

Selsted Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118683
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	291213
Inspection date	5 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Michael Barron

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	70
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richie Fraser
Headteacher	Catherine Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	10 December 2001
School address	Stockham Lane Selsted CT15 7HH
Telephone number	01303 844286
Fax number	01303 844286

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Selsted is a small primary school serving a rural area of Kent. Pupils come from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds and nearly all are of White British heritage. All pupils speak English as their first language. An above average number of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The present acting headteacher was appointed in September 2006.

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 satisfactory school which gives pupils a satisfactory start to their education.

The below average rate of pupils' achievement in the past has been a cause for concern. However, since her appointment, the acting headteacher has displayed drive and determination to ensure that the school has benefited from its partnership with outside agencies to successfully implement a number of support and intervention programmes aimed at improving teaching and raising standards and progress in all year groups. This has resulted in an improvement in pupils' achievement, which is now satisfactory.

Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is broadly average but varies from year to year. Children make satisfactory progress as a result of satisfactory teaching and usually reach the expected standards in nearly all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. The quality of teaching shows improvement and is satisfactory throughout the rest of the school, ensuring most pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress and are prepared satisfactorily for the next stage of their education. However, there are still some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching which sometimes hinder pupils' progress, particularly that of the more able pupils because they not always provided with work matched to their abilities. Standards in Year 6 are presently above average which represents satisfactory achievement for this group of pupils.

Pupils enjoy school and say that they value the school's family atmosphere. They have a good community spirit and describe their school as a happy place. Their personal development and well-being are good and this is reflected in their outstanding behaviour and positive approach to their work. They display responsible attitudes and respect for others. They make sensible and healthy choices and have a good awareness of the need to keep safe. Parents value the good support the school offers their children and comment that they are 'extremely pleased' with the level of care their children receive.

The curriculum is satisfactory and is enriched by a range of additional activities that further develop pupils' skills and their enjoyment of learning. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their understanding of the multicultural nature of British society. The level of care, guidance and support for pupils is good, although the use of individual target setting to help pupils make better progress is not used consistently throughout the school. In addition, teachers' marking does not always give pupils effective guidance on how to improve their work.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The governing body fulfils its role satisfactorily and is now beginning to offer an adequate level of challenge to the school. The acting headteacher has worked well with the staff and governors to analyse the school's performance well and implement change where needed. The school has clear plans to bring about further improvement and demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to achieve them.

What the school should do to improve further

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- Improve the consistency and quality of teaching in order to raise standards and achievement of all groups of pupils and especially the more able pupils.
- Improve the effectiveness of teachers' marking and the use of target setting in order to consistently provide pupils with effective guidance about how to improve their work.

- Increase pupils' awareness and understanding of the multicultural nature of modern British society.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The school has worked well to improve pupils' achievement during the present academic year. This has resulted in improvements in standards, especially in literacy and numeracy. Achievement is now satisfactory in all year groups and is a reflection of satisfactory teaching although there are still occasions when more able pupils do not achieve as well as they could because they are not consistently challenged with work at a suitable level. Standards in Year 6 are presently above the national average. This represents satisfactory progress and achievement for this group of pupils when compared to their performance in the Year 2 national tests.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because of the satisfactory level of academic support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

There is a real sense of community within the school. Pupils are polite and their behaviour is outstanding. They have good attitudes to learning and say that teachers 'help you with your work'. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their good attendance. Pupils respect and value both one another and the adults around them. They take their responsibilities seriously and talk enthusiastically about their involvement with the local community and about how the school council gives them opportunities to participate in school decision making.

Pupils demonstrate a willingness to help those less fortunate than themselves, for example by raising funds for charities. They feel safe and secure and say that they know there is always someone to turn to if they have a problem. Their spiritual, moral and social development is good although their cultural development, and in particular their awareness and understanding of the diversity of life in British multicultural society, is less secure. Their satisfactory progress in developing numeracy and literacy skills, together with their good understanding of individual and collective responsibility, means that they are prepared satisfactorily for future life.

Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of staying safe and making healthy choices, especially about what they eat. They also talk enthusiastically about how the school provides them with 'fun things' to do including sporting activities designed to make them fitter and healthier.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress because they are provided with suitable activities which blend independent learning with teacher- directed tasks.

