



Sellindge Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 118387
LEA Kent
Inspection number 280307
Inspection dates 23 May 2006 to 23 May 2006
Reporting inspector Robert Ellis HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Main Road
School category	Community		Sellindge
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Ashford, Kent TN25 6JY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01303 812073
Number on roll	116	Fax number	01303 812073
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs M Rand
Date of previous inspection	13 September 1999	Headteacher	Miss H Baxter

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	23 May 2006 - 23 May 2006	280307

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Sellindge Primary School is a small school but the number of pupils has been rising over the last four years. Just over half the pupils live within two miles of the school and the remainder come from nearby towns and villages. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds and around one in ten pupils come from ethnic minority families and speak languages other than English at home. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is higher than is common in most schools of this type.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Sellindge is an outstanding school that provides good value for money. Good leadership and management have ensured that educational provision is at least good in all respects and outstanding in many. Pupils are valued and most achieve well and reach above average standards because teaching is good and teachers know their pupils well.

The pupils' personal development is outstanding and good levels of care, guidance and support are provided to meet their needs. Pupils' views are frequently sought and they say that they enjoy school and find lessons challenging but enjoyable. The broad and balanced curriculum is extended and enhanced by a wide range of well attended extra-curricular activities. Parents are supportive and value what the school does for their children. Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage is very good and they make good progress and achieve well in all areas of learning.

Those responsible for leading and managing the school know its strengths and weaknesses. Their view of the school's provision is in line with the inspection evidence in most respects, although their judgement that overall effectiveness is only good is too conservative and does not give sufficient weight to the pupils' outstanding personal development. Weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been addressed and the actions taken to bring about further improvement demonstrate a good capacity to improve. Although the school has a good range of accurate assessment information, the way that this information is recorded makes it a time-consuming process to get an overall picture of the progress that pupils' make. The new buildings provide good accommodation but plans to develop the outside areas, particularly for the younger children, are still at an early stage of development.

What the school should do to improve further

Organise assessment information to provide an efficient means of quickly identifying the progress that pupils make. Develop the outside area to encourage more challenging physical activity and provide better opportunities for different types of play.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding and standards are good.

Children's attainment when they start school is variable but is broadly average overall. They make good and sometimes outstanding progress in Reception and most achieve the expected standards for 5-year-olds in all six areas of learning. Pupils achieve well through Years 1 and 2 and many reach standards that are above average by the age of 7. They make exceptional progress between Year 2 and Year 6 which results in standards that are well above average by the end of their time at the school and a significant proportion achieves the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science in the national tests for 11-year-olds. The needs of individual pupils are met very well, enabling many to make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points.

Teachers ensure that the higher attaining pupils are given suitably challenging work and those with learning difficulties and disabilities are provided with the support they need to enable them to achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in the good attendance and punctuality of most pupils. Pupils say they feel safe and are well looked after and this helps them to develop positive attitudes to their learning. To encourage the youngest children to feel safe, an effective 'buddy' system has been developed which has had the additional benefit of encouraging pupils of different ages to play together.

Being healthy and staying healthy are an integral part of the science and personal, social and health education curriculum. Pupils know the benefits of eating healthily and taking regular exercise. Children are looking forward to growing their own vegetables in the new school allotments which are being developed with help from the local gardeners' association.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils are involved in decision making and participation in the school council contributes towards pupils' personal development and is helping them gain practical experience of citizenship. The school council was recently involved in choosing and purchasing new playground equipment which is well used by the younger children. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is very good and pupils are polite, considerate and respectful to each other and to adults.

Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy helping others. The school has good links with the local community. For example, the school council represented the 'Youth of Sellindge' at a parish council consultation day and they were invited to officially open a new store in the village. The school also takes part in fund raising for different charities and has active links with a children's home in Kenya. All pupils are encouraged to develop independence and there are good opportunities for pupils to develop basic skills that will be useful in adult life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching throughout the school is good. Teachers know their pupils well and very good relationships between adults and pupils strongly promote a positive approach to learning. However, although there is a good range of assessment information it is not recorded in a form that makes it easy to quickly gain an overall picture of the progress that pupils make.

The way teachers mark pupils' work varies between classes. In the best practice, the teachers' marking gives pupils clear indications about what they have done well and how they can improve. Pupils are involved in setting their own targets and are increasingly encouraged to assess how well they think they have done in relation to their targets and to think about what they need to do next. The information gained from regular and accurate assessments enables teachers to plan work that is challenging for all levels of ability and which offers opportunities for creativity and enjoyment.

Teaching assistants work well alongside teachers to give individuals and groups of pupils good support. However, their expertise is not always used as effectively during other parts of the lessons when the teacher is working with the whole class.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum that is broad, balanced and meets statutory requirements. Classrooms are well resourced and provide an attractive and stimulating environment for learning. Displays throughout the school celebrate the pupils' achievements. A good range of extra-curricular activities extends the curriculum and helps the pupils to broaden their interests. These activities are well attended. Pupils also enjoy the visits to local places of interest and participation in local events. For example, younger pupils were designing flags in their art lesson which were to be used on a school stall at the local steam rally. There is an appropriate balance of different types of learning in the Foundation Stage. However, the school recognises that further development of the outside area is needed to encourage more challenging physical activity and to provide opportunities for a wider range of experiences and different types of play.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good, with some outstanding features. Challenging targets are set for all pupils. The school values its pupils and cares for them well. The pupils are kept safe, happy and secure and child protection matters are well understood and are effective. The school makes every effort to ensure that the younger pupils are well looked after by older pupils. Staff are sensitive to the needs and interests of the pupils and pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning and become independent. Vulnerable children are closely monitored and the school works closely with other agencies to ensure that the needs of individual pupils are met. Visiting speakers talk to the pupils about recognising danger and keeping safe.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Although the headteacher has only been in post a short time she has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. She has already gained the confidence of parents who are

overwhelmingly positive about the school. Typical comments were: 'My wife and I are very impressed with the caring attitude of the school' and 'Our son comes home each night full of enthusiasm about what he has done during the day and is often heard to be saying "I love school!"'. Parents are involved in the school and their views and opinions are sought and taken into account. Monitoring by subject leaders ensures that they are well informed about teaching and learning in their subjects, but this monitoring, although identifying strengths, does not always identify areas for improvement. The headteacher is well supported by staff. Governors are regular visitors to the school and have established their own programme for gauging the school's progress and are holding it to account.

The school has an accurate picture of most aspects of its performance and uses self-evaluation well to identify priorities for improvement and the deployment of resources. Although the school's development plan is based on appropriate priorities the timescales for their implementation are unclear. Finances are well managed and principles of best value are applied effectively.

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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?	1	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?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	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	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	1	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?	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	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

As you know, I visited your school to see how well it is doing. Thank you very much for making me feel so welcome, with a special thank you to all of you who showed me your work or took time to talk to me.

Everyone I spoke to said that yours is an outstanding school and that you enjoy being at school and feel safe and well looked after and I am pleased to say that I agree.

The adults all help you to learn the right sorts of things in your lessons and they encourage you to do your best and think about how you can improve. By the time you are ready to move on to your next school many of you know or can do more than other children of your age.

The people in charge of your school check on how well it is doing and have some good ideas about how it can be made even better, including improving the outside play areas and keeping an even closer eye on the progress that you make.

I enjoyed watching you try different types of dancing and seeing you at work in your classrooms. I particularly enjoyed the singing that the choir club led in assembly. I thought you did really well in what I know is quite a difficult activity.

Thank you again for helping me with my work and making my visit to your school so enjoyable.