



# Soudley School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 115521  
**LEA** Gloucestershire  
**Inspection number** 279616  
**Inspection dates** 21 June 2006 to 21 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Martin Kerly AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Church Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Soudley
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Gloucestershire GL14 2UA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01594 822004
<b>Number on roll</b>	80	<b>Fax number</b>	01594 822004
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Ms J Sykes
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs P Howell

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	21 June 2006 - 21 June 2006	279616

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

The school is much smaller than average. Each of its three classes has pupils from two or three year groups. It serves a small and relatively isolated village which includes families from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. Almost all pupils are White British and all speak English as their first language. The proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and with statements of special educational need are higher than the national averages. The school recently gained the Healthy Schools and Artsmark awards.

## **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. The appointment of the current headteacher and other changes to the teaching staff are the most significant factors which have led to recent substantial improvements. The school has good systems for checking its performance and an accurate view of its effectiveness. Its capacity to improve further is also good.

The achievement of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is good following a period when younger pupils did not achieve well enough. This is a result of improved teaching, which is now good because teachers usually provide work matched to the needs of different groups and very effectively promote their pupils' personal development. Many children start school with skills below those usually found for their age. Standards by the end of Year 6 are broadly in line with the national average but are lower in English and information and communication technology (ICT). Some pupils have not caught up fully from the period when they were not making enough progress in school. Pupils' personal development is good and their cultural development is excellent as a result of the outstanding quality of the many additional curricular experiences provided. The extended and refurbished building and grounds strengthen the overall provision. Within a good overall curriculum, more use needs to be made of ICT in some subjects to support learning. The provision for Reception and Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory but constrained by the shared classroom, limiting targeted teaching, and lack of direct access to outdoor facilities. The school provides good care, guidance and support for all pupils and is exceptionally well led by the headteacher. It provides good value for money.

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

Raise standards further in all aspects of English. Review the organisation and provision for pupils in Reception and Years 1 and 2 to more accurately meet their exceptionally wide-ranging needs. Raise standards and improve the use of ICT across the curriculum.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is now good after a period when it was inadequate in Reception and Years 1 and 2. Children enter school with a broad range of abilities but a relatively high proportion has skills below those usually found in speech, literacy and social and emotional development. Children's progress in Reception has improved and is now satisfactory. Some children make good progress, especially in personal and mathematical development. Nevertheless, a significant number do not reach the nationally expected learning goals by the end of the year, particularly in language development. Pupils of all abilities are making good overall progress in Years 1 to 6, particularly in mathematics and science, and some of those with learning difficulties and complex needs achieve very well as a result of carefully planned programmes of support. Progress in English, whilst satisfactory, continues to be impeded by some pupils' limited speaking and listening skills and their lack of confidence in writing.

Despite current good achievement, some pupils have not yet caught up with their full potential following inadequate achievement during their early years in the school. Standards are below the national average in English. Standards in mathematics and science are in line with the national average. Standards in ICT are improving but remain below national expectations. Last year, almost all pupils met their challenging targets and most are on track to do so this year.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is good. Children in Reception make good progress in their social and emotional development, frequently from low starting points. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school and demonstrate care and consideration for others through, for example, their commitment to the buddy system and the support given to their peers when experiencing emotional difficulties. One pupil-buddy said to an inspector 'We hear both sides of the story and help them work it out for themselves.' Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Their cultural development is excellent, helping them to enjoy school. They are inspired by experiences such as attending the Cheltenham Literary Festival, the visit to France and video conferencing with a school in Pakistan, all helping to widen their appreciation of the world. Pupils feel secure and well cared for and have a good awareness of how to ensure their own health, safety and fitness. School councillors and other older pupils take pride in the contributions they make, for example, through decisions by the school council, and in their participation in local events and festivals. Pupils gain satisfactory levels of skills they need for the next stage of their education but some lack confidence in their ability to work independently and in using ICT.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Recent staff changes have contributed to the improved quality of teaching and learning, which are now good. Teachers plan well for their mixed year group classes. In most lessons, they provide work which is carefully matched to the needs of specific groups of pupils. This sometimes involves moving small groups of pupils from one class to another to work alongside pupils with similar levels of understanding. Pupils with learning difficulties are taught well by teachers and teaching assistants, using detailed information from assessments about their specific needs, and providing well structured support. This enables them to learn well, particularly in mathematics. Learning in the class for children from Reception and pupils in Years 1 and 2 is constrained by the large number in the class. Despite some good teaching in this class, pupils do not always receive sufficient direct teaching to ensure they learn well. Pupils respond well to the teachers' increasing use of ICT in lessons but the new equipment is not always used to full advantage. Teachers are developing a variety of assessment techniques

