

Sedgefield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114159
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	311505
Inspection date	8 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Brian Blake 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	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Elwell
Headteacher	Mr Philip Irvine
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2005
School address	Rectory Row Sedgefield Stockton-on-Tees TS21 2BJ
Telephone number	01740 620359
Fax number	01740 622324

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	8 May 2008
Inspection number	311505

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following aspects of its work: the provision for pupils' personal development and well-being, teacher assessment as an aid to pupils' progress in their learning and strategies for monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation form (SEF), nationally published pupil performance data, lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work books and additional documentation provided by the school and discussions with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, chair of governors and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its SEF, were not justified, and these have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

Description of the school

Sedgefield Primary School is smaller than the average sized primary school. The school serves the village of Sedgefield, an area with few characteristics of socio-economic deprivation. Almost all the pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with the national average, but is well below for those with a statement of special educational need

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Sedgefield Primary School is providing a good standard of education for its pupils.

Although the vast majority of children start school in Reception with levels of personal skills and attributes typical for their age, around 50% are not achieving the expected levels in communication, language and literacy in their baseline assessment. During the Foundation Stage, however, the children make good overall progress so that by time they start school in Year 1, the vast majority have exceeded the levels expected for their age. The pupils continue to make good progress during Key Stage 1, achieving above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they reach end of Year 2. Higher attaining pupils do particularly well in mathematics. The pupils maintain this good rate of progress throughout Key Stage 2, achieving above average standards by the end of Year 6. In the 2007 national tests, however, overall standards were exceptionally high in English and mathematics and above in science, with higher attaining pupils achieving particularly well against the national averages in all three core subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good overall progress relative to their capabilities.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Some school based initiatives are ensuring that the pupils feel safe because there have been positive actions to improve a number of safety aspects in and around the school. For example, the joint pupil/governor road safety group has, in collaboration with the community policeman, community warden and local town council, tackled the problem of excessive parking on roads adjacent to the school. This has meant that inconsiderate and dangerous parking is tackled quickly, making the access to school as safe as possible at the start and finish of the school day. Procedures for safeguarding the children comply with all requirements, including Criminal Records Bureau checks of all adults who work in the school. There have been no recorded incidents of bullying and racism since the previous inspection, and the pupils report that the 'peer mediators', 'butterflies' and 'buddies' initiatives are helping to prevent these types of anti-social behaviour. The overwhelming majority of pupils are very enthusiastic about attending school and this is reflected in the above average attendance rates. One pupil's view, which was typical of all those who spoke with the inspector, said 'It's a good school because you always get your say.' The pupils are very positive about their contribution to a number of decision making activities within the school and local community through the school council and town 'youth council', the latter of which is helping pupils to express their views about life in Sedgefield. The work of the school in this area enabled it to achieve 'Investor in Children'. Linked work with some local businesses, including identifying and contributing to local and national charities, is helping the pupils to appreciate their own and others' economic well-being.

The overall quality of teaching is good, which contributes to the good rate good of progress being made in the core subjects across the school and the above average standards achieved in national tests and assessments. Teachers' planning is generally thorough and is sufficiently focused on the needs of different abilities in the class. However, although good use is being made of a number of commercial schemes of work, there are occasions when they are insufficiently amended or adapted to suit the particular needs of the children. Relationships between teachers and pupils, and between the pupils themselves, are very good. Assessment for learning is satisfactory overall and good in the collection and analysis of pupils' performance data in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Teachers regularly mark the

pupils' work, which the vast majority find very helpful. However, the quality varies across the school, with the best insightful and helpful, and when only satisfactory, too few or no comments to help the pupils know what they have to do to make further improvements in their work. In all lessons, pupils are very attentive to what the teacher is saying and almost all show great enthusiasm and enjoyment at answering questions that will aid their learning. The speed at which pupils get on with their work, following a whole-class plenary session, is very impressive and is an indication of the good classroom management skills of the teachers. The use of teacher support assistants is working very well because they have a focused and targeted role in lessons. This means that those pupils receiving additional adult support because of some identified learning need generally make good progress relative to their capability.

