

# Sketchley Hill Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119986
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	291595
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 July 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike Capper

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	421
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Daniel Banks
<b>Headteacher</b>	Susan Lees
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 July 2002
<b>School address</b>	Sketchley Road Burbage Hinckley LE10 2DY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01455 238640
<b>Fax number</b>	01455 614201

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Sketchley Hill Primary School, is larger than average and takes most of its pupils from the local area. There are slightly more girls than boys and the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average. The proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language is low. The number identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities is broadly average. Pupils' attainment on entry to the Reception Year is similar to that found nationally.

## 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, with some outstanding features. Good teaching helps pupils to achieve well. Children get a good start in the Reception Year. By the start of Year 1, most are comfortably meeting or exceeding the expected levels for their age. Standards continue to improve in the rest of the school and are well above average overall by the end of Year 6. In Years 3 to 6, progress is not quite as fast in writing as it is in reading. This is because the teaching of spelling is insufficiently structured in these year groups and pupils sometimes make careless mistakes in their everyday writing.

Pupils' personal development and well-being is good. Pupils behave well most of the time and have very good attitudes towards learning. They thoroughly enjoy school because there is an excellent curriculum which helps to make learning fun. Especially noteworthy is the school's outstanding work in the creative arts. This is reflected in the high quality of art displays and in the school's outstanding musical performances. In 2006, the choir became the first from a state primary school to win the 'Songs of Praise' Choir of the Year award.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher carefully plans for school developments based on a good understanding of what needs improving. She is ably supported by enthusiastic senior managers and subject leaders, who take a good part in checking that all pupils are doing well. Care, support and guidance are satisfactory, with a strength in academic support. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and the school responds positively to any who are falling behind in their learning. Teachers get on well with the pupils. They are kind and support pupils sensitively in lessons. However, the school's systems for checking that all pupils are being cared for lacks rigour. Record keeping is lax and provides insufficient detail of how the school has responded to issues such as accidents, poor behaviour or complaints. There are good arrangements for helping pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, but the school does not do enough to help the small number of pupils with poor behaviour to improve by, for example, seeking the support of outside agencies.

Most parents are pleased with the school and they make a good contribution to their children's learning. They especially like the way that children are supported in the Reception Year. As one typically commented, 'The change in my child since she started school in January is remarkable and she has come on in leaps and bounds.' Another parent wrote that 'The school promotes positive attitudes and is constantly trying to improve.' This comment accurately captures the essence of this successful school that has a good capacity to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils always produce their best work when writing and improve the way that spelling is taught in Years 3 to 6.
- Improve record keeping so that systems for checking that all pupils are being cared for well enough are more rigorous.
- Ensure that the few pupils with behavioural problems are given more support to help them improve.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. Children make good progress in the Reception Year. By the end of the year, most have reached or exceeded the expected levels for their age. They achieve especially well in physical and creative development, benefiting from a rich curriculum and good opportunities to work outside.

All pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities, continue to make good progress in Years 1 to 6. Standards are securely above average by the end of Year 2 and rise to well above average by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. In English, pupils do slightly better in reading than in writing. Pupils read frequently at school and at home but pupils in Years 3 to 6 sometimes make careless errors with punctuation and do not always spell accurately.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children in the Reception Year gain confidence quickly. Throughout the school, pupils happily celebrate the successes of their classmates and they contribute very well to the community. They enjoy taking responsibility by acting as 'book buddies' or helping children in the adjoining nursery. The school council makes an effective contribution to life and ensures that pupils' views are very well represented. Links with a school in Africa and fundraising for charities help pupils to consider the needs of others. As one pupil said, 'It's important to help others who have less than us.'

Pupils' outstanding enjoyment of school is reflected in their good attendance. Very good attitudes are underpinned by strong relationships between children and teachers. Behaviour is generally good, although this is not always the case with a few older pupils. Pupils work hard in lessons, but sometimes they make avoidable errors in their written work.

The effective focus on developing basic skills lays a firm foundation for pupils' future working lives. Work related to gaining healthy school status has given pupils an excellent understanding of the need to take exercise and eat healthily. Pupils show a good knowledge of how to stay safe when moving around school.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers are well organised and ensure that the open plan nature of the classrooms does not detract from learning. They plan interesting work and make good use of resources to engage and motivate pupils. Clear instructions enable pupils to focus on their targets in most lessons and questioning is used successfully to encourage them to think for themselves. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils should learn. Pupils are grouped by ability for many literacy and numeracy lessons. This is generally effective in ensuring that work is matched closely to differing needs, although there are occasions when all pupils in a group do the same piece of work whatever their ability. On these occasions, learning slows. In the Reception Year, adults provide sensitive support for individuals, enabling them to make good progress.

