

# Sutton-On-Trent Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122678
<b>Local Authority</b>	Nottinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327780
<b>Inspection date</b>	5 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lynne Blakelock

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	122
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>	Mr Martin O'Connell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Ellen Gascoigne
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 July 2006
<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>	Church Street Sutton-on-trent Newark Nottinghamshire NG23 6PD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01636 821286
<b>Fax number</b>	01636 822238

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This small school serves the village and adjoining rural areas. It is housed in two buildings, one of which is Victorian and the other a more recent addition. A building programme has resulted in improved accommodation for learning. It includes discrete accommodation for the Early Years Foundation Stage which children join following their fourth birthday and which they attend each morning. They are admitted full time into the school in either September or January, at the beginning of the term in which they are five years old. Children start school with a wide range of ability from year to year but which is generally a little below or in line with the national average. All pupils speak English as their first language and the vast majority are White British. A below average percentage have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or a statement of special educational needs.

The school has been awarded Activemark, the Eco Bronze award, the Healthy Schools Gold Award and the Financial Management Standards in Schools. It has achieved Investors in People status for the second time. The school is an Extended School and is part of the Tuxford family of schools.

## 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 and improving school. The headteacher and curriculum leaders are steering the school carefully and systematically, implementing an agenda which is improving the all round quality of education. Overall leadership and management are good. Issues from the last inspection have been addressed, particularly standards in mathematics which have risen to be in line with the national average, and this supports the school's good capacity to improve. Although teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, a greater consistency of practice across the school is increasing the number of lessons in which good progress is made. The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school's work, with increasing awareness of the faster rate of progress in some year groups. Problem-solving tasks and computer-based learning are key features in pupils' enjoyment of learning.

Pupils' satisfactory progress through school results in standards that are in line with the national average overall by the end of Year 6. In 2008, by the end of Year 2 standards rose significantly from the previous two years when they were below average. This is mainly due to greater information, more effectively used, about the standards that pupils are working at. However, a lower than average percentage of pupils reached the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2, and in science and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Standards are not yet high enough in English, mathematics and science. Pupils who are capable of reaching higher levels are not regularly provided with tasks that enable them to extend their skills as much as is possible. Pupils who find learning more difficult make satisfactory progress in line with their peers.

The school provides a positive environment for learning from the start of the Early Years Foundation Stage, encouraging pupils' good attendance, attitudes, behaviour and personal development. Their understanding and adoption of healthy lifestyles and their enthusiasm to be involved as participants and leaders in school and community activities result in them having a sound range of skills for the next stage of their education. Their cultural understanding is less well developed, with the curriculum and daily life not yet providing opportunities for them to appreciate the cultural diversity of our society. However, overall the curriculum is good, encouraging pupils' enthusiasm in lessons and their good personal development. Specialist teachers for a variety of subjects and links with the local secondary school provide good expertise and a wider range of activities, both in lessons and in after-school activities. Good improvement in the provision of information and communication technology (ICT) has added to pupils' enjoyment of school from the time they join. Well established procedures and consistent practices to help ensure pupils' health, safety and well-being add to pupils' security in school. Improved tracking of their progress and the use of targets for learning, have resulted in good quality academic guidance and pupils' focus on improving their standards.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

When the children start in the Nursery their achievement varies but is generally at levels slightly below or broadly in line with those typical for their age. By the time they leave the Reception class, standards are above national expectations in all areas of learning. This fast start owes much to the welcoming and supportive environment provided by teachers, and by the good partnerships forged with parents, some of whom help in school. As a result, children's personal development is good. They settle quickly and mix happily with each other when they work and

play. Teaching in the lesson seen was good, enabling the children to achieve well. The opportunity for discussion presented by the sudden appearance of a snail on a plant offered a striking illustration of the teacher's readiness to promote children's learning and excitement through the world around them. There is a good balance of teacher-directed and free-choice activities to promote their learning, as well as their ability to work on their own. The outdoor space and facilities are satisfactory and used well, helped by the recent addition of direct access to this space. Assessment arrangements are thorough, enabling staff to build up a comprehensive picture of where each child is in their learning and what to plan for them next. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards further in English, mathematics and science, particularly for pupils capable of reaching higher levels, by increasing the challenge and creativity in tasks.
- Establish and sustain regular and planned opportunities within the curriculum to enable pupils to develop a greater knowledge and understanding of the cultural and multicultural diversity of the world in which we live.

