



# Silverdale Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 114454  
**Local Authority** East Sussex  
**Inspection number** 289919  
**Inspection dates** 24–25 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Helen Hutchings

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>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Perth Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		St Leonards-on-Sea
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		TN37 7EA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01424 448100
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	659	<b>Fax number</b>	01424 448104
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Georgina Doherty
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Phil Stephenson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 November 2002		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

The school is larger than most primary schools. Many pupils come from an area of significant social disadvantage. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is broadly average because a number of families prefer to send packed lunches rather than take up their entitlement to free meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is higher than in most schools. Most children are from White British backgrounds. More pupils enter or leave the school after the normal time of entry than is the case in most schools.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school which meets the needs of its pupils well. Parents are rightly confident in what the school offers. As one parent wrote, 'Every effort is made to challenge and develop all children.' The school is a happy and harmonious community where pupils become caring, tolerant and reflective individuals who work well together. The care, support and guidance for pupils are good and this is reflected in pupils' good personal development and well-being. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility for themselves and for others. For example, pupils said that 'playground buddies' have made a difference to making sure that playtimes are enjoyable for all.

All aspects of the school's work are good and enable pupils to achieve well. Pupils reach average standards in national tests from a below-average start. They have achieved better in English and mathematics than in science for a number of years. Improving the quality of science investigational work is a current school focus for development. Children get off to a good start in the Reception classes but many pupils join the school when they are older. Some parents of these pupils commented on how well their children had settled as a result of the school's very caring attitude and friendly welcome. For example, one parent wrote, 'Since being at Silverdale, my son's enthusiasm for school and learning has exceeded our expectations.' These pupils make very good progress during their time in the school, although some do not reach the nationally expected standards because of earlier disruption to their learning. Pupils enjoy their learning and remarked how 'we have to work hard but the teachers try to make it fun'. This is seen in the good curriculum, which links subjects so that pupils see the relevance of their learning and practise the basic skills of literacy and numeracy in other subjects. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers know pupils and their capabilities very well and plan lessons to meet individuals' needs. Work is marked carefully and mistakes pointed out. Targets are set for individual pupils, but many pupils are not very clear about exactly what they have to do to achieve these.

Leadership and management are good. Staff and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school's record of success in addressing weaker areas shows that it has the capacity to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards and achievement in science.
- Help individual pupils understand exactly what they need to do in literacy and numeracy to make the next step in their learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well throughout the school. Many children enter the Reception classes with skills and understanding below the levels for their age. They do well in the Reception classes and join Year 1 ready and enthusiastic for more formal learning.

However, standards at the end of the Reception year are below those expected nationally, particularly in learning how to read and write. Pupils reach standards generally in line with national averages in the tests taken in Years 2 and 6. Standards vary from year to year, but are due to differences in the needs of pupils in these years. There are no significant differences in the performance of different groups, although as pupils move through the school they develop a momentum in their learning and increase their rate of progress in their last years in the school. In spite of the good progress made, standards are not higher in Year 6 because many pupils entering the school later than the normal time of entry are a long way below the levels expected. They have had disruption in their learning but make significant progress because they integrate into the school quickly.

Performance has been higher in English and mathematics than in science for a number of years. Recently the school has focused on improving pupils' writing and has been successful in this, particularly in enabling the most able older pupils to achieve higher levels. It is now bringing the same determination to improving science across the school. The targets the school has set for performance in the tests each year are challenging and the school has a good record of achieving them.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are proud of their school and show their eagerness by being punctual and attending regularly. Attendance levels are average. Pupil's spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good because all these areas are promoted well. Pupils are becoming 'Global Citizens'. They particularly value learning about schools in other countries through the school's exceptional links across the world.

