



Seething and Mundham Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120849
Local Authority NORFOLK
Inspection number 291880
Inspection dates 9–10 January 2007
Reporting inspector Declan McCarthy

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	School Road
School category	Community		Seething, Seething
Age range of pupils	4–11		Norwich, Norfolk NR15 1DL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01508 550256
Number on roll (school)	75	Fax number	01508 550256
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Louise Spall
		Headteacher	Mrs Susan Foster
Date of previous school inspection	8 July 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4–11	9–10 January 2007	291880

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This popular small primary school serves a scattered rural community including Seething and surrounding villages. The roll includes 12 children in Reception. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage and come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. Most children have had pre-school experience and school data shows that most children, but not all, enter Reception with skills that are broadly typical for their age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, is below average. An above average number of pupils leave and enter the school in Years 4 to 6. The school is working towards Healthy Schools status and there are plans to build a new school in the near future.

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 and few areas for improvement, and this is an accurate reflection of how the school views itself. The headteacher's exceptional leadership has led to highly effective teamwork among the staff, excellent partnerships with the local community and local businesses, good teaching and learning, a good curriculum and high quality care. As a result, pupils' achievements are good and their personal development is outstanding. This demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve and good value for money. All parents express consistently positive views of the school. One parent wrote, 'We are very lucky to have such a forward thinking school with excellent staff and super attitudes.' Pupils are equally proud of their school and above average attendance figures are a reflection of how thoroughly they enjoy learning.

By the time pupils leave, attainment is above the national average with standards set to rise further. Standards in Year 6 fluctuate from year to year but all pupils' achievement is good. Standards in Year 2 have been consistently above average for the past three years and pupils' achievement is exceptional. Children in Reception also achieve exceptionally well and all are expected to meet or exceed their early learning goals. This paints a picture of good progress for all pupils across the school, regardless of gender or ability. Much of this is due to stimulating teaching with high expectations for learning and good subject knowledge. Teachers nearly always match work closely to pupils' abilities, although occasionally a few of the brighter pupils are not sufficiently challenged in their learning. Children in Reception receive an excellent start with exceptional teaching and stimulating learning opportunities. The curriculum is greatly enhanced by high quality after-school clubs and strong partnerships with local schools, the local community and businesses.

Pupils are extremely well behaved, courteous and polite to visitors and have excellent relationships with others. They make an outstanding contribution to the local and wider community through active involvement in fund-raising and show eagerness to take on responsibility. Pupils stay safe and feel secure because the school works hard to ensure that their interests are safeguarded and protected. Pupils stay fit and healthy through regular exercise and eating healthy foods. They have a genuine voice in the life of the school and staff really listen to their views. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities receive excellent support and as a result they achieve exceptionally well. Systems for tracking pupil progress are not yet fully implemented, as pupils' involvement in assessing their own learning is not yet fully developed and there are some inconsistencies in the quality of teachers' marking.

Strong teamwork and a shared drive for improvement are key features of the good leadership and management in the school. Governance is good with strong partnership between staff, governors, parents and pupils. However subject managers have not fully developed their monitoring roles.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils are more involved in assessing their own learning and are fully aware of what they are expected to achieve.
- Ensure greater consistency in marking pupils' work so they always know how to improve their learning.
- Further develop the monitoring role of subject managers.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards have risen significantly since the time of the last inspection and are now above average because teachers have high expectations for pupils' learning. Standards reached by Year 6 pupils dipped in 2005 because the more capable pupils did not reach the higher levels in English and mathematics in the national tests. However, the headteacher ensured that the weaknesses identified in teaching were effectively addressed and curricular planning was improved. As a result, school data shows that pupils in 2006 did much better, with nearly all reaching their expected levels. Year 6 pupils are currently on course to achieve their challenging targets in 2007. The achievement of children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1 and 2 is exceptional because they consistently reach standards which are well above those expected for their ages year on year. This is because planning is extremely thorough and teaching is exceptional. From broadly average attainment on entry, all children reach, and many exceed, the goals expected of them by the end of Reception. By the end of Year 2 all pupils gain at least the expected Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics, with most reaching the higher levels. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make exceptional progress because of the excellent highly individualised support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is exceptional. The main reasons for this are the strong community ethos of mutual respect between all adults and pupils and the way each pupil is helped to play a full part within the school community. Strong links with local parishes, assemblies, daily prayer reflection at meal times and opportunities for pupils to experience wonder in the world around them promote spiritual development extremely well. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to participate in the arts, and to learn about other cultures, for example through music and links with a school in Nepal. Pupils develop a very strong sense of social responsibility through a very active school council. They are polite and courteous to visitors, their behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary and they show a genuine concern for others. Staff provide many opportunities for pupils to work together and to take on responsibility for others. Pupils eat healthily, for example in choosing fruit or raw carrot at break times. They actively engage in exercise at their after-school sports clubs, in the playground activity

