

Sudbury Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112631
Local Authority	DERBYSHIRE LA
Inspection number	310955
Inspection date	30 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Andrew Cook HMI

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	31
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Mr David Brown
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2006
School address	School Lane Sudbury Derbyshire DE6 5HZ
Telephone number	01283 585251
Fax number	01283 585251

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Sudbury is a very small rural school. It has two classes. One class has children in their reception year (known as the Foundation Stage) and those in Years 1 and 2, known as Key Stage 1. The other class has children in Years 3-6, which is also known as Key Stage 2.

The proportion of children who have been identified as learners with difficulties or disabilities is about a third. All of the children are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The headteacher took up his post in January 2007. The school has recently been awarded the Active Mark for promoting physical activities.

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 some good features. It continues to improve and is increasingly becoming more confident in making the curriculum at Sudbury distinctive. Parents and children speak very positively about the impact of the new headteacher who has tirelessly focused on making the school more effective. Along with the good support and challenge from governors, this school has good capacity to build on its success.

The rate of progress children make is satisfactory and improving. By the end of Year 2, children often attain average standards. By the end of Year 6 children attain at least average standards and sometimes above. The very small numbers in each year group make it very difficult to generalise about achievement but overall, it is sound. Teaching is satisfactory overall with good teaching having a positive impact for children in Reception and Key Stage 2. Teachers in this small school, where in each class there is a significant age range, have a huge challenge to give each child work that will challenge them. This is happening more effectively for children in Reception and Key Stage 2. Children in Years 1 and 2, especially the more able, are not always given work that will ensure they make good progress.

Children's personal development including their moral, social and spiritual development is good. At the time of the last inspection, it was satisfactory so this is clear evidence that the school continues to improve. Children's behaviour is good. They enjoy school and there are increasing opportunities for them to contribute to the school community and to the local community. The school recognises that more could be done to help children experience and learn about our multicultural society.

The curriculum is also an area where the school has improved since the last inspection. It is well managed and some subjects are now taught through a common topic. A new computer suite has transformed the provision for children to learn through working with computers. Links with Sudbury Hall and a local engineering firm all add to the interest being generated by a fresh look at the curriculum, which has gained the approval of the children.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The teaching for children in reception is skilfully adapted to meet their needs by a teaching assistant. Activities provided ensure that children often make good progress because they enjoy learning and the teaching assistant is able to give one to one support. The school is improving the outdoor learning environment and this is giving greater scope for outdoor activity. The care and guidance that these youngest children receive is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the rate of progress children make, especially the more able, in Years 1 and 2.
- Ensure the quality of teaching is always good and better.

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

Children make satisfactory progress. The school's tracking system indicates that the rate of progress children make is improving. Evidence in lessons and children's work confirm that this is happening more so in Key Stage 2.

By the end of the reception year children are working securely within the early learning goals at just above the national expectations. The progress they make is at least satisfactory and in some areas good. By the end of Year 2 children attain standards that are average. In the last three years, no child has reached the above average Level 3 at the end of Year 2. The school is predicting that this trend will change this year. By the end of Year 6, children have achieved results that show they have made at least satisfactory progress. The school has set challenging targets for the Year 6 tests in 2008 which, if achieved, will mean children will have made good progress. Children with learning difficulties make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development is good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Many parents commented positively on how the school ethos promotes personal development. One parent wrote, 'The school has a strong sense of community and high values'.

Children's social, moral and spiritual development is good. The school is focusing on increasing the learning experiences children have to improve their cultural development, which is satisfactory. Attendance is good. Children enjoy coming to school. Their behaviour is good. They have positive attitudes in lessons and always get on with the work they have been given to do. The school has successfully ensured that children have adequate physical education lessons, learn about, and adopt healthy lifestyles. The school council and eco council provide children with good opportunities to get involved in improving the school. Children also get opportunities to contribute to the local community for example through a recent music project when 'Sudbury Senior Residents' and children shared songs about the village. Children also get involved in activities at the village church, building on the relationship the school and church have developed. The school has good links with a local engineering firm and Sudbury Hall. They are currently involved in a 'Learning Links' project with the Hall, which will involve children helping to redesign the Museum of Childhood, making it more accessible to the children. The school is also involved in a project with a local engineering firm aimed at encouraging young children to become interested in following a career in engineering.

The improvements in information and communication technology (ICT), along with the skills children learn in English, mathematics and their social development ensure they are well prepared for their next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching for children in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. At times, this teaching lacks pace which results in children not being challenged enough. This is especially the case for children with above average abilities who often do the same work as other children in the class. In Key Stage

2, teaching has improved and is good. The headteacher leads by example and creates a purposeful learning environment where children make good progress. Key to the effectiveness of teaching in Key Stage 2 is high expectations and the matching of tasks to meet the different needs of children in the class.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There have been a number of recent improvements to the curriculum, which is now good. The school now has a computer suite, which is an excellent resource for children to develop ICT skills. Evidence of the impact of this new suite can be seen in how some of the youngest children in school are now quickly learning and making good progress. Another development is the move towards teaching through topics such as 'Space' and 'World War 2'. Subjects such as English, history, design technology, and geography are then taught and linked to these topics. This approach has revitalised learning and children speak enthusiastically about these lessons. Extra-curricular activities are a good addition to the curriculum and give children opportunities for gardening, football and art.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

One parent commented, 'It is very easy to talk to members of staff about any concerns that arise and they always do their utmost to listen and act upon what has been said'. Many parents shared this confidence in the school. All checks on staff and other health and safety checks are made, many having been updated since the headteacher took over. The academic guidance children are given is satisfactory and developing. A significant amount of guidance comes from teachers helping and challenging children as they work in lessons. Marking varies in quality and there are examples where comments really help children to know what to do to improve. The use of targets has recently improved and the headteacher is effectively monitoring the impact on children's progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The relatively new headteacher is confidently leading the school as it continues to improve. Since the last inspection, children's personal development, the curriculum, teaching in Key Stage 2 and the provision for ICT have moved from satisfactory to good. There is now a much sharper focus to raising standards and promoting the personal development and well-being of children. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school are very well managed by the headteacher who has approached this in a systematic and realistic way. The headteacher has an accurate view of the effectiveness of the school and where there is still work to do.

Governors provide good support and challenge for the school. They recognise the challenges the school faces to manage the budget and ensure good value for money. The Chair of Governors has seen the school through some turbulent times but is right to believe that the school has improved and has good capacity to do so further.

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Annex A

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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	2

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?	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.

Annex A

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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	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

31 January 2008

Dear Children,

Inspection of Sudbury Primary, Sudbury, DE6 5HZ

I am writing to tell you about the inspection that took place in your school. I enjoyed my day with you and I was impressed with your good behaviour and the way that you all got on with each other. It was good to see your special curved wall garden and spend time looking at the good displays of your work.

Some of the older ones amongst you told me how your school had changed over the last few years. The changes have all been for the good and your school is doing well and working towards being a good school. Many of you are enjoying good teaching and you are beginning to learn more quickly because of this. Your headteacher has made a good impression on you and your parents. He has already made a number of improvements including making sure the ICT suite is being well used.

Your topics, some of which you chose, are making learning more fun. The links with Sudbury Hall and the local engineering firm also offer good opportunities for you to learn. Those of you in the school council and eco council are doing a good job.

There are still some things your school could do better. I have asked Mr Brown to make sure teaching is always good and to keep checking that all of you make good progress including those in Years 1 and 2.

All of you can carry on helping to improve your school by working hard and doing well. If this happens, more children will hear about how good your school is and will want to join you.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Cook

Her Majesty's Inspector