Children settle quickly into the Reception classes. Behaviour is good and most pupils respond enthusiastically to everything that the school provides. 'Buddies' play a vital part in monitoring behaviour in the playground and pupils accept their contribution in sorting out conflict. The school council is increasingly influencing improvements to the environment, such as planning for the painting of 'the old bike shed'. The school recognises that the responsibilities of the group need to be expanded to improve pupils' personal development further. The very good emphasis placed on health and safety from the earliest years means that pupils know how to stay safe. Pupils enjoy sport; they exercise regularly and know why this is important. They feel that the school meals have become 'more healthy' and know why it is important to make healthy diet choices. Pupils are developing a growing awareness of economic matters through their participation in events to raise money, which, together with their sound literacy and numeracy skills, will help them in the future. Their handling of money at lunchtimes and at the breakfast club helps them to realise its value and what it can buy, for example.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good because teachers manage pupils very skilfully and establish orderly and interesting learning environments in their classes. This helps pupils to concentrate and to develop good work habits. Pupils say that they find learning fun. Relationships are good and teachers know their pupils very well. Pupils are encouraged to take a full part in class discussions and work together constructively when required to do so. Teachers carefully match activities to pupils' interests and abilities but sometimes the pace of lessons is a little slow so that pupils relax too much and do not achieve as much as they could in the time. In science, more-able pupils are not consistently challenged and the school is currently developing more opportunities for pupils to experiment and investigate in science across the school.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good because it meets the differing needs of pupils and helps those of all abilities to achieve well. Provision for gifted and talented pupils, in particular, has developed since the last inspection, through effective links within a local cluster of schools. Teachers in each year group plan together and this enables them to draw on best practice. The emphasis on learning through enjoyable practical activities in the Reception classes is continued through the school. Many good links are made between subjects, for instance, using information and communication technology in art, history and geography. Teachers' encouragement of creativity is evident in many displays of good quality art and writing for all to appreciate. Pupils are given opportunities to develop their writing skills in other subjects, particularly history and geography. The school has highlighted the need to develop this in science.

Pupils participate in a good range of after-class activities. Provision for sport is particularly strong, leading to many successes in local competitions. The school makes a good contribution to the life of the local community, for instance, in planning a sensory garden for visually impaired people.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The school works very effectively to make sure that pupils work and play in safe surroundings. This is appreciated by parents and pupils and is a key factor in pupils' good progress. The school has robust procedures for child protection and for assessing and dealing with risks. All staff are aware of their responsibilities for the health and safety of pupils. Links with parents are strong and they are pleased with the way the school seeks their views and responds to questions and concerns. A strong emphasis on supporting the needs of individuals is evident in all aspects of school life. The school has an increasing amount of data about pupils' performance and uses this well to set

academic targets for overall performance. Pupils are given personal targets but they do not readily recall them and they are not yet detailed enough for pupils to know exactly what they have to do to reach the next level in literacy and numeracy.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Strong leadership and management underpin pupils' good achievement. The headteacher gives the school a high profile in the area and the strong links established with neighbouring schools and the community enable the school to share resources and respond quickly to local needs. The very good links maintained with teacher training institutions are an indication of the school's openness to embrace new ideas and share good practice.

Procedures for monitoring the overall effectiveness of the school are good and based firmly on the analysis of data and consultation with parents and governors. Prompt action is taken when necessary and is successful, for example, in improving writing for older pupils. An example of the school's good leadership and management is seen in the way in which the development plan is now centred on helping pupils to grow as well-rounded citizens to bring cohesion to its work. The school recognises that the emphasis on raising standards and accelerating achievement in the plan is not sufficiently explicit. Governors support the school well as critical friends.

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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>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<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>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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**

The inspectors really enjoyed visiting your school and looking at some of the things you do in lessons and at playtime. Many of you spoke to us and this really helped us to hear your views of the school. We promised you that we would let you know what we found out about the school.

Silverdale is a good school and we are glad that you recognise this.

- You are safe at school and enjoy it a great deal.
- Your teachers are good; they make lessons interesting and sometimes fun.
- You work hard and make good progress. This helps you to do as well as other children of your age.
- You all get on well together and there is always an adult on hand to sort out problems if that is necessary.
- The school council listens well to your views about how to improve your surroundings and has already changed some things.
- Many of you said that 'playground buddies' help to make sure that everyone has someone to play with.
- Many of you get involved in after-school sport and this helps you to keep fit and healthy.
- The adults in charge of the school do a good job.

When I asked what you would want to see changed in the school, some of you said 'nothing' and we can see why you say that. The staff have planned some things which we agree should help you to do better in the future. Teachers are planning to include more opportunities for you to carry out investigations and experiments in science so that you understand it better. We have asked them to make your targets more precise and remind you of them more often, so that you know exactly what you have to do to make your work better.