



Saffron Green Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 117195
Local Authority HERTFORDSHIRE
Inspection number 290751
Inspection date 13 December 2006
Reporting inspector Patricia Cox

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Nicoll Way
School category	Community		Borehamwood
Age range of pupils	3-11		Hertfordshire WD6 2PP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8953 3801
Number on roll (school)	194	Fax number	020 8905 2656
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Jean Heywood
		Headteacher	Mrs Debbie Purrett
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector over one day.

Description of the school

The school is larger than it was previously, because it has changed from a first school to a primary school. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above the national average, reflecting the higher than usual level of deprivation in the area. Although the majority are from a White British heritage, a minority are from a range of other ethnic groups. 25% of pupils speak English as an additional language and 14 % are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. A higher proportion than average starts or leaves during their school career. The school operates a number of additional services for parents and the community. Children's attainment on entry to the school is lower than expected for their age.

The school has recently been granted the Investors in People and the Healthy Schools Awards as well as Football Association Accreditation.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school provides its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education and gives satisfactory value for money. Children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage from a low point, and their progress in personal, social, language and physical skills is good. Therefore, in these areas they enter Year 1 with attainment that is closer to that expected for their age. The most recent test results in 2006 were above average at the end of Year 2 but very low at the end of Year 6. However, those Year 6 pupils had made satisfactory progress since the end of Year 2 in mathematics and science, although their progress was weaker in English, particularly in writing. The school has recognised that the development of pupils' abilities in speaking and listening are key to their progress in English and is implementing measures to improve them. Standards in Years 2 and 6 are currently below average but pupils are making satisfactory progress through Years 1 to 6. This is because teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is some good practice, using interesting resources and providing challenges but the tasks set for pupils are not always matched well enough to their needs. The curriculum is satisfactory and there is a good range of activities outside the school day.

The pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They behave well and many behave very well, although there is some occasional fussiness in class. The school works extremely hard to provide many opportunities to ensure that their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils' enjoyment of school is excellent and they take advantage of the encouragement given to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Attendance is satisfactory. However, in spite of the school's stringent procedures, some parents still do not ensure that their children attend regularly and punctually. The school takes extremely good care of pupils' physical and emotional needs. Academic guidance is satisfactory; the school keeps regular and careful records of pupils' progress and sets them targets to improve their work. However, the targets are rather general and the pupils are not involved in evaluating their progress. Leadership and management are satisfactory; the headteacher is keen to ensure that the pupils do as well as they can and the senior leadership team give sound support. Some subject leaders carry out their work suitably, but others who are new are at a relatively early stage in taking responsibility for standards in their subjects. There are sound methods for checking the school's effectiveness, such as lesson observations and work scrutiny. The school analyses the assessments in great detail, particularly for individual progress, but the information is not kept in an easily accessible form. There is a mostly accurate view of how well it performs, although there is an overoptimistic view of the effectiveness of leadership and management.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards, particularly in speaking and listening, and writing
- Improve the quality of teaching, by ensuring that the work is matched carefully to the pupils' needs

- Improve the use of assessment and target-setting to involve the pupils more directly and record this information in a way that makes it easier to track the progress of different groups of pupils
- Develop the role of newer subject leaders in taking responsibility for standards in their subjects

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Test results at the end of both key stages vary from year to year, depending on the proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties or who have arrived in the school very recently. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 has been rising since 2002, when it was very low. In 2005, test results were above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Standards at the end of Year 6 rose sharply from 2003, when they were well below average, to 2005 when they were above average in science and mathematics and average in English. The results showed that the pupils had made very good progress in mathematics and science and satisfactory progress in English. Test results in 2006 however, were low and failed to meet the school's challenging targets, particularly in English where they fell a long way short. Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and whose first language is not English, are making satisfactory progress through the school. The targets set for the present Year 6 pupils are again challenging and they will need to make good progress if they are to reach them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school's very good systems for promoting pupils' moral and social development have a positive effect on their behaviour and their understanding of the difference between right and wrong. There are few racist incidents and little bullying. Most pupils develop into mature and sensible individuals, confident to speak in public. They know how to stay safe and fit. Pupils' views are sought through the school council, and members take their responsibilities seriously, carrying them out efficiently. They make a good contribution to the school community through their work on such areas as preventing bullying. The school has strong links within its community and the pupils make a good contribution to both this and the wider world, for example, through charity donations. The breakfast club is a calm social occasion to which parents are welcome and supports the pupils' better understanding of good nutrition. The standards they achieve, their developing social and moral skills and their increasing understanding of the world and its cultures ensure that they are soundly placed for the next stage of education and their roles as citizens.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

