



Seagrave Village Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119948
Local Authority Leicestershire
Inspection number 291579
Inspection date 6 March 2007
Reporting inspector Peter Callow

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Green Lane
School category	Community		Seagrave
Age range of pupils	4–11		Loughborough LE12 7LU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01509 812486
Number on roll (school)	60	Fax number	01509 812486
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Fiona Johnson
		Headteacher	Judith Latham
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2002		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
4–11	6 March 2007	291579

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils who attend this small school come from a wide variety of backgrounds, but all are of White British heritage. About two thirds come from outside the village of Seagrave. The proportion that join or leave the school other than at the normal time has been increasing since the last inspection and is now average. The small number in each group starting school is different each year, as is the proportion with learning difficulties. This results in standards on entry that vary considerably from year to year, but which are broadly average over time. The outdoor play space for pupils is limited and there is a lack of suitable accommodation for staff.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of Seagrave Village Primary School is good and it has some outstanding features. The vast majority of parents share this very positive view, with many expressing how much their children enjoy going to school. They particularly appreciate the high priority given to pupils' personal development, which is outstanding, and to their achievement, which is good. As one parent commented, 'We are extremely happy with the progress our children are making in their education, as well as their social skills.' Whilst the care, guidance and support for pupils is good overall, the pastoral care is outstanding. This is particularly as the result of the dedication and commitment of all the staff to pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are excellent. Children start to thrive in the school's friendly and caring ethos as soon as they enter the Reception Year. They enjoy their learning both inside and outside the classroom because of a well-planned curriculum that makes very effective links between different subjects. For example, children were observed learning to count by listening to the number of beats played on different musical instruments. Pupils of different abilities make good progress as they move up through the school and they generally reach standards which are above average at the end of the Reception Year, Year 2 and Year 6. This is because teachers plan their work so that it builds really carefully on what pupils have already learned. All pupils, and particularly those with learning difficulties, have excellent support from teaching assistants. These factors, together with the very positive relationships in every class, make a significant contribution to the good teaching and learning throughout the school. There are some good examples of teachers' marking, oral feedback and pupils' targets being used well. However, they are not yet consistently sufficiently effective across the school to enable all pupils to understand how to improve their work. The leadership and management of the school are good, with the headteacher providing strong leadership. She makes very effective use of the good systems for evaluating the performance of the school so that she is accurate in her assessment of its strengths and areas for development. As a result, the school has continued to improve since it was last inspected and has good capacity to improve further. Standards are now significantly higher in writing and the headteacher, together with the capable and supportive staff team, has made a good start in improving standards in science. They are aware that they need to raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve by making sure that scientific skills are taught in a progressive way. The curriculum has also improved since the school was last inspected and is now good. Pupils say that the new curriculum structure makes learning much more fun and interesting.

