



Suckley Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116741
LEA Worcestershire
Inspection number 279884
Inspection dates 24 May 2006 to 24 May 2006
Reporting inspector Gerald Griffin AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Church Lane
School category	Community		Suckley
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Worcester, Worcestershire WR6 5DE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01886 884283
Number on roll	46	Fax number	01886 884283
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms Joan Green
Date of previous inspection	4 December 2000	Headteacher	Mrs J Shepherd

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	24 May 2006 - 24 May 2006	279884

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Suckley Primary School is a two-class village primary school. There is a Key Stage 1 class for Foundation, Years 1 and 2 and a Key Stage 2 class for Years 3–6. It is much smaller than the average primary school. No pupils are from minority ethnic groups. There are three Traveller pupils on roll. Pupils' standards on entry are average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is above the national average. The percentage of pupils claiming free school meals is also above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school and inspectors agree with the school's evaluation of its effectiveness. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall and the headteacher provides good leadership. Through her accurate understanding of the qualities of the school, she provides clear direction for improvement. As a result, standards and achievement are rising, although recent staffing problems have slowed this rate of improvement. Subject managers provide enthusiastic support. However, some are new in post and as yet do not have a sufficiently accurate understanding of the achievement pupils make in their subject areas.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and children attain the standards expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory in all years, including for pupils with learning difficulties. Teaching is satisfactory, although occasionally the work planned does not engage and interest all pupils sufficiently. Pupils behave well and have good attitudes in lessons and around school. They enjoy school and make good strides in learning how to take responsibility.

The curriculum meets the needs of pupils well. The quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory. While the school sets pupils challenging academic targets, the tracking of their progress towards attaining them is inconsistent. The school has effective links with other organizations to promote the well-being of learners. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and is well placed to continue making improvements. It gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Track progress pupils make towards their targets to ensure they achieve well.
- Improve the effectiveness of teaching by ensuring that work always engages and interests pupils.
- Develop the role of subject managers to enable them to evaluate pupils' achievement in their subject areas more accurately.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory, taking into account pupils' average standards on entry. Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy a stimulating environment and make satisfactory progress overall. At the end of Year 2, standards are broadly average and pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. Standards in Foundation and Years 1 to 2 are rapidly rising because of the steps being taken to improve teaching, which is now good, and other aspects of the school's provision. This is shown in the improving test results at the end of Year 2 over the past three years. Achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory, despite the upward trend of recent years not being maintained in 2005 because of staffing difficulties. In addition, the school does not

track pupils' progress rigorously enough in Years 3 to 6 and consequently additional help is sometimes not provided quickly enough when pupils' progress falters. The school did not meet its target last year because several pupils were absent from the tests, lowering the overall score for the school. The school has responded well to two areas of relative weaknesses in pupils' work. It has successfully raised standards in writing following measures taken to improve pupils' sentence construction in their work. Mathematics standards have risen, especially for higher-attaining pupils, following a greater focus on mental arithmetic practice. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress because they are provided with an appropriate level of support, as do the small number of Traveller pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy school and this reflected in their good attendance. Pupils' good behaviour and their good relationships with each other and staff are based on a clear moral code. They have good opportunities to reflect on spiritual matters in assemblies. Pupils' understanding of different cultures and their understanding of a multicultural society are underdeveloped. Pupils understand well the need to eat healthily and to exercise. They do their best to put this into practice in their choice of packed lunches and in physical education lessons and games. A survey of pupils' views has shown that physical education is a very popular subject. Pupils adopt safe practices and feel free from harassment. If they have a worry they are confident in approaching a member of the school's staff. They say that staff deal quickly and effectively with their concerns. Pupils enjoy their charity work and are gaining good experience of taking responsibility through helping around the school and by being monitors. They feel, however, that opportunities to take part in decisions that affect them are restricted because the school council is not effective. Pupils' average standards in English, mathematics and information and communication technology are providing satisfactory support for their developing economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In some lessons, teaching is good and this is accelerating the rate of learning. However, recent difficulties in recruiting and retaining teachers mean that the picture varies. In the best lessons teachers thoroughly engage pupils through exciting tasks and challenging presentations. While teachers mostly plan work appropriately to meet the needs of all pupils in mixed-age classes, in a few lessons the tasks set for pupils are not interesting enough to sustain their concentration. Well-briefed teaching assistants support learning effectively. In Years 1 and 2 very thorough marking supports learning well by showing pupils how much progress they are making and how they can improve further. This has been particularly effective in

