



# Sparkenhoe Community Primary School

Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 120094  
**Local Authority** Leicester City  
**Inspection number** 291627  
**Inspection dates** 23–24 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Paul Edwards

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>	Saxby Street
<b>School category</b>	Community		Leicester
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		LE2 0NE
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 2512686
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	468	<b>Fax number</b>	0116 2621816
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Geoff Saul
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Kathryn Falconer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 November 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Sparkenhoe Community is a large primary school serving an area of significant deprivation. Over 40% of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and just over a quarter are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is well above the national average. A higher than average proportion of pupils enter or leave the school part-way through the year.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Sparkenhoe is providing a satisfactory education for its pupils and has made satisfactory progress since the previous inspection. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and parents are rightly very happy with the way in which their children are cared for and supported. The comment of one parent reflects the views of many others when she said, 'Teaching staff and support staff are very supportive when it comes to my child's education.'

When the children enter the Nursery their skills are less well developed than is usual for their age. Good teaching and a lively and interesting curriculum ensure the children get a good start. Early literacy and numeracy skills are promoted with effective emphasis to ensure that those at an early stage of learning English make good progress in their acquisition of the language. This good start is built on satisfactorily in the Reception classes, although standards are still below average when the children start Year 1. In Years 1 and 2 teaching is too variable to ensure that pupils make better than satisfactory progress. The pupils' progress is better in Key Stage 2, especially in Year 6 where consistently good teaching helps pupils to do as well as they can. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory but by the end of Year 6 standards remain below average.

The personal and social development of the pupils is good throughout the school. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and, as a result, pupils behave well, enjoy school and have good attitudes towards their work. This is demonstrated in the improved level of attendance which is now satisfactory. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy eating and many try to follow the guidance that is provided. A significant majority thoroughly enjoy taking part in the good range of physical activities on offer, during and after school. The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are good. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are given good support and this enables them to make progress in line with their peers. Those pupils entering the school later in the year and those at an early stage of learning English as an additional language are provided with good, well focused support and guidance so that they can participate fully in lessons. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. It is enriched by a good range of clubs, visits and visitors, but there are too few opportunities for pupils to improve literacy and numeracy skills through other subjects.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. New roles and responsibilities have been taken on by the recently formed senior management team. Whilst the good impact of initiatives can be seen in the steady improvement in standards at Key Stage 2, they have not had sufficient impact on raising standards at Key Stage 1. The leadership has developed very detailed tracking and monitoring procedures but has not ensured they have been used sufficiently well by all staff. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve pupils' achievement in Key Stage 1 by improving the consistency of the quality of teaching and ensuring teachers make more effective use of assessment information when planning lessons.

- Improve the planning of the curriculum by identifying opportunities to use literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Children's levels of skills and understanding when they start school are low. They make good progress in the Nursery class and satisfactory progress in the Reception classes but, on entry to Year 1, standards are still well below those expected for their age. Pupils' progress throughout the rest of the school is satisfactory, but it is not consistent across the year groups. In Key Stage 1 the teachers do not always challenge the pupils sufficiently so their progress and achievement are not as good as they could be. This is reflected in the Key Stage 1 test results, which fell in 2006. In contrast, there has been a steady improvement in test results in Key Stage 2, although standards are still below average at the end of Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress when they are given additional support, both in lessons and during withdrawal sessions. This also applies to those pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language, enabling them to make rapid progress in their acquisition of English.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well-being are good because the school's approach to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Pupils respond very well to encouragement to celebrate the diversity amongst the school community. They proudly show their knowledge of other languages and religions. There are good opportunities for reflection, as in the encouragement to write Ramadan diaries. There is a good emphasis on encouraging suitable moral and social development from entry to the school. For example, children are encouraged to share toys and play together. This means that pupils' behaviour is good and they develop positive attitudes to their learning and to each other. Pupils value 'Golden Time' as a way of encouraging them to behave well. Pupils enjoy school because, 'There are lots of activities,' and 'Teachers are kind and fun.' Attendance is improving and is satisfactory, but the progress of a small number of pupils is affected by extended holidays. Pupils show a good understanding of how to lead a healthy life. They take part in physical exercise with enthusiasm and voluntarily attend additional opportunities after school. Pupils have welcomed new rules about what they can eat and drink at school. Pupils have a satisfactory awareness of how to stay safe. They participate with enthusiasm in activities which enable them to contribute to their own school community and that of the local area. School council members are consulting younger children on ideas for spending their budget on playground equipment. While pupils have good personal and social skills they are only satisfactorily prepared for the future because their basic literacy and numeracy skills are below average.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory but not consistent across the year groups. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. In the Nursery it is particularly effective in developing the children's early language and number skills. Teaching is better in Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1 and as a result pupils make better progress there. The key difference is that teachers in Years 1 and 2 do not always make the best use of information provided for them about pupils' prior attainment when planning their work. In some lessons pupils lose interest because the teacher spends too long talking and questions are pitched at the middle ability pupils, meaning that some pupils are not sufficiently challenged and others lack the knowledge to participate fully. Teachers and pupils develop good relationships and this contributes to a calm working atmosphere in most classes. Classrooms are well organised, attractive and stimulating with helpful displays which support pupils' work. Support staff work well with teachers to plan additional help, particularly for those pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities or those who are at an early stage of learning English. Individual and group work is largely well matched to individual pupils' starting points. Most marking in pupils' work gives clear guidance on what pupils need to do to improve. An example of good practice is the use of colour coding to link targets to pupils' work and evidence of checking by the teacher that the advice has been followed.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