area and in physical education lessons. Good attendance facilitates their good progress. Together with the lack of exclusions, it also reflects pupils' enjoyment of school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have high expectations and encourage pupils to discuss and explain their ideas. All teachers have excellent relationship with pupils and manage behaviour effectively. As a result, pupils remain focused on their activities and try their hardest. Lessons are well planned, with exceptional planning for Reception children and pupils in Years 1 and 2. Teachers inform pupils what they are expected to achieve in a lesson, although they do not always review the progress pupils have made at the end. Marking of pupils' work is also inconsistent because it does not always inform pupils on what they need to do to improve their learning. Teachers make good use of resources, particularly the new interactive whiteboards, to stimulate learning. Teaching assistants are well deployed to ensure all groups of pupils learn effectively. Teachers nearly always use their good knowledge of pupils and outcomes from previous lessons effectively to ensure tasks are matched to particular abilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum's emphasis on developing the basic skills of literacy and numeracy effectively promotes pupils' economic well-being, preparing them well for the next stage of their education. Curricular planning is good and has improved considerably since the last inspection. Individual planning and support for pupils with learning difficulties is exceptional. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from extremely well planned learning opportunities. There is a strong emphasis on the arts and music is a strength of the school. Pupils sing and perform to very high standards for the community and in local church festivals. There is an effective sports partnership with a local secondary school and a wide range of after-school clubs, such as the Kids Club, which are well attended. Pupils have good opportunities for a residential visit, further promoting their enjoyment and achievement. Provision for personal social and health education is good and permeates the work of the school. An outward bound outdoor activity, 'Team Challenge', develops pupils' teamwork, organisational skills and adaptability. Excellent links with the local community and local businesses have considerably enriched learning through, for example, involving pupils in building their organic garden. Information and communication technology (ICT) is beginning to be used effectively to support teaching and learning across subjects. A well resourced playground, funded through the Parent Council, is actively used and thoroughly enjoyed by pupils. However the school site does not allow the full curriculum to be developed as there is no hall and no indoor physical education facility. While plans for a new building are underway, the school has compensated for this by using the village hall for indoor physical education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This aspect of the school is good with some excellent features. The outstanding ethos for pastoral care is shown through the strong partnerships between home and school, which contribute to the outstanding personal development of pupils. An extremely effective individual mentoring system for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, together with high quality individual education planning also ensures these pupils make outstanding progress. The school's procedures for safeguarding the interest and welfare of pupils are thorough, so that pupils always feel safe and secure in school. Staff are vigilant in the supervision of pupils and all risks are carefully assessed before visits or activities are planned. Although new systems for tracking pupils' progress have been introduced, these are not yet fully developed because not all pupils know the targets set for them as a result of the tracking.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management are underpinned by the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, who provides clear direction and has developed strong teamwork throughout the school. She regularly monitors teaching and learning, through lesson observation and team teaching to share good practice. This has led to improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum and has ensured that pupils of all abilities have full access to learning. However subject managers, have yet to fully develop their monitoring roles to ensure they have a clear view of standards and provision in their subjects. The headteacher has also established exceptional communication within the whole school community and enabled the formation of an active Parent Council to support the work of the school. The headteacher and senior management team have a good knowledge of its strengths and have effectively identified priorities for improvement. Governors actively support the school, and have a good strategic view of the school's work. They make well-informed decisions based on their visits to school. The school uses its resources well and provides good value for money.

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?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
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	1

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	1
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	1

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	1
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

15 January 2006

Dear Pupils

Seething and Mundham Primary School, School Road, Seething, Norwich, Norfolk NR15 2DL

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. You told me many good things about the school and so did your parents and the staff. I now know why your school is so good

You are extremely well behaved and you are very polite and friendly. You always try to help others and listen to other people. I was very pleased to meet the members of your school council who shared their ideas with me. All adults in your school take great care of you.

You told me that you enjoy learning new things and that staff always help you when you find the work hard. You are all making good progress, especially in your reading, writing, and mathematics. I also really enjoyed listening to your marvellous singing.

Your teachers expect you to work hard and you do. I think there are a few things to make your school even better. I think your teachers could give you a clearer idea of how well you are doing and how you could do even better. I think they could visit different lessons to check how well you are learning in different subjects.

I know how much you enjoy your after-school clubs and visits to interesting places. Mrs Foster runs your school extremely well and she has made many improvements since she came. All the adults in school are trying to make things even better for you.

I think you will go on doing your best and you are so lucky to go to such a good school.

Declan McCarthy

Lead Inspector