

Siddington Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115665
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	295304
Inspection date	22 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Jacqueline Marshall

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	42
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nicholas Lockett
Headteacher	Ann Blakelock
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2005
School address	Coach Road Siddington Cirencester GL7 6HL
Telephone number	01285 652866
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Siddington is a considerably smaller than average primary school serving a rural village community with close ties to the village and local church. Over the last twelve months, the school has worked closely with the local authority since receiving a notice to improve in the last Ofsted inspection.

Attainment on entry to the school is below what is expected nationally, though with often very small numbers in each year group, this varies year on year. The school also has a greater than average number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, currently just under half of all pupils, with a third of these having a statement of special educational need. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage with a very small number of Roma/Gypsy heritage.

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 effectiveness is satisfactory and it provides a sound education for its pupils. The school has been successful in securing significant improvements since the last inspection, demonstrating a satisfactory capacity to improve. Successful steps have been taken to improve the provision for English and mathematics, which was required by the notice to improve, but weaknesses in science identified by the school have yet to be tackled fully. Assessment is not yet used well enough in science to plan lessons that challenge pupils sufficiently or to enable them to systematically develop the necessary investigative skills in order to make satisfactory progress.

The focus on good care results in pupils and parents alike praising the school's friendly atmosphere where everyone 'looks out for each other'. This, alongside positive relationships with staff and the wide range of interesting activities, means pupils enjoy coming to school and their personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Throughout the school, from Reception to Year 6, all pupils achieve satisfactorily from their low starting points, though standards remain below average. This is because teaching overall is satisfactory and the school provides an adequate curriculum that meets pupils' needs. Whilst the school has tackled some previous weaknesses in teaching, inconsistencies remain and pupils' progress is better in some lessons and classes than others. Although all teachers regularly check how well pupils are doing, not all make sufficient use of this information to always plan lessons that challenge pupils enough and make them try hard. This prevents achievement from being better than satisfactory and leads to care, guidance and support being satisfactory overall.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Key leaders make regular checks to understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and what needs to be done to improve. These checks are not yet sufficiently rigorous to ensure consistent practice and ensure pupils achieve well. However, they are used successfully to help leaders know where to focus to bring about improvement. Consequently, they have already begun to take actions to address the weaknesses in science provision. Other leaders are just beginning to become involved in this process.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement in science by making better use of assessment to check how well pupils are doing and to plan lessons that challenge all pupils.
- Raise standards through a more consistent approach to teaching investigative skills in science.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring all leaders are effective in the checks they make to ensure pupils always achieve well.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The overall achievement of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities and those of Roma/Gypsy heritage, is satisfactory. From low starting points, children make satisfactory progress during the Reception Year in all areas of learning. Although progress is satisfactory, few children reach the early learning goals and, as a result, start in Year 1 with skills and knowledge below those expected for their age. In recent years, the standards reached in national tests by pupils in Years 2 and 6 have been exceptionally low, reflecting weaknesses in provision. Due to the school's efforts, all groups of pupils now make satisfactory progress across the school, though standards remain below average. Progress in English and mathematics

is now satisfactory overall but pupils underachieve in science, although the school is taking steps to improve progress in this subject.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are satisfactory. Pupils' cultural awareness has been enhanced because of improvements in the quality of cultural provision, including recent visits to a mosque and synagogue. Because there are still some times in lessons where pupils are less engaged in their learning, their enjoyment and behaviour are only satisfactory overall. However, in lessons and around school, behaviour is often good. Pupils are willing to take on responsibilities and contribute suitably to the school community through the school council. They behave safely and are developing a satisfactory understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. Whilst attendance remains below average, the school is doing all it can to improve the poor attendance of some individual pupils.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Since the last inspection, considerable changes have taken place and these have had a very positive effect on the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. As a result, teaching and learning are now satisfactory overall. Nonetheless, the school is aware that some things need time to settle and become routine. Whilst teachers are increasingly using assessment information to set high expectations and plan challenging work, this is not yet found in all lessons. Consequently, work is not always adapted closely enough to pupils' capabilities, particularly for the more able. In some lessons, pupils could be challenged more and make even greater progress in their learning. Learning is fostered by the good relationships between pupils and adults with behaviour generally managed well. However, where lessons lack pace or pupils could be challenged further, behaviour is less good and progress slows. Teachers' marking, particularly in English and mathematics, is increasingly well linked to pupils' learning targets. As a result, pupils are clear about how they can improve their work. Teaching assistants contribute satisfactorily to learning, particularly when supporting those with learning difficulties and disabilities, ensuring they make the same progress as others.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The satisfactory curriculum is sufficiently adapted to meet the needs of mixed- age classes. It is well enriched by a wide range of well planned activities outside the school day and the use of visitors and visits. These help to ensure pupils' positive attitudes to learning even when weaknesses in provision exist. Due to considerable improvements since the last inspection, pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) capabilities are developed satisfactorily. Consequently, pupils make satisfactory progress in acquiring the skills needed for the world of work. However, pupils' investigative skills in science are not yet developed systematically and not enough opportunities are planned for them to use what they have learnt or to explain their ideas using scientific language.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory, with strengths in the pastoral care provided for pupils. Most pupils and parents recognise this is a caring school where pupils' well-being is important. Health and safety procedures are well understood and any pupils who are at risk are quickly identified and supported well. Pupils say that they feel safe and know who to turn to if necessary. Support for different groups of pupils such as those with learning difficulties and disabilities and those of Roma/Gypsy heritage is satisfactory as a result of sound links with outside agencies and parents. This enables them to achieve as well as other pupils.

The academic guidance and support provided by the school are satisfactory but there are some inconsistencies. Procedures to enable the school to track pupils' progress more carefully have been introduced in English and mathematics. However, assessment information is not used well enough in science to inform teachers' planning, set high expectations or help pupils with the next steps in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leaders, including governors, regularly analyse data and monitor teaching to see where it is best and what needs to be improved. Consequently, they have an accurate understanding of the school's overall effectiveness. It is through these checks that the school has identified the weaknesses in science and has begun to take actions to address them. Since the last inspection, key leaders and governors have developed the skills needed to carry out these checks and driven forward the recent improvements. Other leaders have yet to become as involved and the results of their checks are less effective at present. Consequently, the checks overall have yet to be rigorous enough to ensure teaching is consistently good and address the weaknesses in provision that remain. The school works in close partnership with parents, keeping them well informed of how the school is improving. As a result, a very large majority responded positively when asked about the effectiveness of their school.

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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	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

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	3
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
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	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 for talking to me and showing me your work when I visited your school. I think your school is giving you a satisfactory education because your teachers help you to make satisfactory progress in most of your work. I was pleased to hear that you like school and that the grown-ups are kind and look after you well. I think that they help you to know just what you have to do to get better in English and mathematics. I was happy to hear that there are plenty of things for you to do such as being involved with the school council and your different clubs. I think you get on well with each other, are polite to adults and can behave well when you are challenged in your lessons.
- In order to make your learning even better, I have asked the adults at your school to:
 - make sure you know how well you are doing in science and are given lots of opportunities that stretch you to do your very best
 - help you get better in science by developing your investigative skills further
 - keep checking exactly what the school does best and what could be better so that you all learn as well as you possibly can.

You can help, too, by always using scientific vocabulary when you explain your answers and ideas in science lessons. Thank you again for helping me with my work.