



# Southbrook Infant and Nursery School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 121905  
**Local Authority** Northamptonshire  
**Inspection number** 292255  
**Inspection dates** 13–14 March 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Paul Weston HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Hawke Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Daventry
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7		NN11 4LJ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01327 703440
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	192	<b>Fax number</b>	01327 703440
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	John Trehern
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Sharon Hillyard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 April 2002		

<b>Age group</b> 3–7	<b>Inspection dates</b> 13–14 March 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 292255
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is an average size school which serves the town of Daventry. Children are drawn from across the town, nearby villages and the Southbrook estate, which is an area of high deprivation. There are 116 girls and boys who attend full time with a further 77 children who attend the Nursery on a part-time basis. Pupils are mostly from White British backgrounds with few in the early stages of learning English. The range of socio-economic circumstances is broad but the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. Attainment on entry is well below the expected levels and, on transfer to Reception, many higher attaining children leave to attend another mainstream school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. The school has fully integrated Designated Special Provision (DSP) for pupils with a wide range of moderate or significant learning difficulties, including autism. The school has the Investor in People Award, the National Healthy Food Award and the NAACE mark for information and communication technology (ICT).

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with a determination to 'get it right' for all pupils. It is a caring school where every child matters. Most children who join the school in the Nursery have starting points that are well below expectations. They get off to a good start but many of the higher attaining children transfer to their local school when they move into the Reception Year. Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics although standards in Year 2 remain significantly below average. This is partly because the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average and a high number of boys do not achieve well. Teachers do not always ensure that activities are carefully matched to pupils' different abilities and some lessons do not offer enough challenge. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They enjoy school and most want to be there. Attendance is satisfactory and the school is working hard to improve it. Behaviour is good and the very few arguments are sorted out quickly. Parents are generally pleased with their pupils' positive attitudes to learning which are brought about by a number of significant factors. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. The school provides a satisfactorily broad curriculum with an interesting array of additional activities. These factors, coupled with the friendly supportive atmosphere, help pupils grow in confidence, enjoy learning and behave well. Pastoral care is good so that pupils feel safe and secure, saying that 'if we have a problem we can tell a teacher and it will get sorted out'. Academic guidance is less effective. This is because marking does not always help children know what they need to do to improve and some are not aware of their targets.

Strong teamwork has preserved the smooth running of the school during a change in leadership. The school is satisfactorily led by an acting headteacher, who is supported by her leadership team, staff and governing body. They are all committed to further improvement. The school has a good understanding of what it needs to do next. However, planning does not focus consistently on how to tackle priorities or how to measure success.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in reading, writing and mathematics to ensure better progress is made by pupils of all abilities.
- Ensure that teachers consistently match activities to the pupils' different abilities and increase the levels of challenge to all pupils.
- Ensure marking and target-setting provide pupils with more individual guidance about their next steps in learning.
- Focus school development planning on the main priorities, identifying how to bring about improvement and how to measure success.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

When they start school, children's skills and abilities are well below average, particularly in communication and calculation. Children grow in confidence during their time in the Nursery. They develop well socially, their spoken English improves and they enjoy school. In the Reception classes, many children begin to read and write but difficulties in expressing ideas clearly in speech and in writing persist through the school. In Year 1, standards are below national expectations, and by the end of Year 2, standards remain significantly below average. However, when their starting points are taken into account, pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory. Standards have not risen enough since the time of the last inspection. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress towards their individual targets because they receive additional support. However there is a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs, many of whom are boys who find learning difficult. The recently introduced tracking system is helping staff to provide support at an earlier stage. This is beginning to increase rates of progress, especially for the more able pupils.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well-being are good. The school puts considerable emphasis upon these areas of development and, as a result, pupils have very positive attitudes toward school. Spiritual, moral and social development is good although there is scope to extend pupils' awareness and understanding of the diversity of cultures in Britain. Pupils generally behave well and they enjoy good relationships with each other and with adults. Pupils have a good understanding of how to be safe and how to remain healthy, for example by eating plenty of fruit. Attendance is satisfactory. The school is not content with this and has introduced a range of appropriate strategies to increase attendance rates. Pupils are happy to take up positions of responsibility around the school, such as answering the telephone at lunchtimes. They contribute well to the community through a good range of activities, such as supporting charities, recycling and looking after the environment. There are good links with industry. For example pupils take part in a young enterprise link with a local car manufacturer. Preparation for economic well-being is satisfactory because of pupils' low standards in literacy and numeracy.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have good relationships with pupils, who try hard to do well as a result. Teaching assistants provide good support to a range of pupils needing extra help, enabling them to participate fully in lessons. As

