

# Sutton Park Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135075
<b>Local Authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	319608
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Eadie

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	255
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Samantha Walker
<b>Headteacher</b>	Val Adams
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Greatfield Road Kidderminster DY11 6PH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01562 677 42

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Sutton Park is an average sized primary school, which opened in September 2007 as a result of a change from three-tier to two-tier education in the area. It occupies the building formerly used by a first school. A new building is being constructed on the school site and, when it is completed, the current building will be demolished. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The school has a Communication Centre with places for eight pupils with autism and 10 with speech and language and communication difficulties. Currently, 16 pupils attend the centre, all of whom have a statement of special educational needs. As well as these pupils, the school has a high proportion of pupils with statements or identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision is made in a Nursery, which operates for mornings only, and a Reception class. Because of demand, the school has opened a private nursery in the afternoons, with 24 places, only one of which is available at present. The school jointly manages, with the local health authority, the Wyre Forest Nursery Language Unit, which occupies a room in the school and is part of the school's Communication Centre. It has space for eight children who come from a number of settings in the area.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This school is providing a satisfactory education for its pupils. It has had a troubled recent history, as the local reorganisation resulted in considerable staffing changes which adversely affected pupils' learning quite substantially. However, the corner has been turned and pupils' progress is accelerating, although the difficulties of being a major building site do not make it easy. The school has several strengths. In particular, provision is good in the EYFS and the Communication Centre. Sensitive teaching and carefully planned learning programmes ensure that the pupils in the Centre make good progress relative to their abilities. These pupils are integrated very well and the school is a truly inclusive community. A further strength is that pupils throughout the school are developing well into sensible and responsible young people, who behave well. As one of many parents who made positive comments about the school said, 'I have accompanied classes on many trips and pupils are always an absolute credit to themselves and their school.'

Children make good progress in the EYFS because of the good provision made for them. Progress through the rest of the school is satisfactory and, by the time pupils leave, they reach standards that are a little below average. These standards are improving, particularly in English, where raising standards in writing has been a major focus. In particular, the numbers of pupils working at the higher levels in writing is rising well. However, standards in mathematics are not improving as quickly because pupils' ability to apply their mathematical knowledge and solve problems is limited.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall because the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Although several examples of good practice were seen, too often pupils are not actively involved in their learning, having to sit and listen instead of getting on with activities. This also leads to pupils not gaining sufficient skills of independent learning. The curriculum makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. There are some strengths, such as the teaching of French throughout the school and the provision for music and physical education (PE), where outside experts are used well. However, few formal links are made between subjects for pupils to see the relevance of their learning and practise their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.

The key reason for pupils' good personal development is the good pastoral care. The needs of pupils and their families are well known to the school and parents are complimentary about this provision, saying such things as, 'Staff are caring and kind and are always available to share our concerns.' Academic support and guidance is good. Good systems of tracking pupils' progress enable managers to identify those in danger of falling behind and effective support is then put in place to help them catch up. A good start has been made at setting targets to help pupils progress. However, these are not always sufficiently specific or achievable in the short term to be helpful. Although some teachers' marking is effective, too often it does not refer to pupils' targets or give them clear information about how they can improve their work.

Leaders and managers have coped well with the trials of the last few years and they deserve much credit for the way the school is now improving. However, the building work is a further distraction and means that the focus on improving pupils' progress has not been as effective as it might have been. Bearing in mind the progress being made, the school is satisfactorily placed to continue to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

A strong focus on language and personal and social activities when children start in the Nursery results in children settling happily into the routines of school. Good teaching and well-planned activities ensure that children make good progress from their starting points, which are well below expectations for their age. Despite this progress, children enter Reception with standards still lower than those expected for their age. While in Reception, children continue to experience good teaching and make good progress, though they have still not reached average standards by the time they start in Year 1. Effective assessment procedures track children's progress and ensure activities are well matched to cater for the needs of the children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The balance between activities led by an adult and those children select for themselves is good. However, because of the physical constraints during the building work, the use of outdoors for learning is limited.

The EYFS staff are led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable coordinator who ensures that EYFS requirements are met. The good care and welfare that children receive from the committed team results in their good personal development. Good procedures are in place to ensure that all children are kept safe and healthy. These procedures are reviewed regularly and shared with all members of staff. Parents appreciate the good start their children receive at school. 'My children have had the best start to school that they could possibly have had. It's great here,' is a typical comment from a parent.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics by improving pupils' ability to tackle problem solving and providing more opportunities for them to apply their skills to new situations.
- Improve pupils' progress by consistently giving them precise and measurable targets for improvement and by ensuring that teachers' marking refers to these targets and shows pupils their next steps in learning.
- Raise the quality of teaching so that a greater proportion is good or outstanding, by ensuring that lessons are more involving and engaging for pupils and that they have more opportunities for independent learning.

