefit from more detail of the small steps they need to take to make progress. There is an effective programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education. The school makes good use of visits and visitors to enhance its curriculum. For example, the storytellers who visited during the inspection. There is a typical number of clubs and extra activities for the age of the pupils. Within these, a high priority is given to music and this promotes good achievement in this subject.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school cares for its pupils well. Parents are unanimous in their support for this aspect of its work. The level of pastoral care for all pupils, including those who may be especially vulnerable, is good. There are thorough systems to ensure pupils' safety and security, including attention to child protection procedures and the vetting of adults who work in school. Staff know the pupils very well and are able to give strong pastoral support because lines of communication with home are well established. There are good links with the junior school to ensure that transition to the next stage of education is smooth.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The headteacher provides sound leadership, well supported by the deputy headteacher and the office manager. They are committed to the pupils' personal development and well-being. The school works hard to include pupils from all backgrounds and this contributes to the family ethos. The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory. It has identified the right areas for improvement in its development plan. For example, it is already working to raise standards in reading. However, areas identified for improvement are not as tightly matched to raising

standards as they could be and this makes them difficult to measure. Subject leaders for English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) have a sound understanding of standards and areas for improvement, but this is not so well developed for those who lead the other subjects. The views of all members of the community are welcomed and parents are very positive about the school. One parent said, 'My children have progressed thanks to the relaxed and welcoming atmosphere in the school!' The team spirit among the staff and governors is helping to drive the school forward. The governors are committed and watch over the school appropriately. They rightly recognise the need to develop a more rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. The school has taken appropriate action to address the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. It has a sound capacity to improve.

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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?	3	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	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

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ 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

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	3	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?	3	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?	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

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

Following our visit to your school, we would like to thank you for helping us. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn. What we liked best : - you made us feel welcome and greeted us with a friendly smile - your behaviour is good and you play very nicely with your friends in the playground - you enjoy your lessons - you learn how to be healthy and stay safe - all the adults in school take good care of you - the children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start in school - your parents like the school. What we have asked your school to do now to make it even better : - help more of you to do better in reading - help you to work a little quicker in lessons - some of you can help by listening more carefully and working hard - improve the way that the school plans for the future. We wish you all the best with your learning. Carry on enjoying your time at South Green Infant School.