

Sutton-on-Sea Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120479
Local Authority	LINCOLNSHIRE
Inspection number	291751
Inspection dates	15–16 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Martin Newell

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	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Monk MBE
Headteacher	Mr David Pearson
Date of previous school inspection	24 June 2002
School address	Station Road Sutton-on-sea Mablethorpe LN12 2HU
Telephone number	01507441319
Fax number	01507443578

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average size primary school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than that found in schools nationally, while that of pupils with a statement of special educational need is similar to the national average. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and of the small number of pupils from different ethnic minority backgrounds, none is at an early stage of acquiring English. A substantive headteacher was appointed in September 2006 after a period where the school had no permanent headteacher. The school has gained the Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory and it provides satisfactory value for money. The headteacher has established a clear agenda of what is needed to move the school forward. Inspection findings endorse the accuracy of this agenda and there is a sound capacity for continued improvement. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are currently average and this represents satisfactory progress given pupils' starting points. However, over time standards at Year 6 have been below average and some pupils in Years 3 to 6 have underachieved, mainly because of weaknesses in teaching and a lack of a cohesive approach to assessment. Indications are that initiatives brought in by the headteacher are bringing about improvements. However, work still needs to be done to increase the proportion of good and better teaching, to use assessment information better as a tool for tackling underachievement and to ensure standards continue to rise. Good teaching and provision in the Foundation Stage ensure children make good progress. There are examples of good progress in Years 1 to 6 where teaching is punchy and pacy and activities are tailored well to meet the needs and interest of all pupils. However, these strong features are not yet present in enough lessons.

Pupils' personal development, the curriculum, and care, support and guidance are all satisfactory with some good features. Pupils behave well and attendance is close to the national average. Pupils are well versed in how to keep safe. They have a satisfactory awareness of what is needed to follow a healthy lifestyle. However, there is scope to give pupils a more significant role in contributing to the school community. Key basic skills and qualities to equip pupils for their future lives are developed satisfactorily. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and the provision made for the development of pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) and artistic skills is strong. Less well developed is the provision on offer for gifted and talented pupils. The school provides good pastoral support but academic guidance is not yet strong enough to help ensure all pupils make good progress. Parents are very supportive and speak well of the school.

Leadership and management, including governance, are satisfactory. The headteacher leads the school well and is building a stronger team spirit which is firmly focused on making the school a better place. Key to this is the part to be played by the school's leadership team, subject leaders and governors. In the recent past their role in monitoring the work and performance of the school and in tackling underachievement has not been rigorous enough.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the incidence of good and better teaching so that pupils are challenged, learning is brought to life and pupils across the school make good progress.
- Make sure pupils' performance is rigorously assessed and outcomes are used effectively to raise standards.
- Ensure that the leadership team, subject leaders and governors play a full role in monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school and the progress of pupils.

A small proportion of the 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

When pupils start school, their knowledge and skills are a little below national expectations. Good teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures good progress and by the end of the Reception year standards are securely at the nationally expected level. The picture from Years 1 to 6 is more complex. National test data shows that attainment by the end of Year 2 has been consistently at an average level but below average by the end of Year 6. This indicates that there has been some underachievement in Years 3 to 6 in the past. The current situation is more positive because the use of assessment is becoming more robust and teaching is improving. Attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is currently at an average level and progress and achievement overall are satisfactory. Year 1 pupils and some pupils in Years 3 to 6 are making good progress where teaching is good. However, there remain weaknesses in some teaching in Years 3 to 6 that sometimes result in inadequate progress. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory and sometimes good progress because of the quality of provision and support they receive. The school is setting more challenging targets but the benefits are yet to impact on standards because this work is still in progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Personal development, including pupils' overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils are friendly, welcoming, socially aware, and show good levels of interest when involved in conversations. Pupils are reflective but their knowledge of other cultures is patchy. They behave well in lessons but become passive when the pace of lessons flags with weaker teaching. Pupils' attitudes to learning are sound and the majority concentrate effectively on the tasks set for them. They work and play well together in groups, and show a good appreciation of how to stay safe and manage risks in their lives. Pupils understand the importance of exercise and adopting healthy lifestyles. However, healthy eating practices are not always reflected in their lunchboxes or the variety of meals on offer at lunchtime. Pupils play a satisfactory part in school and community life. However, the role of the school council, as an active voice for pupils, is still developing. Overall, pupils are prepared adequately for the next stage of education. Pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills in particular make a good contribution to their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory although there is evidence of some good and outstanding practice. Pupils are managed well and relationships are good. Teaching assistants make an important contribution to the quality of learning. Teaching for pupils in the Foundation Stage, Year 1 and for some pupils in Years 3 to 6 is lively, animated, packed with pace and good humour and pupils readily respond to the high expectations set. The regular checking of lessons by the headteacher is leading to some improvements in teaching but there is still some way to go in ensuring that good teaching is the norm because some lessons lack urgency, challenge or vibrancy with which to readily capture the interest of pupils. The headteacher has recently introduced some well constructed systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress. However,

