

South Darley CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112842
Local Authority	DERBYSHIRE LA
Inspection number	311024
Inspection dates	12–13 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Derek Watts

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	
School	69
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Stephen Hibbard
Headteacher	Mrs Meryl Hall
Date of previous school inspection	17 March 2003
School address	Cross Green Matlock Derbyshire DE4 2JT
Telephone number	01629 732240
Fax number	01629 732240

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a much smaller than average sized primary school. The vast majority of pupils come from a White British background. There are very few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. The proportion eligible for free school meals is also below average. A new headteacher started in September 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of South Darley Church of England School is satisfactory. Pupils' personal development is good and a strength of the school. Their academic achievement is satisfactory. Most parents hold positive views about the school and give it good support. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and at a developmental stage with the appointment of a new, enthusiastic headteacher. She has quickly gained an accurate overview of the school's performance and has identified a range of improvements to teaching and to the curriculum in order to raise pupils' achievement and enhance their enjoyment. However, the headteacher has not had enough time to implement these plans fully and so it is too soon to see their impact on educational provision and achievement. The roles of subject leaders are underdeveloped and, as a result, they are not fully effective in monitoring and evaluating their areas of responsibility. The lack of rigorous self-evaluation hinders the leaders' ability to plan and implement improvements. This is recognised by the new headteacher as a key improvement priority.

Good care, guidance and support, along with a very positive school atmosphere, contribute well to pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected by their good attendance and keen interest in the activities provided. Clear expectations by staff and outstanding relationships lead to exemplary pupil behaviour. Pupils show a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating, keeping safe and regular exercise. They readily take on additional responsibilities and make valuable contributions to the community. Pupils participate well in the good range of additional activities, of which drama, music and sport are strengths.

Satisfactory teaching and a sound curriculum enable pupils to make adequate progress as they move through the school. Teachers have good relationships with their class and their instructions and explanations are clear and informative. Pace and challenge in lessons is not always high enough to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress. Pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to engage in investigations and problem-solving activities or to apply and develop literacy and numeracy skills in a range of areas. The school is currently revising its curriculum to incorporate these aspects. By Year 6, standards are above average overall, but there are variations in standards and progress between subjects, particularly in Years 3 to 6.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children enter Reception with knowledge and skills above those expected for their age. They quickly settle into routines and make good gains in their personal development. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and children make satisfactory progress in other areas of learning and reach standards above those expected for their age. The Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory. Opportunities for creative activities are limited and there are insufficient outdoor equipment and facilities to promote physical development. However, the school has plans to tackle this.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teaching so that lessons are always sufficiently challenging, maintain a good pace and enable pupils to make consistently good progress.

- Implement the planned changes to the curriculum so that pupils have more opportunities to investigate, solve problems and apply their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.
- Strengthen the role of subject leaders so that they are effectively monitoring performance and planning for improvement.
- Improve the outdoor learning facilities for children in the Foundation Stage to provide broader learning experiences.

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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Most year groups enter the school with an above average range of knowledge and skills. Standards at Year 2 have improved during the past three years and are usually above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Standards by the end of Year 6 are also above average overall, although progress is inconsistent between subjects. In 2006, for example, pupils made good progress in mathematics and standards were above average. Standards in English and science were average. While pupils achieved satisfactorily in science, there was some underachievement in English, particularly in writing. The school has taken positive action to improve progress in writing and standards in English are now significantly above average and slightly higher than in mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Pupils that are more able also make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, particularly their moral and social development. Pupils' good attendance reflects their positive attitudes to school, which are strengthened by the high expectations of staff. These contribute strongly to pupils' outstanding behaviour and their good personal development. Pupils have extremely positive relationships with staff and amongst themselves. They are extremely friendly and polite. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and safe practices. They thrive on additional responsibilities, such as being members of the school council, organising events and supporting younger pupils. Pupils make a positive contribution to the wider community by raising funds for well known charities. They put on good quality performances in the local church and village hall that are well received by parents and local community. Pupils are reasonably well prepared for their future years through their good social skills and satisfactory progress in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with examples of good practice. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and have created a positive climate for learning. Teachers' instructions and explanations are clear and informative. Interactive whiteboards are used well to illustrate