With the good relationships between pupils and with adults most lessons proceed at a reasonable pace. Work is often set at different levels for pupils of different abilities, and consequently pupils concentrate and do their best. However, there are occasions when this is not always the case, and the more able do not always have sufficient challenge. In addition, the less able only succeed in the task because they have high levels of support. Some imaginative strategies are used, for example, the construction of a 'zoo' in the Foundation Stage gave children good opportunities to learn by sorting, and they developed their language well through the discussions involved. There are high levels of support in many lessons and teaching assistants make a sound contribution to the progress of the pupils they assist. However, they are not always used effectively during whole class teaching sessions. Marking is inconsistent; while there is some good practice that shows pupils how well they have done and what they need to do to improve, some work has not been marked effectively.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Timetabling make sound use of the time available and reflect the school's emphasis on speaking and listening, for example, through drama lessons. This means that pupils make satisfactory progress in developing key skills such as literacy and numeracy. The pupils' experience is enhanced through a range of visits and visitors, and through days that focus on a specific subject. The good programme of personal, social and health education supports the pupils' development and their understanding of such issues as bullying and healthy lifestyles. There is a good range of activities outside the school day, for example, football, drama and German.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. All necessary checks are carried out on adults who work in the school and there are suitable arrangements for risk assessments. Pupils say that they feel entirely safe and that there is always an adult they can confide in if they are upset and who will help them if they have problems with their work. Academic support is satisfactory. The pupils have targets for their writing and mathematics. However, these are generic, not focused on their individual needs and pupils are not sufficiently aware of them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

There has been satisfactory progress since the previous inspection and the school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement. It consults and involves parents, who are positive about what it offers. The school's systems for monitoring its own work are adequate. Individual long-term targets are set for pupils' progress and through scrutiny of test and assessment data and in pupils' work there is a detailed view of how well they do against these targets. However, there are inconsistencies in the way that the targets are set, so that it is difficult to compare pupils' progress. The school cannot readily present summaries of the progress of specific groups. Lesson observations are evaluative and suitable support is put in where needed. Planning for school improvement is satisfactory. Appropriate broad priorities are identified and actions are suitable, but the plan is weaker in showing how the school will know how successful it has been. There is some sound subject leadership but some new staff are at an early stage in knowing how to carry out their responsibilities. Governors carry out their role satisfactorily and are improving the way they check the school's work, under the good leadership of the chair of governors.

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Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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	1
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

14 December 2006

Dear Pupils

Saffron Green Primary School, Nicoll Way, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire, WD6 2PP

Dear Pupils

I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to your school recently and want to thank you for the way you helped me and looked after me while I was with you. I thought you were very polite and friendly and I thought you'd like to know what I found out about your school.

I agree with you that your teachers are nice to you and help you when you need it. It was good to know that you can ask any of the adults in the school for help if you're upset. I think you behave well, and many of you behave very well, although a few of you chatter too much when you should be working. Your work improves during the year and that's fine, but I think you could do better in English, learning and using new words and trying really hard to improve your writing. So I've asked your teachers to help you to learn more and faster. But another area I think you could really help is by making sure you come to school every day and on time because you can't learn if you're not there!

I liked the way that school starts with many of you and your parents in the breakfast club eating and chatting quietly, which is one of the many ways that the school helps you to stay fit and healthy. It looks after you really well and you told me that you felt very safe there. I think the school could help you to know what you need to know next, by setting you targets, and getting you to help to decide whether you've reached them.

Thank you to those of you who came to talk to me - I wish I'd had more time so I could have talked to more of you. I wish you all the best for the future and hope that you all had a wonderful Christmas.

Mrs Pat Cox Lead Inspector