



Sedley's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 118595
LEA Kent
Inspection number 280350
Inspection dates 11 May 2006 to 11 May 2006
Reporting inspector Jacqueline Marshall AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Church Street
School category	Voluntary aided		Gravesend
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Kent DA13 9NR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01474 833221
Number on roll	82	Fax number	01474 834355
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Deborah Lawrence
Date of previous inspection	15 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Alison Coppiters

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	11 May 2006 - 11 May 2006	280350

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Sedley's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a smaller than average primary school serving a rural community in Kent. The mainly White British school population has an average proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average although the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need is average. The school is currently seeking permission to carry out a major building project to replace Foundation Stage accommodation in an air-raid shelter.

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 caring school that provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The vast majority of parents agree and praise the 'close-knit feel' and 'community spirit' the headteacher and staff have nurtured. Consequently, all children starting at the school settle in well and pupils' personal development is good throughout the school. Good relationships with all staff and the wide range of interesting activities that are planned mean that pupils enjoy school and behave well. Pupils throughout the school, including children in Reception, make satisfactory progress and reach the standards expected for their age. This is the result of satisfactory teaching and an adequate curriculum. By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6, standards are average. The school has recognised the need to use assessment more effectively to raise achievement from satisfactory to good by consistently planning lessons that challenge all pupils and by setting high expectations. Whilst the school has worked hard to good effect to improve the standards pupils' achieve in science, standards in writing have yet to improve across the year groups. This is because pupils' targets and teachers' marking do not always help the pupils to know just what to do next to improve. The school's leaders understand the school's strengths and weaknesses through their own self-evaluation process. However, these checks are not yet focused enough to ensure that practice is consistent throughout the school or to improve pupils' progress further in all areas. The improvements made since the last inspection, including improved provision for information and communication technology (ICT), demonstrate that the school has the capacity to make further progress. Taking into account the school's large carry forward, earmarked for improvement to the Reception class accommodation, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement by making better use of assessment to check all pupils are doing their best and to plan lessons that challenge all pupils.
- Improve teaching by continuing to develop the expertise of the school's leaders in checking and ensuring consistency of practice across the school.
- Raise standards, particularly in writing, by involving pupils more positively in gaining a clearer understanding of what they need to do next in their learning to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Throughout the school, the achievement of all pupils is satisfactory. It could be better if the pupils were given greater challenge in the work set. Children enter school with the skills and knowledge expected for their age. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make steady progress to reach average standards by the time they leave the school at age 11. In the Reception class they settle quickly and make satisfactory progress. They make good progress in their personal, social and emotional education because of the school's strong emphasis on personal development.

In the Year 2 national tests in 2005, standards in reading and mathematics were average. They were below average in writing because few pupils reached the higher levels. More Year 2 pupils are on course to reach the higher levels this year. However, in lessons and in the pupils' work, standards in writing are not as high as in other areas, which indicate that the more capable pupils should be doing better. Standards reached in the 2005 tests at the end of Year 6 were in line with national expectations. The school's efforts ensured that standards, particularly in science, and pupils' progress improved in 2005. In the current Year 6, these standards are being maintained and pupils are on track to meet the school's own targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good, a view strongly supported by the vast majority of parents. Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. They make a valuable contribution through the school council, which enables them to raise questions and ideas important to them. Pupils respond well to their responsibilities and their ideas have a real impact on school life. For example, the safety of pupils on the playground improved as a result of them identifying and tackling their own concerns. Pupils behave safely and have a good understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle, with many involved in a wide range of after school activities, including sports. They develop a sound economic understanding through the school council and their involvement both with local businesses and in fundraising for local and national charities. Attendance is broadly average. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is strong and is a key factor in their good behaviour and positive relationships. Pupils' cultural development has improved since the last inspection because the school makes good use of staff, visitors and visiting groups to raise the pupils' awareness of the wider world.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory with good features. This reflects the overall satisfactory progress pupils make through the school. Good links are established with parents so that they help their children with learning at home through the regular homework that is set. Throughout the school, activities are planned so all pupils in the mixed-age classes are included in lessons. However, teachers do not always take sufficient account of assessments to adapt work for pupils of different abilities. As a result, some pupils, particularly the more able, are not always challenged enough and could make even greater progress in their learning. Occasionally, where the pace of lessons is too slow or teachers miss opportunities for pupils to share and develop their own ideas, pupils become more passive learners. All work is marked, although comments showing pupils the next steps in their learning are less consistent. Relationships between pupils and adults are very good and, as a result, pupils enjoy lessons and are