Teaching assistants provide valuable support by working with groups of pupils, especially those with learning difficulties or disabilities, helping them to make good progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

An exciting curriculum provides very well for all pupils and is a major reason why they enjoy school so much. It is enriched by a very wide range of visits, visitors and out-of-class activities. In addition to the sharp focus given to teaching basic skills, teachers successfully make purposeful links between subjects to bring greater interest to learning. They are rightly now working to ensure that there is a better structure to the teaching of spelling for older pupils. In the Reception Year, children benefit from a very good range of interesting and purposeful activities in all areas of learning.

The enthusiasm with which pupils speak about their work in art, music and sport reflects the school's outstanding provision in these areas. A comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education is supported very well by pupils' residential visits. The school is working very successfully to heighten pupils' awareness of environmental issues through activities leading to the award of an 'Eco Green Flag'.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Pastoral support is satisfactory. In their day to day involvement with pupils, teachers and teaching assistants are kind and caring and they generally look after them well. Strong relationships in lessons contribute well to pupils' personal development and mean that they usually have someone they can turn to if they have a worry. However, the school's systems for checking that all pupils are being cared for well enough are lax. Although statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding pupils are met, senior managers do not ensure that clear records are kept of all accidents, of poor behaviour or of the very occasional incidents of racial abuse. It is not always clear from the school's records how incidents have been followed through. This makes it difficult for senior managers to check that the right things have been done or to respond to any concerns that parents or pupils may have.

Academic guidance is good. Detailed systems for tracking pupils' progress help teachers to plan for the next stage of learning. Clear targets and good quality marking give pupils a good understanding of how to improve their work. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are set clear targets for improvement. However, the school does not do enough to help the small number of pupils with behavioural problems. They are not always identified as needing additional support through the school's special educational needs procedures and therefore do not receive the structured guidance that they need to help them improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides a clear direction to school improvement and she is ably supported by hard working and enthusiastic senior managers and subject leaders. Together, they have established good systems for checking school effectiveness, although record-keeping with regard to the care given to pupils is not sufficiently thorough. Good use is made of test data to show what is going well and to identify what needs improving. Consequently, senior managers

are accurately identifying priorities for development and are taking the right steps to improve things further. They have shown in the effective way that they deal with minor weaknesses that there is a good capacity for further improvement.

Governance is good. Governors provide a good level of challenge to senior managers. They manage finances carefully so that resources are deployed effectively, with the high number of teaching assistants having a particularly good effect on learning. However, the school does not make enough use of outside agencies to support pupils who display challenging behaviour.

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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>	<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?	3
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	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

<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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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

<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>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<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.

## Annex A

**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

3 July 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Sketchley Hill Primary School, Hinckley, LE10 2DY

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for showing us your work. You were polite and friendly. We are very pleased that you attend a good school.

Some of the things we found out about your school.

- Good teaching helps you to learn new things quickly. You generally make good progress, although you do slightly less well in writing in Years 3 to 6 than in reading, mathematics and science.
- Most of you behave well in lessons and are keen to take responsibility. We are pleased that you enjoy school so much and can see that you have lots of really interesting things to do both in and out of lessons. Your work in music and art is super. We enjoyed listening to the musical performance on Tuesday morning.
- You have a very clear understanding of how to stay healthy and make an excellent contribution to the community.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are kind and caring and they help you understand how to improve your work.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors lead the school well and are working hard to make it even better.

What we have asked your school to do now.

- Improve the way that spelling is taught in Years 3 to 6 and ensure that you always check your written work for careless errors.
- Be more careful about keeping accurate records of when you have accidents, behave badly or when parents have concern. This will help the headteacher and others to be sure that you are all being cared for well enough.
- Make sure that the small number of you who find it hard to behave well are given more help to improve.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn, and we wish you all well for the future. We hope you continue to help your teachers by working hard and trying to make sure that you always produce your best written work.

Best wishes

Mr M Capper Lead Inspector