



# Sacriston Infant School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 114007  
**Local Authority** Durham  
**Inspection number** 289776  
**Inspection date** 7 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Michael Onyon

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Witton Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Sacriston, Durham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-7		County Durham, DH7 6LQ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 3710777
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	152	<b>Fax number</b>	0191 3719132
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Jim Tinnion
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Lesley Farnaby
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 February 2002		

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<b>Age group</b> 3-7	<b>Inspection date</b> 7 December 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 289776
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This is a smaller than average school serving its local community. Almost all pupils are White British and have English as their first language. The proportion claiming an entitlement to a free school meal is above average. The overall percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above the national average. On entry to the school, the children's attainment is well below that expected nationally. The school holds the Investors in People and Sport England Active Mark awards.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. As expressed in its motto, it is 'creating a rainbow of opportunity for all.' Pupils and parents speak highly of the school's success in meeting their aspirations and expectations. As one parent said, 'My son is so happy at the school and he says it is fantastic. You can see that all the teachers really care for the children. He couldn't have had a better start to his education.'

The care provided for pupils is outstanding and pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They become confident young people who can make informed, sensible and healthy choices. Pupils' personal development is excellent. Parents refer to the emphatic progress made by their children in self-confidence and maturity. Pupils behave very well and look after one another as part of an extended family. They thoroughly enjoy their work. They develop their social skills in all classes and in every curriculum subject. They care for one another and demonstrate their responsibilities through their involvement with the community and by raising funds for local and national charities. The way that sport, art, drama, foreign languages and personal development are woven into the life of the school, engaging the skills of local coaches and visitors, is exemplary. Pupils have a strong voice in school and have been involved in considering the benefits of nutrition and encouraging thoughtful suggestions for improvement. Engagement in decision making has helped to raise the pupils' self-esteem and, combined with their impressive academic achievement, ensures that they are very well prepared for the future.

The curriculum is stimulating and imaginative. Learning is enriched by a wide range of interesting visits, visitors, clubs and activities, which adds to the pupils' obvious enjoyment in learning. Provision in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) is very good. Outstanding teaching enables children to make very good progress and children are working towards the level expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Excellent progress is sustained throughout Years 1 and 2 because of the consistent very high quality of teaching. At the end of Year 2, standards are well above average. Work is well planned in all subjects and the focus on establishing the precise learning needs of all pupils and providing challenging and interesting activities is very successful.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher provides excellent and visionary leadership, which is shared by governors and staff who share the vision and the commitment to 'create a passion for learning'. Self-evaluation is very effective and all staff have an accurate view of what works well and what can be improved. The school has improved very well since its last inspection and has maintained standards at a very high level. There is no complacency and all are determined to continue to improve. Consequently, the school still has the will and an excellent capacity to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- There are no significant areas for improvement.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is outstanding and overall standards are consistently high. This is because pupils are exceptionally well taught and they want to learn. Progress is equally good across the whole school for all groups of pupils. From below average attainment on entry to the school, pupils make excellent progress and reach well above average standards by the end of Year 2. The national test results in reading, writing and mathematics in 2005 were all well above average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level is also well above average. The school's data indicates that, in 2006, the results were similar to those of the previous year. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve very well.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is excellent and makes a significant contribution to their learning. Parents certainly believe this and speak warmly of the great strides their children make in self-confidence and maturity. The pupils enjoy coming to school; many arrive early and enthusiastically take part in the Brek-Fit (exercise and buffet breakfast). They have very good attitudes to learning and think the rich range of activities provided is interesting and fun. Behaviour is excellent and pupils say that there is no bullying. As one said, 'You are safe here, everybody is your friend.' Attendance is above average. Older pupils spontaneously look after younger ones in lessons and around school. Pastoral groups help to reinforce this. Pupils play a full part in the life of the school, often influencing decision-making; for example they express their views about clubs and fund raising activities.