raising standards in writing and mathematics. Marking in other classes is regular and detailed but is not always as effective in helping pupils to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum is contributing to raising standards by building successfully on pupils' prior attainment and experience. It meets the specific needs of pupils in a small school well. In the Key Stage 2 class the learning of English and mathematics is helped by teaching younger and older pupils separately, in small groups, so that their needs can be met more effectively. This is contributing to rising standards and achievement in writing and mathematics. The school has a good supply of computers that are used well to develop pupils' independence as learners. The school feels it could make better use of the local community and nearby schools to enable pupils to broaden their experiences, and the inspector agrees with that judgement. Pupils' learning is enriched through the many visits to places of interest and talks from visitors to school. Pupils particularly enjoy their residential holidays that extend their personal development successfully. There are many opportunities for pupils to participate in clubs and sports. The take-up is good and this develops their aspirations well. The fairly recent introduction of violin tuition in the school is proving successful.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support of pupils are satisfactory. Arrangements for the care of pupils are good. Parents feel children are safe and well supported. Child protection arrangements and health and safety procedures are robust. Procedures to ensure good behaviour and good attendance are very effective. The school cares for its vulnerable children well, making good use of external agencies and specialists to promote their welfare when the need arises. There are also good and productive links with the local Travellers Service for the small number of pupils concerned. Teachers' accurate analysis of work provides pupils with challenging targets to aim for. In Years 1 and 2, progress is carefully tracked and shared with pupils. If progress slows, teachers quickly provide further effective support; this contrasts with some aspects of support in Years 3 to 6.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher is good and her definite sense of purpose has helped regain the confidence of parents and halt the decline in pupil numbers. Her clear direction has resulted in rapid improvement in standards and achievement in Years 1 and 2. While the school has clear strategies to improve standards in other years, recent staffing difficulties have hampered their implementation, despite the best efforts of senior management. The subject leaders enthusiastically support the headteacher. Some of these are experienced and are checking and evaluating work in their areas well. Others are new in post and,

whilst they are clear about their roles and responsibilities, they are not yet proficient enough in evaluating the progress of pupils in their subjects.

The quality of monitoring and evaluation gives the school an accurate picture of its strengths and weaknesses. Information gathered has been used to improve the quality of teaching and thereby standards in writing and in mathematics for higher-attaining pupils.

Financial management is secure. Parents' views are readily sought and acted upon. For example, the school has expanded the range of after-school clubs for pupils in response to parents' concerns. The inspection survey shows parents are very happy with the school. However, the fact that pupils feel the school's management do not always respond quickly enough to some matters that they raise shows that there is still some work to do in this respect. The governing body provides the headteacher with good support. Through their developing understanding of data, governors are now in a stronger position to challenge the school in order to raise standards and improve the progress which pupils make.

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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	3	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	3	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?	3	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?	3	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	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	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

25 May 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and being so friendly. I enjoyed my conversations with you about your work and the other things that you do at school.

What I liked most about your school.

You are polite and well behaved.

In lessons, you enjoy your learning and work hard for your teachers.

All of the staff care for you well.

You have a good understanding of the importance of eating healthily and taking exercise.

You enjoy the good number of extra activities such as visits and clubs which the school provides.

Your headteacher is a good leader of the school.

What I have asked your school to do now.

Keep a careful watch on the progress you are making so that you reach the targets which are set.

Make sure teachers plan work that really interests you.

Ensure that teachers who are in charge of subjects check how well you are doing in those subjects.

Yours sincerely

Gerald Griffin Lead Inspector