they are not yet embedded or used consistently or regularly enough by all teachers, to have the best possible impact on pupil achievement. Whilst there are some good examples of the marking of pupils' work, other examples are inadequate because they do not give pupils guidance on what is needed to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. An appropriate emphasis is given to the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills but opportunities to develop these across other subjects are not planned systematically. Provision in the Foundation Stage strikes a good balance between teacher and child led activities. Art and design, and ICT are provided for well and the work that pupils produce is often of a good standard. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a strength because the curriculum is adjusted well to meet their needs. Pupils who may be gifted or talented are not specifically identified across subjects or the school as a whole. Pupils receive satisfactory personal, social and health education. The school offers a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, school trips and visitors to the school which make a sound contribution to pupils' learning. The school is rightly looking to extend the range of enrichment opportunities in response to requests from pupils and parents alike for a wider and more varied array of activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. As a result, pupils feel safe, secure and valued. There is good support for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and their progress is monitored well. The secure links with external support agencies mean that additional help is on hand when needed. Pupils feel confident that all adults in school show considerable concern for their physical and emotional needs. Arrangements for safeguarding children are satisfactory, with appropriate checks made by the school. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic development are improving but they are not yet rigorous, regular or robust enough to ensure pupils make consistently good progress or for the information to be used as a tool for tackling underachievement. In addition, not all pupils are aware of the levels they are working at and what precisely is needed to work at a higher level. However, the monitoring of pupil progress being piloted for some Year 5 and 6 pupils provides a model of good practice.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher leads and manages the school well and has accurately identified in the school's self-evaluation aspects that need to be quickly and rigorously tackled. He is increasingly creating a strong sense of cohesion where many staff share his fervent desire to improve the school. Initiatives introduced have seen improvements in assessment, teaching and in planning but the headteacher fully recognises there is still much to do if good standards and achievement are to be the norm. The headteacher has restructured the senior management team and although signs of improvement are visible, the role played by the leadership team and subject leaders in monitoring teaching, learning and achievement is not yet fully effective. Governors are supportive of the school and some, particularly the chair, visit the school regularly. However, not all governors have a strong enough understanding

and awareness of the school's work and performance. Improvement since the last inspection has been inadequate because standards, teaching and provision have declined. Under the current leadership team, guided by the headteacher, this decline has been halted and standards are rising.

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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?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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	No

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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	3

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	4
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

17 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Sutton-on-Sea Primary School, Station Road, Sutton-on-Sea, Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire, LN12 2HU

You may remember that we visited your school not too long ago and this letter is to let you know what we found out. Before I do, I would just like to take the opportunity to thank you for making us feel so welcome and for helping us to have an enjoyable couple of days. We had the chance to talk to many of you and it was good to hear about the things you enjoy about school and that there is always someone to talk to or sort things out if you have any worries or concerns. We know that some of you are really enjoying taking part in the School Council. We agree with you that more opportunities should be provided for you to make suggestions as to how to make the school a better place and I know that Mr Pearson is going to try to make this happen.

During our visit we saw that many staff are working hard to make learning fun and enjoyable and to try and help you all achieve as well as you can. Staff help you learn to know what is needed to keep fit, safe and healthy but this is not always matched in eating choices at lunchtime! There are a number of opportunities for you to take part in visits and clubs and to learn from different visitors to the school and we know that you would like more of these opportunities where possible. We were impressed by your good behaviour and how polite you are to adults and to one another.

Mr Pearson, the staff and governors want to make your school even better, so we have suggested a few improvements. We think that teaching could be more challenging, lively and fun. We have asked teachers to make more regular assessments of how you are doing and then use the information to help you make even better progress. Finally, we have asked teachers and governors to check more closely on how well you and the school are doing. Having met you all we are sure you will want to play your part in the success of the school by continuing to behave well, working hard and contributing to lessons and your own learning.

It was a pleasure to meet you and we wish you every success for the future.

Martin Newell

Michael Miller

Additional Inspectors