key learning points in a visual way. Pupils have good opportunities to discuss their work and to express their ideas and opinions, and this contributes well to their speaking and listening skills. In a few lessons, the level of challenge is not sufficiently high and the rate of learning slows. For example, worksheets are not always challenging enough and their prescriptive nature can hinder pupils' ability to plan and organise their own work. The pace of learning is sometimes slowed when introductions are too long or when pupils are not fully clear about the purpose of the lesson. Teaching assistants are usually deployed well and contribute effectively to pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum promotes pupils' personal development well and enables them to make satisfactory progress. The headteacher and staff are currently revising the curriculum to increase creativity and the links between subjects in order to add meaning, relevance and enjoyment to pupils' learning. Provision for ICT has improved and is used well to support teaching and learning. There is a good range of clubs, including football, netball, gardening and rounders, that contributes to pupils' interest and enjoyment. Pupils are pleased with the good opportunities provided to learn a musical instrument. Health and personal safety education receive effective attention. In the Foundation Stage, children do not always have sufficient opportunities to work creatively. The school has firm plans to improve facilities for outdoor learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Good pastoral care and support contribute well to pupils' personal development. Procedures to ensure pupils' protection and safety are effective, so that pupils feel safe and secure at school. Staff know the pupils well and have established very good relationships with them and their parents. As a result, new pupils including those with English as an additional language settle quickly. As one pupil remarked, 'Teachers care for us a lot.' There are appropriate systems for assessing and tracking pupils' attainment and progress. Assessment is used to set individual learning targets in English and mathematics and, as a result, most pupils are clear about what they are working towards in order to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management have been successful in providing effective care, guidance and support and in promoting pupils' good personal development. The impact of leadership in terms of promoting effective teaching and pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

The partnership with parents is good and most parents are positive about the care and education provided. The new headteacher is keen to tackle any minor concerns expressed by parents.

Self-evaluation is satisfactory. The new headteacher has a perceptive view of the school's performance and has already identified some key areas for improvement. However, subject leaders' roles are not effective enough in monitoring and evaluating performance. Their monitoring does not focus sufficiently on the progress that pupils make, which has resulted in the school having an over-generous view of its effectiveness. Target-setting procedures are currently being revised to ensure that targets are challenging and making a valuable contribution

to raising achievement and standards. Improvements since the last inspection are satisfactory and there is satisfactory capacity to improve.

Governors are committed, supportive and have been effectively involved in the appointment of the new headteacher. However, they have not challenged the school enough about pupils' achievement.

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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	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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?	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	1
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

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?	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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

14 September 2007

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of South Darley Church of England Primary School, Matlock, DE4 2JT

Thank you so much for welcoming me into your school and showing me your work. I enjoyed my visit and would like to tell you what I found out. Your school is a satisfactory school. Your attitudes, behaviour and personal development are strong features of the school. Teaching and learning are satisfactory.

These things are strengths of the school

- You clearly enjoy school and your attendance is good.
- You are friendly and polite.
- You get on extremely well with other pupils and adults.
- You show good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- A good range of activities and clubs are provided.
- Your behaviour is exceptionally good in and around the school.
- Staff know you very well. They take good care of you and give you good support.
- Your new headteacher has settled in well.
- Your parents are pleased with the care and education provided.

These are the things the school has been asked to improve

- You could make more progress if teachers ensure that you are always challenged well and that learning in the lesson maintains a good pace.
- Your headteacher and teachers are beginning to make changes to the curriculum so that you have more opportunities to solve problems, do investigations and use your literacy and numeracy skills.
- Subject leaders should check carefully how well you are progressing and introduce plans to bring about improvement.
- The outdoor learning equipment and facilities for children in the Foundation Stage could be improved and the school has plans to do this.

Finally, thank you once again for all your help. I wish you all the best for the future.

With kind regards,

Derek Watts

Lead Inspector