The quality of teaching and learning throughout the rest of the school is satisfactory overall. Lessons are usually well structured and teachers work well with other adults to offer pupils support with their learning, especially those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Teachers have had opportunities to visit other schools to observe good practice in teaching and this is proving effective in bringing improvement to the teaching, but there are still some weaknesses: the pace of lessons is sometimes slow and teachers do not consistently inspire pupils or make them interested in learning. Pupils say that, in some lessons, the tasks they are given to complete are either too hard or too easy. When this happens, pupils are not sufficiently challenged by their work and this slows their progress, especially that of the more able pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the needs and interests of pupils satisfactorily. The curriculum suitably ensures that the school's topic cycle takes account of mixed-age classes. Resources for ICT have improved since the previous inspection, but teachers are not yet fully confident in the use of ICT as an aid to learning.

Good planning for pupils' personal, social and health education ensures that they become well aware of the importance of fitness and well-being. Pupils also have opportunities to take part in a range of popular out of school activities, including sports clubs. Interesting visits and visitors to school increase their enjoyment of learning whilst the school uses its links with Avron in Normandy to build up pupils' awareness of the wider world. However, pupils are not provided with regular opportunities to develop their understanding of the multicultural nature of modern British society.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and contributes to children's enjoyment of learning and their developing independence. The recent addition of a covered outdoor area provides the children with opportunities to develop the skills associated with outdoor play.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is a caring school with a real family atmosphere which contributes well to pupils' enjoyment of learning and their sense of well-being. Parents are very happy about the care their children receive and comment about the 'extremely supportive' nature of the teaching staff. Induction and transfer arrangements are good and help pupils to settle quickly into new routines. Health and safety arrangements are good and risk assessments meet current government guidelines. Robust child protection procedures are understood and followed by all staff. The school works well to ensure that pupils who have particular learning needs receive the support they require in order to make satisfactory progress. The level of pastoral care and support for vulnerable pupils and those with emotional and behavioural difficulties is good and helps them to take a full and active part in school life. Good links with external agencies, for example, educational psychologists, help to support pupils' learning, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The school has recently developed procedures to track pupils' progress and to provide pupils with learning targets, particularly in English and mathematics. These targets are not yet used consistently throughout the school as an aid to improving pupils' progress and not all pupils are aware of their own learning targets. The quality of teachers' marking is variable and does not consistently provide pupils with effective guidance about how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The acting headteacher is an effective leader with a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She has worked well with the staff and governors to ensure that the school has monitored and evaluated its performance well and has made good use of the extra support from outside agencies. As a result, recent initiatives to improve pupils' standards and achievement have already led to improvements but systems for assessing the impact of initiatives such as target setting and the quality of teachers' marking on the pupils' achievement and attainment are not yet sufficiently rigorous.

The governing body fulfils its duties satisfactorily and is now beginning to develop its role of challenging the school about its actions and offering constructive criticism when appropriate. Individual governors support the school well.

The school has developed a good partnership with parents, who appreciate that the school regularly seeks and acts on their views.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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	2
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	3
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
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	3

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.

Annex A

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	2
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

5 July 2007

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Selsted Church of England Primary School, Kent CT15 7HH

Thank you for making us feel welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed our day at Selsted Primary School and especially enjoyed talking to some of you about your school and seeing you work in lessons

Here are some of the things we liked about your school:

- Selsted Primary School gives you a sound start to your education and makes sure you make satisfactory progress.
- You enjoy school and your personal development is good.
- You are very friendly and your behaviour is outstanding.
- The quality of care and support you receive from the school is good.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to make sure that your school continues to improve in the future.

We believe your headteacher, teachers and governors can do some things to make your school better:

- Make sure that when your teachers mark your work they always give you ideas about how you can improve.
- Ensure that lessons always provide work at the right level so that you can all make as much progress as possible.
- Make sure that you all know your personal targets and that you work towards achieving them.
- Help you to find out more about the customs and traditions of people living in this country who are from different cultural backgrounds.

You can help your school to get even better by continuing to work hard.

We wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Barron Lead inspector