

Sibford Gower Endowed Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123092
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	314492
Inspection date	29 April 2008
Reporting inspector	John Collins

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	127
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Richard Earle
Headteacher	Mrs Judith Tinsley (Associate Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2005
School address	Acre Ditch Sibford Gower Banbury OX15 5RW
Telephone number	01295 780270
Fax number	01295 780270

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school, and investigated how effective the leadership is in maintaining the good standards and achievement in the absence of a headteacher, how well more able pupils in Key Stage 1 are achieving and what the school is doing about differences in attainment in English between boys and girls. Evidence was gathered from an analysis of pupils' test results, current assessment and tracking data, observation of lessons, and a scrutiny of pupils' work in writing. Parent questionnaires, discussions with the associate headteacher, senior staff, governors and pupils also contributed to the judgements. 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 self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included in the report where appropriate.

Description of the school

Almost all the pupils of this smaller than average sized primary school are from a white-British background. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those whose first language is not English are much smaller than average. The school has an Activemark award for sports, a Health and Safety Award and is currently working towards a Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school is appreciated by the great majority of parents, one writing to describe it as, 'a happy, cheerful environment for children to grow and achieve'. At its heart lies its concern for the care and welfare of all pupils, resulting in some outstanding aspects of personal development and well-being. The pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are outstanding. All pupils have a very well developed sense of being safe and make an outstanding contribution to the local community. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, although discussions with pupils showed that their knowledge and understanding of the different groups in modern British society is less well developed.

Pupils thrive because all are valued and supported to achieve their best. They are confident learners who listen well and are eager to contribute to lessons. Pupils work very well together in pairs or small groups and readily celebrate the success of others as well as their own. Most have a good understanding of the importance of healthy living and appreciate the new playground apparatus that encourages them to exercise. When asked to try to identify one thing that they liked particularly about their school, one Year 2 pupil said, 'I can't, I like it all!' This illustrates well why attendance has been above average for the last three years.

Standards are well above average with many pupils achieving well in reaching the higher levels in national tests by the end of Year 6. Progress in Key Stage 2 is good. By the end of Year 2 more pupils than usual reach the expected levels but at the higher level the proportion is similar to the average. Standards are not quite as high in reading and writing as they are in mathematics and science because some boys are not doing as well as girls. Nevertheless, overall progress in Key Stage 1 is good with good achievement in mathematics and science. Throughout the school tasks are usually well matched to the needs of different groups but this is not always the case in writing, where more able pupils, particularly boys, are not always challenged to achieve as well as they might. The school has rightly identified the need to focus on improving standards in boys' writing and the achievement in writing of more able pupils across the school and is tackling them as priorities in its improvement plan. The focus on providing extended writing opportunities is beginning to have an effect but more remains to be done. Tracking and assessment data shows improvement in standards in writing and the gap in achievement between boys and girls is narrowing. Challenging targets have been set. Pupils' progress is monitored carefully, any under-achievement quickly identified and support groups put in place.

One of the main reasons why pupils are doing well is that the teaching interests and engages the pupils. Good use is made of the new computer suite to support learning in different subjects. The positive conditions for learning are based on very good relationships between pupils and adults. Pupils enjoy coming to school and like their teachers because, 'They show us lots of different ways of learning' and 'make learning fun'. Work is marked thoroughly and pupils appreciate the useful comments for improvement. Teaching assistants play a strong part in supporting pupils' learning.

The school has successfully tackled the change following the resignation of the previous headteacher. Many parents have appreciated the way the associate headteacher and senior teacher have kept the school moving forward with a strong sense of purpose and direction. They have been ably supported by the staff and the governing body. Subject leadership is good. The English subject leaders in particular are leading the drive to improve standards in writing effectively. The focus on phonics teaching and staff training has raised the profile of writing

significantly across the whole school. Subject leaders and governors have a secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. Governors have a good understanding of their roles and are particularly effective in their support for improvements to the school environment. The significant improvement in the quality of the Foundation Stage, more rigorous tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress, the strong team ethos and accurate self-evaluation ensures the school has a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Most children enter school with a wider range of personal, language and mathematical skills than usual. Children settle well and make good progress so that by the end of Foundation Stage 1 Class most are achieving the goals in all six areas of learning. Good progress is particularly evident in their personal, social and emotional development because of good teaching. Staff skilfully provide children with good opportunities to work and play together helping to develop their social skills as well as their independence. Progress is carefully and regularly monitored so that activities are well matched to their next steps in learning. The transition in the mixed Foundation Stage 1/Year 1 class is well planned and managed. Parents appreciate the new buildings, which have added much needed space and provide a safe and welcoming learning environment in which their children thrive.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement in writing, particularly for more able pupils in both key stages.
- Increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures other than their own.

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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?	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	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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	2
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

14 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sibford Gower Endowed Primary School, Banbury, OX15 5RW

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school and for taking the time to talk to me and show me your work. I was very impressed by your excellent behaviour and how hard you worked in class. The WOMBATS and others told me how much you enjoy coming to school because your teachers make learning fun.

I think all the adults who work in your school are good at looking after you and make it a safe place to learn. You achieve well and make good progress. I agree with you that you have good teachers. I have asked the school to help you improve your writing, particularly those of you who are more able. You can help by trying hard and doing your best at all times. Another thing I have asked them to do is to improve your knowledge and understanding about the different groups in our country. I think this will help prepare you better for the future.

You go to a good school and I hope that in the future it is even more successful in helping you to do as well as you can. Remember to ask your teachers if you need help.

Good luck to you all in the future.

Best wishes

John Collins

Lead Inspector