What the school should do to improve further

- raise the expectations of what pupils can achieve in science, by ensuring that scientific skills are taught in a progressive way
- through consistently good marking, oral feedback and target setting, help pupils to have a greater understanding of how to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter school with standards that are broadly average, although increasingly, some have weaknesses in their emotional development and in their communication, language and literacy skills. Standards are generally above average at the end of the Reception Year, Year 2 and Year 6. However, there is considerable variation in the abilities of pupils in different year groups. Nonetheless, pupils of all abilities make good progress from their starting points and as they move up through the school, because of a consistency of good teaching. There has been a big improvement in writing standards since the previous inspection. This has been achieved by giving pupils more opportunities to write in different subjects and also by checking on their progress more frequently and carefully. The school has now rightly identified that often, standards in science are not as consistently high as in other subjects and has made a good start in improving this through staff training. It is aware that it needs to ensure that the expectations of what pupils can achieve are high enough, by looking to see that their scientific skills are systematically built upon year by year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils work in a calm and industrious way, and their behaviour is exemplary at all times. They play together very well, and feel extremely safe in school. This is because they have an excellent understanding of the way in which their actions impact on others and they know that adults care for them greatly. There is a strong emphasis on respect for others, and this underpins pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is good. Attendance is good and pupils of all ages are keen to say how much they enjoy school. Pupils and their parents have responded very well to the school's initiatives on healthy eating and evidence for this is seen in the contents of pupils' lunch boxes. Even very young pupils have a thorough understanding of the importance of exercise. This was evident when a girl in Year 2 who was skipping explained, 'It is good for your body and for your brain'. Pupils are making good progress in acquiring the personal skills, as well as skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, that will stand them in good stead in their future work life. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the community and talk with pride about the many responsibilities they have in school. The school council enjoy their role, although there is scope to give pupils more independence and allow them to contribute more to decision-making. Pupils also enjoy hosting events for the local community, such as the coffee morning held for MacMillan Cancer Support.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers make good use of their assessments of pupils' work to plan tasks that build carefully on their previous learning. They are very effective in meeting the needs of the wide ability range of pupils. Pupils respond with excellent attitudes, by trying hard and making good progress. They enjoy their lessons because teachers make an effort to find practical and interesting tasks to motivate them. Pupils learn particularly well when they are involved in group tasks and have the opportunity to question each other and give explanations, for example when pupils in Years 5 and 6 were considering the views of the different characters in the poem 'The Highwayman'. However, there is scope in a few lessons for pupils to be more actively engaged in their learning. Adults question pupils well, often following up their answers to develop their thinking and understanding. There are some good examples of pupils' work being marked well. However, as the school recognises, the marking policy needs to be reviewed so that marking, as well as oral feedback, consistently helps to give pupils a good understanding of how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school achieves its main aim which is, 'to ensure that children experience and enjoy a broad, balanced yet challenging curriculum, tailored to the needs of every pupil'. As a result, all pupils make good progress in their learning and the school does particularly well to overcome the constraints on the curriculum imposed by the Victorian building, for example through a wide variety of extracurricular activities for sport. The curriculum has relatively recently been restructured around the six areas of learning in the early years curriculum to increase enjoyment and make learning more relevant. This appears, from talking to pupils, to have been successful, but it would be helpful to undertake a rigorous evaluation to assess the full impact on their learning. Provision for pupils' personal development, particularly to get them actively involved, has been well thought out and is very effective. For example, 'The Gold Book' is used to enable pupils to write positive comments about other pupils, which are then read out in the weekly citizenship assembly.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff know pupils extremely well, keep a very close eye on them and respond to their individual needs, especially of those with learning difficulties. This has a very positive impact on pupils' personal development and well-being. There is an outstanding emphasis throughout the school on healthy lifestyles and for the safety of pupils, for example when they cross the road to go to the village hall for physical education. Arrangements for child protection are well established with all staff clear about the

school's policy. Some staff are now due to have their training updated. Academic guidance, through target setting, for pupils in English and mathematics is developing well. However, its effectiveness is not yet consistent across the school, with the result that some pupils are not clear enough about what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher tracks pupils' progress extremely well, quickly identifying any that appear to be underachieving, and ensuring that the right support is given. This contributes significantly to the good progress that pupils make throughout the school. There is a comprehensive school development plan which provides a sound structure for enabling the school to improve further. However, there is scope for all leaders to make better use of their good analysis of assessment information to focus the priorities even more sharply on pupils' achievement. The headteacher is supported well in leading the school by a good structure for subject leadership which is based on the six areas of learning of the early years curriculum. This innovative approach is proving highly successful in enabling competent subject leaders to have a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning across the school. The very committed governing body provides good support for the school, but recognises that it could be more involved in the school's self-evaluation. This has already begun, under the leadership of the new chair of governors, with the development of a governors' plan which will help governors to have a better understanding of the school's performance.

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?	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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
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	2

The quality of provision

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

We are grateful to you for answering all of our questions when we visited your school recently. You helped us to find out a lot. All the pupils that we spoke to said how much they enjoyed going to your school, and we certainly enjoyed our visit. You go to a good school where the adults look after you extremely well. We could see from your smiles in the playground how happy and safe you feel. This helps your personal development to be outstanding. Your behaviour at all times is excellent, you show a great deal of respect for adults and each other and you willingly take on responsibility. You also have a very good understanding of how to lead a healthy life. When you are in your lessons, you show outstanding attitudes to your work, you try hard and are keen to learn. The teaching and curriculum are good, with the result that you make good progress and find most of your tasks interesting. For example, finding out why the puddles on the playground had got smaller during the day really made some of you think. The standards in your writing have improved since your school was last inspected, so we agree with the leaders of your school that raising standards even further in science should now be the priority. We also want you to have a greater understanding of how you can improve your work in all subjects, but particularly in English and mathematics. We have asked your teachers to make sure that when they talk to you about your work, or when they mark it, that you are clear about how you can make it even better. We want them to do the same when they set your targets and you can help by making sure that you really know what those are. Your headteacher leads your school extremely well, with the help of other teachers, support staff and governors. She is very clear about what makes your school a good school and what needs to be improved. We think that because of this and because of your enthusiasm for learning, your good school could become even better in the future.