one child said, 'I like everything at the school, but mostly I like the teachers because they help you!' In some lessons, pupils are well engaged in their learning and their activities are enjoyable and suitably challenging. However, teachers' expectations are not always high enough to ensure that pupils of different abilities make as much progress as they should. The introduction of ability groupings has gone some way towards ensuring work matches pupils' needs but tasks do not always provide real challenge for everyone. Consequently, opportunities to extend learning are missed. In addition, some teachers accept poorly formed handwriting and presentation.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is broad and relevant. Staff work well together to plan interesting lessons that respond to the complex range of pupils' learning needs. However, planning is insufficiently focused on raising standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Some tasks are not challenging enough and there are insufficient opportunities to develop independent writing in some lessons. The curriculum has a number of strengths. The range of visits and visitors, along with extra-curricular activities for Year 2, helps to provide interest and enjoyment. For example, the recent 'World Book Day' helped to improve pupils' use of language and their reading. A stimulating and rich curriculum helps children in the Nursery to get off to a good start. ICT is well integrated into teaching and learning. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good and all members of staff ensure these pupils are very well integrated into the school.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Pastoral care is good and pupils feel safe, supported and valued. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are rigorous. For example, procedures for child protection are secure, as are the arrangements for health and safety checks and risk assessments. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is good. The academic progress of pupils is carefully monitored and has recently improved. Challenging whole-school targets have been set. Individual targets are also set but are not consistently used by teachers or understood by pupils. There is some effective marking which helps pupils to understand how to improve but this too is inconsistent. As a result, pupils are not always clear about what they need to do next to improve further.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The acting headteacher has been in post for almost two terms. She, along with the acting deputy headteacher, has successfully involved staff and increased their participation in the school's development. Improved procedures for self-evaluation mean that they now have a better understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards further. For example, the recent

implementation of a tracking system is helping staff to improve planning and target pupils' needs, leading to increased rates of progress. Staff are enthusiastic, committed and form a cohesive team. Subject leaders and governors undertake a wide range of monitoring activities but do not always measure the results of actions taken to raise achievement. Good liaison and support lead to easy transitions from pre-school groups and to the neighbouring junior school. The increasing effectiveness of actions stemming from self-evaluation, coupled with a strong determination to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching, underpin a sound capacity for further improvement.

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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	4
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	2
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>	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.

## 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**

Dr Jensen and I really enjoyed our visit to your school because everybody was so helpful and friendly. Thank you for welcoming us so well. We were very pleased to be able to work with you in your classrooms, join in with your assemblies and watch you playing outside. We thought you would like to hear what we liked about your school and how it could get even better.

What we liked about your school:

- You are friendly and happy to talk about what you were doing.
- You behave well in lessons and enjoy what you do, especially when you are working together or have practical activities to do.
- Mrs Hillyard and other grown-ups working in the school look after you and make sure that everyone behaves well and is happy. This makes sure that you can get on in lessons.
- Your teachers and teaching assistants work hard and try to get it right for each one of you.
- Your parents really like the school and feel you learn well.

What we have asked your school to do to make it even better:

- Set you work that makes you think hard and stretches you further.
- Tell each of you clearly what you need to do to get better.
- Improve the plans for making the school even better.

You can help by working as hard as you can on your reading, writing and mathematics and always doing your best. We feel certain that everyone at the school will continue to work hard to help you learn. You have some challenging targets for 2007. Continue to work hard and good luck for the future.