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 of all levels of ability make satisfactory progress through the school. They are starting to make better progress in lessons because teachers are making better use of information about pupils' standards. In 2008, pupils' progress in science by the end of Year 6 was inadequate because the school had concentrated on raising standards in numeracy. However, school assessments and inspection evidence indicate that pupils are on track to make satisfactory progress in all subjects in 2009.

Standards vary from year to year at both key stages largely because of the small cohorts. Results in 2008 in reading, writing and mathematics showed a three-year improvement by the end of Year 2 and were broadly in line with the national average. A lower than average percentage reached higher levels. By the end of Year 6, an average proportion of pupils reached expected levels. Apart from in English, a lower percentage reached higher levels. Standards in mathematics have improved from below average at the last inspection and are now broadly in line with expectations. Pupils have met challenging targets in English and mathematics for the last two years and are on track to do so in 2009. Inspection evidence and the school's good tracking system point to standards being in line overall at the end of Year 6, with a higher proportion of pupils than last year predicted to reach higher levels. Results at the end of Year 2 are on course to be close to the national average.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' good behaviour and above average attendance support their statements that they enjoy school. Relationships between pupils are harmonious and there is an ethos of support and mutual care. The school considers the personal development of pupils to be the cornerstone of its work. Consequently, well-planned and structured opportunities during the day, in lessons

and during out of school activities, enable pupils to develop a variety of social skills for when they are older. One example of this is the 'Pupil Voice' which offers all pupils regular discussion and ownership of how they can improve their school environment, and their learning and playing activities. This has extended to the village, with pupils regularly making a contribution to community life. Staff ensure that, through the curriculum, pupils understand the importance of healthy eating, regular exercise and keeping themselves safe. They are increasingly adopting nutritious eating habits and keeping fit. Whilst pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, their experience and understanding of the ways of life of people from other than their own heritage are more limited.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Whilst the proportion of good teaching is increasing, its impact on pupils' progress over time has been satisfactory because of some inconsistencies and historic instabilities in staffing. The rate of progress is now quickening due to more careful planning of lessons, based on the school's accurate assessment of pupils' levels of work but there is still room for improvement. In particular, pupils who are capable of reaching higher levels are not always challenged sufficiently or given enough opportunities to develop their creative responses. Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive, helped by good relationships with staff. They enjoy computer-based learning and in particular the increasing use of learning through problem-solving tasks. Pupils' increased involvement in evaluating their own work and that of others is helping them to become more critical learners. Teachers' marking is usually diagnostic, so that pupils know exactly how to improve their work, although this is less often the case in numeracy.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school has a good curriculum that offers a wide range of opportunities to improve standards and achievement across the school. It includes French for all pupils. Since the last inspection, weaknesses in ICT provision have been remedied to the extent that pupils now make good use of it to aid their learning and progress in most subjects. Closer links between subjects, and opportunities for more meaningful learning, especially in writing skills, are encouraged and are beginning to pay off, though inconsistently across the various classes. Pupils requiring extra help are well served by the curriculum and by the support they receive. This is also the case for those pupils with particular gifts and talents, an area of good improvement. The school has an exciting array of educational visits and visitors, and links with the community that feed effectively into the topics they study. Pupils speak highly of these, as they do of the wide range of sports activities provided for them after school. The range in other areas is more limited. Pupils' personal development is well supported through the curriculum, although weaker in supporting their understanding about being members of a multicultural society.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school justifies its reputation as a caring and welcoming community. The pupils speak of the kindnesses shown to them by all staff and the fair and considerate way in which they are treated. They feel safe, not least because they know that at any time they can seek the help

of staff or indeed of other pupils. They insist that any bullying is dealt with thoroughly. Child protection and safeguarding arrangements are all in place and well managed. Pupils needing extra support are well cared for, including those with learning difficulties. Academic guidance has been successfully strengthened since the last inspection through the development of more robust and rigorous systems for tracking pupils' progress, and through more accurate assessments of the standards pupils have reached in relation to national expectations. This has enabled the school to set individual pupil targets that challenge pupils to reach the standards they should, as well as giving the school a clearer view of pupils' needs. The next step is to ensure that targets always offer enough challenge for all pupils to reach their potential.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The very appropriate strategies put in place by the headteacher and senior team have provided the school with a solid base from which it is moving forward. In particular, information about pupils' progress is far more of a focus in lesson planning, leading, for example, to improved standards in mathematics since the last inspection. Pupils' greater ownership of their learning and the good curriculum is quickening their academic progress and contributing to their good personal development. Community cohesion is satisfactory, with the school understanding that it needs to develop its ethnic context. The governing body is supportive and involved in strategic planning. