



Sandhills Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123027
LEA Oxfordshire LEA
Inspection number 281386
Inspection dates 6 March 2006 to 7 March 2006
Reporting inspector Bernice Magson AI

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Terrett Avenue |
| School category | Community | | Sandhills |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 | | Oxford OX3 8FN |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01865 433000 |
| Number on roll | 190 | Fax number | 01865 433001 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Mr C Hicks |
| Date of previous inspection | 26 June 2000 | Headteacher | Mr J Johnson |

| Age group | Inspection dates | Inspection number |
|-----------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This small primary school is in Headington, Oxford. Most pupils are of white British heritage, although a small number are from other ethnic backgrounds. A few pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The percentage of pupils entitled to claim free school meals is low while the proportion with learning difficulties and disabilities is slightly above average. In the last two years there has been a significant staff turnover. The school moved into a new building in 2003.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school has accurately judged that it provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils and gives satisfactory value for money. Standards are average, although there are recent improvements in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. There are some weaknesses in the performance of more able pupils at the end of both key stages when compared to other pupils nationally. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well, because of good targeted support. The headteacher has established a cohesive staff team, who are eager to establish a caring and inclusive school. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement in pupils' behaviour, the curriculum and in school facilities. The school has a sound capacity to improve further. Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe and secure. They work well together in lessons and in activities out of school. Many pupils play an active role within the school. They appreciate the fact that their views are valued. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. There is some good teaching in Year 6 where skilful questioning encourages pupils to extend their learning. In the Foundation Stage, lessons are filled with fun and excitement and pupils steadily work to attain their expected goals in all areas. In some other lessons, the tasks that are set are not always matched sufficiently well to their capabilities and pupils have an insufficient understanding of how to improve because of a lack of guidance. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff and governors have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Nevertheless subject leaders are not playing a full enough role in school improvement, because they do not analyse assessment data or monitor teaching and learning sufficiently in their own areas to be effective in raising standards.

What the school should do to improve further

* Raise standards in English, mathematics and science, particularly for the more able pupils.* Improve the quality of marking and target setting so that pupils are clear about how to improve.* Ensure that subject leaders play a full and effective role in improving the quality of provision in order to raise standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Children start school in the Foundation Stage with the knowledge, skills and experience which are appropriate for their age. They make steady progress and the majority meet expected goals by the start of Year 1. By Year 2 standards are broadly average. The school has successfully arrested the decline in standards, although the performance of more able pupils remains below the national average in writing and mathematics. Pupils make steady progress and reach average standards by age 11, although there is a significant variation from year to year because fluctuating numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities influence results. In 2005, additional support was effective in helping the less able pupils to achieve better results than predicted, and a greater number of pupils attained

the higher level 5 in English and mathematics than nationally. These higher standards have yet to be maintained over time. In science, the more able pupils did not perform as well as might be expected. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress and meet the individual targets of their education plans. This is because their needs are assessed well and good support is given. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve as well as their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is satisfactory and improving. A few parents expressed concerns about pupils' behaviour; however, inspectors found that pupils behave well and have positive attitudes towards learning. Pupils feel safe in school and are happy that any incidents of bullying and racism are dealt with promptly. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They show good awareness of different faiths and cultures and benefit from many opportunities for quiet reflection. The school encourages them to think about themes such as appreciation and hope and this is helping them to learn about the world around them. There is an active school council which considers many issues in the life of the school, such as in purchasing new playground equipment. Pupils appreciate the fact that their ideas are valued and acted upon. Pupils have a good awareness of the importance of a healthy diet and the physical exercise. They work co-operatively in activities in and out of school and use their initiative well: for example, in fund raising. This helps prepare them for the next stage in their education and their later working lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and strongest in the Foundation Stage and Year 6. All teachers are successful in developing positive relationships with pupils and this contributes to good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Teaching is confident and has good pace because teachers have good subject knowledge. In Year 6 there is skilful questioning of pupils, extending their learning well. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards and a wide range of other resources which encourage pupils to take an active part in lessons. Although teachers take care to organise a range of activities to meet pupils' needs, sometimes sufficiently challenging tasks are not provided for the more able pupils. The quality of marking varies and occasionally, it does not show pupils how to improve their learning. Similarly, although some pupils are given targets for improvement this is not yet done consistently. In the Foundation Stage staff organise effective learning through play but do not always monitor children's actions sufficiently well. Pupils with learning difficulties benefit from careful planning and support and consequently make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is broad, balanced and enriched by many additional activities, including many extra curricular clubs. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is well-organised with a wide range of activities. There is good provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and a good programme for personal, social and health education, including appropriate provision for sex and drugs education. The effective re-organisation of the curriculum for single age groups has helped to ensure it meets most pupils' needs. There are now satisfactory links between subjects. Pupils benefit from many visits and visitors, including trips to museums and places of interest. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support are good overall ensuring that all pupils are fully included in the school community. Inspectors agree with parents that pupils are well looked after. As one parent wrote, 'this is a kind and caring school'. Staff know pupils well and this helps them to feel safe and secure. Vulnerable pupils, such as those with medical needs, benefit from careful monitoring and planning. Staff liaise effectively with a wide range of outside agencies to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and other emotional concerns. There are effective systems for risk assessment and good procedures in place for child protection and health and safety.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. In the last two years the headteacher has satisfactorily led the school through a period of considerable change including significant staff turnover and the move to a new school building. There is a new and cohesive staff team. A positive ethos has been maintained and pupils' personal development is promoted well. The school has satisfactory systems for self-evaluation and its financial management is good. The headteacher, senior managers and governors have a sound capacity to improve the school further. Senior managers have recognised weaknesses in provision in English and mathematics, and recent actions have been taken to raise standards. As a result demonstrable improvements in English, for example have been achieved through the introduction of additional support for lower attaining pupils. The whole school improvement plan is based on agreed priorities for the curriculum, personnel and finance. The plan however, lacks a clear focus on raising standards and actions are not based sufficiently on an analysis of assessment data. Subject leaders are given insufficient time to lead and monitor standards and provision in their subjects. As a result there is a lack of rigour and consistency in developing and implementing strategies for improvement. Governance of the school is satisfactory. Governors fulfil all statutory duties and have a satisfactory knowledge of the school.

In partnership with the headteacher, they have worked effectively on the project to build a new school.

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Inspection judgements

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| <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? | 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 | 2 | 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 | 2 | 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? | 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

Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming during our visit. We enjoyed meeting you and hearing about the many interesting activities which you are involved in. We agree that you are lucky to have a new school with so many good facilities, both indoors and outside. This letter is to tell you about what we found out about your school.

The inspection team were pleased with the following: * you enjoy school and are keen to learn * most of you are achieving better standards by Year 6 in English and mathematics * you behave well and help to make your school a safe and happy place * activities in and out of school are helping you to work together * you are happy to share your views about how to make the school even better.

We would like to see you do even better in English, mathematics and science, especially the more capable pupils. We have asked the teachers to help you understand what to do next so that you learn as quickly as possible. We think that teachers in charge of subjects should have more opportunity to check your progress and suggest ways to make teaching and learning more interesting. With all our good wishes for your future at Sandhills Community School.