There are close and beneficial links with the community, such as carol singing at local sheltered housing and care homes. Pupils are highly responsible around school, are extremely considerate and very aware of each other's safety. They lead very healthy lifestyles and practise what they learn about healthy eating. Pupils are very well aware of cultural differences and become increasingly familiar with the multi-cultural nature of modern Britain. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils are developing excellent personal and academic skills that will be valuable to them in the next phase of their education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 1

Teaching is outstanding. It is well structured and challenging. Teachers are very knowledgeable; they have a complete understanding of the subjects they teach and the precise needs of the children. Expectations are high; work is well matched to the pupils' abilities and enables learning to be rapid and enjoyable. Teachers allow for

different groups, especially different age groups, and provide close, individual support for pupils. Teaching assistants play a valuable role in this. The clarity of learning objectives and imaginative use of resources helps pupils to make very good progress. Teachers are adept at asking questions to check understanding. Many sessions are taught by a team of teachers. In these, pupils' learning is outstanding because rich and imaginative joint planning helps promote a wide variety of skills and knowledge. Excellent assessment ensures that pupils' individual needs are quickly identified and fully met, so that learning is naturally reinforced and all pupils constantly receive a high level of challenge.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is excellent. It contributes strongly to the pupils' achievement of high standards. It more than meets statutory requirements. As well as the very good provision for the basic skills of literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology, exciting opportunities for investigations and other practical learning experiences are provided. The school is very keen to make learning interesting and enjoyable for the pupils and precise planning ensures that relevant links are made between subjects. Personal, social and health education is very strongly promoted and is linked effectively to other activities. For example, 'Zippy's Friends' enables children to understand and celebrate differences. There are many enrichment activities, including sports and the arts. The curriculum is kept under constant review and pupils explain how they are helped to take personal responsibility for their own learning. Their enthusiasm and enjoyment is tangible and their developing skills evident, for example through the achievement of the Active Mark award.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

All pupils are cared for exceptionally well. The school's ethos is calm, well ordered and supportive. Staff are very well trained and are fully committed to pupils' welfare. Teachers encourage pupils to learn about healthy lifestyles. Pupils say they feel safe and explain how adults help them. Pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities are supported very well by staff who give pupils time to discuss problems. There are very strong links with parents and carers and teachers work very well with parents to meet any individual needs. Many parents and carers have benefited from programmes to help their own learning and to support that of their children. Strong and positive links with the local junior school aid pupils' transition to the next stage of their education. Pupils' progress is monitored very effectively and they are helped to contribute fully in planning their learning. They know what they have learned already and are very clear about what they can do in order to improve. The school works extremely well with other agencies and is at the heart of its community. Each pupil feels wholly valued and secure because teachers know them individually and take a great interest in their emotional and physical well-being. Child protection and safeguarding procedures are in place and risk assessments are carried out rigorously.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher, very ably supported by the deputy headteacher, is highly committed to the school and the wider community. Her vision of how the school can build on its excellent reputation is shared by all staff. Staff know the school's strengths and are keen to maintain high standards and raise them even higher. Thorough, accurate self-evaluation contributes to the maintenance of positive results year on year. As a result of the outstanding leadership, expectations and aspirations are high. The school has gained awards for high achievement, creative and sporting provision and for promoting an awareness of healthy living. The established pattern of shared leadership enables subject leaders to manage their responsibilities very well. They monitor standards throughout the school and continually plan further improvement. The professional development of staff is given a high priority and the skills of all adults are used to benefit the pupils. Finances are well managed. Governors are very skilled and hold the school to account well. With the headteacher, they review and evaluate the work of the school very well and have a very clear view of why they are successful and what they need to do. They celebrate what the headteacher, staff and pupils have already achieved and, with their involvement and support, the school is well placed to achieve further planned improvements.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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>	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Sacriston Infant School

Witton Road

Sacriston

Durham

County Durham

DH7 6LQ

7 December 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for your help when I visited your school. I want you all to know how much I enjoyed looking at your books and your work. You attend an excellent and friendly school where you learn and work together so very well. Your teachers work hard and help you to learn very well. Because of this, your work in English, mathematics, science and ICT is excellent. The work in your books is very neat and the work you do in other subjects such as physical education and art is exciting and helps you to do very well. Pupils at Sacriston have done well in tests for many years and you have to work hard to match the previous success, but in every class you are doing just that. You all know what your next target is so that you can see how you are making progress towards the very highest standards. I liked the way you explained that only your very best work is good enough and that you help your friends when they don't understand things.

Teachers care for you extremely well and organise lots of interesting and exciting clubs and activities. The many visitors to your school have helped to give you a better understanding of the wider world. You come to school every day except when you are ill and your superb behaviour helps you to have fun in lessons and still complete difficult tasks very well. There are no really important things to improve in your school.

My very best wishes for a successful future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Onyon

Lead Inspector