A small proportion of 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 start in the Nursery with levels of skills and knowledge well below those expected. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes but their standards are still below average by the time they start in Year 1. Progress through the rest of the school is satisfactory and, by the time pupils leave, they have reached standards that are a little below average. These standards are higher in English than in mathematics, reflecting the work that has been done, in particular to raise standards in writing. Pupils in the Communication Centre make good progress because of the specialist help and good support that they receive. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in the rest of the school make satisfactory progress. Provision for them is improving, but at present it is inconsistent between classes.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, particularly the social and moral aspects. Pupils are proud of their school; relationships are strong and pupils get on well with each other and their teachers. However, there are more limited opportunities for pupils to reflect on their lives and their sense of being.

Behaviour in lessons is good and, despite the cramped conditions, behaviour in the playground is also good. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy living. They appreciate taking part in the physical exercise at the start of the day, enjoy the healthy snacks and lunches and value the opportunities to drink water throughout the day. Pupils feel very safe and say they can turn to adults if they are troubled. They appreciate that they can report concerns through the 'worry web' and say that incidents of falling out are dealt with effectively.

Pupils generally enjoy lessons, especially when they are clear about what they need to do and are involved in their learning. They enjoy supporting the Eco committee, which is keen to make the school more aware of sustainability. Older pupils also enjoy supporting younger pupils in reading. However, the school council is not yet an effective pupils' voice as it has not been operating for long enough.

Despite the school's efforts, absence rates are above average. This is because a few families keep their children off school too often. These pupils make poorer progress than their classmates. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their development of basic skills; however, the wider skills they need to prepare themselves for their future are less well developed.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teachers and support staff work well as a team to provide interesting learning environments for their pupils, and classrooms contain many visual prompts and resources to aid learning. Teachers manage behaviour well, so there is a purposeful working atmosphere in lessons. Pupils particularly enjoy lessons when they are actively involved in the learning process. However, this does not always happen and there are times when pupils spend too long sitting and listening. In the best practice, teachers have sound knowledge of the subject matter and their explanations and questions probe and extend pupils' understanding very skilfully. In these lessons pupils are encouraged to work independently and evaluate their own learning. This is not happening consistently and in some lessons pupils have too few opportunities to work independently. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning, particularly for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum enables pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, to make satisfactory progress. There is a strong focus on improving literacy and a start has been made at numeracy. Standards in writing have improved through initiatives such as 'Big Writing'. The weekly 'reading morning' is encouraging pupils to develop a real enjoyment of reading. All pupils learn French, and music and sport are strengths of the school's provision. Good

provision for personal, social and health education successfully contributes to pupils' personal development and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is in the process of linking subjects together in topics to make learning more exciting and creative. Enrichment activities, such as educational visits, visitors to the school and a small range of clubs, develop pupils' skills and self-esteem.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The pupils' welfare is at the heart of the school's work. Staff show high levels of care and concern for their pupils and work closely with parents, carers and outside agencies to meet the pupils' needs. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements and the school pays good attention to pupils' health and safety.

The strong emphasis on behaviour management is paying off and the school has a calm and orderly atmosphere. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory and improving. The dedicated coordinator has worked hard to put systems in place to raise the achievement of these pupils. However, these are still being embedded. Pupils' achievement is being carefully tracked, and intervention programmes are matched to pupils' needs so that pupils are making satisfactory progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

It says much for the quality of leadership and management that they have successfully ridden the uncertain waves of the past few years. However, the focus on raising standards has been somewhat diverted until fairly recently, although the impact of initiatives is beginning to be seen. Processes of monitoring and evaluation do not fully involve managers at all levels, though managers have built a generally accurate picture of the school's effectiveness. Governors are keen and supportive, though their involvement in evaluation is also at an early stage of development. The school is a very cohesive community and managers work hard to successfully promote community cohesion in the local and wider British community. Good use is made of links with external agencies and there are also productive links with other schools, who, for instance, provide expertise for PE training. There are good links with parents, for example in the 'reading morning', where many parents take the opportunity to come in to read with their children.



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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	3

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

29 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sutton Park Community Primary School, Kidderminster DY11 6PH

Thank you so much for your welcome to us when we visited your school recently. We very much enjoyed talking to you and hearing all you had to tell us about your school. It has not been easy over the last few years, with the reorganisation, and we were impressed with how sensibly you play, as you have little space with all the building work going on. You told us how proud you are of your school. It is giving you a satisfactory education, although it is improving. At present, you are making satisfactory progress and reaching standards that are a bit below those found in most schools.

We think these are the best things about your school.

- You are developing well into sensible and responsible young people who behave well and care very well for others.
- All adults look after you very well.
- Those of you in the Communication Centre and the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress as the adults there make good plans to help you learn.
- There are some interesting opportunities for you in lessons, such as all Year 4 learning the flute, and all of you, even the youngest, learning French.
- Your headteacher and other staff are very keen to make the school better as quickly as they can.

We have suggested that the school takes the following action to bring about improvements.

- Raise standards in mathematics by improving your ability to solve problems and by providing opportunities for you to apply your skills in new situations.
- Set you more precise targets for improvement and ensure teachers refer to them when they mark your work.
- Provide more opportunities in lessons for you to get involved and do things.

I know you will help by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

John D Eadie

Lead inspector