keen to learn. Behaviour is managed well by all adults. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, particularly when supporting small groups and pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum, well enriched by a wide range of activities outside the school day and visits to places of interest, such as the Houses of Parliament. All pupils have the opportunity to learn a modern foreign language. Increasing interweaving of subjects makes learning meaningful and enjoyable, although opportunities to use and develop writing in subjects other than English are sometimes missed. Since the last inspection, the school has improved ICT resources and computers are now used throughout to support and enhance the pupils' learning. A well planned programme of personal, social and health education gives pupils a clear understanding of how to keep healthy and safe. Staff work hard to minimize the effect of the extremely limited accommodation for children in the Reception class. However, opportunities for these children to improve aspects of their physical development are limited.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

This is a very caring school which welcomes all pupils, whatever their needs. Pastoral care, guidance and support are good. Pupils and parents recognise this and it is a key factor in pupils' positive attitudes to school. Child protection and health and safety procedures are well understood and any pupils who are at risk are quickly identified and supported very well. Pupils say that they feel safe and know who to turn to, if necessary. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is satisfactory. Outside agencies and parents are involved effectively. The academic guidance and support provided by the school are satisfactory. The school is beginning to develop procedures to enable it to track pupils' progress more carefully through each year. Pupil targets are not always used consistently in lessons to inform teachers' planning, set high expectations or help pupils with the next steps in their learning. Whilst the quality of marking is generally satisfactory, and sometimes good, it is not yet consistent in showing pupils what they need to do next to improve. There is good support for children when they start both in Reception and at other times in their school career, which ensures they settle in quickly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management at all levels are satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school which is shared by staff and governors. She has been successful in nurturing a strong community spirit that is recognised and appreciated by parents. All the staff work together as a team and are increasingly taking on leadership

responsibilities, following a period of staff changeover and absences since the last inspection. The school has the capacity to improve further. There are adequate systems for checking on the school's work. Leaders and managers understand both its strengths and what needs improving. Their judgements on the school's performance match those of the inspectors. Information, such as results of tests, teachers' assessments and evidence from pupils' work, is collected and used to successfully identify and target areas for improvement, as shown by the recent improvement in science standards. However, the school has yet to use this information sufficiently effectively to check pupils' progress in order to improve their progress further. Governors are supportive of the school and they fulfil their statutory duties. The school works closely with parents and links with external agencies satisfactorily support pupils' learning. It seeks pupils' and parents' views regularly and takes these into account.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--	-----------------------	--------------

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?	3	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	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	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

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?	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	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

12 May 2006 Dear Pupils Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work when we visited your school. We are pleased to hear that you like school and that the grown-ups are kind and look after you well. We think that they help you to know just what you have to do to keep safe and healthy. We were happy to hear that there are plenty of things for you to take part in, such as the visit to the Houses of Parliament and your different clubs. We think you are polite to adults and behave well. In order to make your learning even better, we have asked the adults at your school to:

- make sure you are given lots of opportunities that stretch you to do your very best
- keep checking exactly what the school does best and what could be better
- make sure that teachers are helping you to know what you need to do to improve your work, especially in your writing.

Thank you again for helping us with our work. Yours faithfully Mrs J Marshall
Lead inspector