In the Foundation Stage good attention is given to improving children's personal, social and emotional development, in order to build their self-confidence on starting school. Throughout the school there is, rightly, a strong and effective focus on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. Consequently, by the time they reach Year 6 most pupils are confident and articulate communicators, standing them in good stead for the future. Appropriate emphasis is given to the development of literacy and numeracy, but too little attention is given to developing pupils' skills in writing and mathematics in other subjects. The school's involvement in the 'Creative Partnerships' project is having a positive impact on developing pupils' performance skills and enjoyment in learning. They feel that through this project they are doing 'more collaboration.' Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about their recent participation in arts based activities of the Winter Festival. The school does not have a planned programme for delivering personal and social education, and so pupils' knowledge and awareness of how to keep themselves safe, although satisfactory, is not really secure. The good range of activities outside lessons, including extra-curricular clubs and visits to places of interest, are popular and broaden pupils' cultural experiences, and develop enthusiasm for learning.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school takes good care of its pupils. Parents feel their children are looked after well, and are rightly confident that any concerns they have will be taken seriously. Pupils are happy, feel safe and are comfortable about approaching staff if they have any problems. An annual trip to the seaside for families provides a shared experience which develops parents' interest in their children's education. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' needs early, and providing appropriate support, with help from outside agencies. Those pupils who join the school during the year are well supported, enabling them to settle quickly. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning English are given good support, enabling them to make rapid progress in learning English. The support given to pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities enables them to progress at the same rate as others. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils are learning how to evaluate their own work and, through the use of targets, are beginning to know what they need to do to improve. However, these targets are not used consistently throughout the school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The leadership team has undertaken a thorough process of self-evaluation. Thorough monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning has correctly identified where weaknesses lie and strategies have been put in place to raise standards and improve achievement at Key Stage 1. These have not yet had the desired impact because the leadership has not been sufficiently rigorous in ensuring all teachers make the best use of the improved assessment information when planning lessons. The school has developed good links with parents, who are actively encouraged to learn alongside their children. Good links with local secondary schools and other primary schools are helping to provide a wider range of learning opportunities for the children. Governors are kept well informed and they have a satisfactory awareness of where the school's strengths and weaknesses lie.

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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>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<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	3
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<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>	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**

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. Sparkenhoe is providing you with a satisfactory education.

These are some of the highlights of your school:

- Those of you who need extra help and guidance are provided with good support.
- You behave well and try to do your best in your work.
- You get on well with your teachers and other children.
- You are developing a good understanding of how to keep healthy.
- The way in which adults look after you and keep you safe.
- Your attendance is getting better and we hope it continues to improve.

These are the things we have asked the school to do now:

- Encourage teachers in Years 1 and 2 to make better use of information about how well you are doing to plan work so that you do better in English and mathematics.
- Help to improve your English and mathematical skills by giving you more opportunities to practise them in other subjects.

I hope you continue to work hard and enjoy your time at school.