and make good use of assessment information in planning lessons and in developing literacy and numeracy targets for groups of pupils. Teaching and learning have been further supported by the recent significant building improvements.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good and the quality of other activities is outstanding. Provision in Reception is satisfactory, and good for personal and social development, but the quality of experiences for the children in Reception and pupils in Years 1 and 2 is restricted by sharing a classroom and, for Reception children in particular, by having relatively limited access to the outdoor area. The curriculum includes all the subjects in the National Curriculum and is adapted to meet the specific needs of pupils with complex needs and learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A rolling programme of topics covered in each subject successfully ensures progression in the mixed year group classes. The use of ICT has increased. Sometimes, it is used well, but it is not used consistently to support other subjects. There are good club activities after school and excellent enriching experiences which motivate pupils, for example, the school pilgrimage to Gloucester Cathedral and residential visits in Years 4 and 6. The recent building programme and development of the grounds has increased the pupils' opportunities, for example, refurbished classrooms with better facilities, the new amphitheatre to develop speaking and listening skills and the 'Trim Trail' to promote fitness.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides good care, guidance and support for the pupils, all of whom are well known by the staff. One pupil told an inspector 'We are like one big family here.' The staff team works closely with pupils' families and other agencies to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils with complex needs. Good induction and transfer procedures support pupils well when they join the school and transfer to secondary school. There are effective systems for child protection and ensuring the safety of pupils. Very good records are kept of pupils' academic and personal progress and these are used to set short-term learning targets for individuals and groups, but not all the pupils are clear about these targets or about their relevance to current lessons, despite their high profile in classrooms.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good, having improved significantly in the last two years. This view is endorsed by almost all parents. The headteacher provides exceptionally clear leadership. She is resolute in her determination to raise pupils' achievement and the quality of their experiences, and has high aspirations for all pupils and expectations of staff. The role of subject leaders is developing well and they take

responsibility for monitoring aspects of their subjects and reporting to governors. Their relative inexperience in observing lessons means that they are reluctant to provide feedback to colleagues. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very well managed and leadership of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Good monitoring and evaluation procedures include the use of the excellent data systems for tracking the academic progress of individual pupils. The comprehensive and robustly implemented systems for checking on the performance of the school, including the quality of teaching, have helped raise standards and the quality of provision following a period of weakness in several important aspects. The school successfully promotes equal opportunities and the involvement of parents in the school. The small staff team is heavily reliant on the headteacher's leadership but the school is well placed to maintain its current good rate of improvement.

Governance has improved and is satisfactory following the appointment of several new governors and an energetic and committed chair. A recently introduced programme of governor visits is a good step towards a greater understanding of the school's overall performance.

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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>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	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	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	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>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	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	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

<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**

A team of two inspectors visited your school recently to find out how well the school is doing. Thank you for making us so very welcome. We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you and seeing some of your work.

I am pleased to say that for lots of reasons we found that Soudley Primary is a good school. Here are some of the most important things that we found to be good:

you work hard in lessons and make good progress you behave well and care a lot about helping and supporting each other the teachers give you work which is interesting and is not too hard or too easy the school arranges some brilliant activities and experiences for you beyond the classroom everyone who works in school makes sure you are safe and well cared for your headteacher works exceptionally hard to improve the school.

To improve the school still further, we have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to work together to do three things:

help you to make more progress in literacy with speaking and listening, reading and writing think about ways of improving the arrangements for those of you in Class 1 make better use of the computers and other equipment to help you improve your information and communication technology skills.

Thank you for your help in the inspection.