The curriculum is good overall and greatly enhanced by a range of additional activities in lessons and after school. The pupils praise the many opportunities that they have to engage in local sports competitions and festivals, all of which adds to their enjoyment of attending school. Coverage of the key skills in literacy and numeracy is very good, with the school achieving the 'Basic Skills Quality Mark' in recognition of their work. Although the time allocation to these two core areas does limit the available curriculum time for other subjects, the school has achieved the 'Activemark' for providing a minimum of two hours physical education and sport each week.

The pupils express a very strong view that the school cares for, supports and guides them very well. 'There is always someone to talk to, adult, peer mediators or buddy,' was a typical comment from the pupils. Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are reasonably clear about the expectations of their achievements in their national tests and assessments, although they are considerably less clear about teachers' expectations in the foundation subjects.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, which is appreciated by governors and the majority of parents. However, a significant minority of parents responding in the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that they felt the school could do a lot more to take account of any of their concerns or suggestions about aspects of the school's provision. The headteacher knows the school's strengths and weaknesses and areas for future improvement. The school development plan identifies the key priority areas and actions but there is an absence of clear and measurable success criteria, which would allow senior managers and governors to accurately assess the progress of these important areas over the life of the plan. Governors play an active part in the life of the school. Minutes of meetings show that the governors' discuss and challenge aspects of the school's work on a regular basis, which is ensuring that there is a satisfactory process for monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision. Financial management is taken seriously and governors are fully alert to any impending issues relating to the budget of the school. Overall, the school achieves good value for money and has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the Foundation Stage is good. Secure baseline assessment and profiling of the children's abilities across all the areas of learning ensure that work is well focused and generally challenging for the range of abilities. The children are very happy in school and all show a high level of confidence in talking with any adults who happen to be in their working area. A detailed and broad range of good quality learning activities are helping the children to make good overall progress during their time in the Foundation Stage. The leadership and management of teaching and the curriculum offered are good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all commercial schemes of work are adapted to meet the needs of all pupils in the school.
- Address the concerns of the minority of parents who feel that the school does not take sufficient account of their suggestions and concerns about aspects of the school's provision.
- Improve the quality of success measures in the school development plan, as an aid to the headteacher's and governors' monitoring and evaluation of the school's progress against stated priorities and actions.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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
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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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	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	1
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?	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.

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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
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

20 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sedgefield Primary School, Durham, TS21 2BJ

You will know that I recently visited your school to find out if it is helping you to do the very best that you can in all your lessons. I was very grateful to all those who spoke to me during the visit, in particular, the small group who met with me over lunch to discuss being a pupil at Sedgefield Primary School. I should also like to thank those parents who took the time to complete and return the pre-inspection questionnaire, and especially those who wrote additional comments that they wanted me to consider during the inspection.

Overall, the school provides you with a good standard of education. Teaching is generally good, which is helping the majority of you make good progress and achieve good standards in national tests and assessments. You are playing a very important part in these successes. You are attentive in lessons, you listen carefully to what the teacher is saying, and almost all of you get on with your work without any fuss and disturbance to others in the classroom - well done!

All those with whom I spoke were unanimous in saying that the school takes good care of you, supports you well and helps guide you to work hard and be successful. Because of this, you feel safe, you enjoy school and you like the friendly atmosphere in lessons and at breaks and lunch times.

I am, however, asking the school to make a few improvements in what they do so that Sedgefield becomes an even better school. These include:

- Ensuring that all commercial schemes of work (the teachers' plans of what they will teach in every lesson) used by teachers are specifically adapted to meet your needs in school.
- Address the concerns of a minority of parents who feel that the school does not take sufficient account of their suggestions and concerns about aspects of the school's provision.
- Improve the quality of the school development plan (the plan that the staff and governors use to help the school improve), as an aid to the headteacher's and governors' monitoring and evaluation of the school's progress against stated priorities and actions.

I hope you continue to work hard and enjoy what the school provides for you in both lessons and out of school.

Brian Blake

Lead inspector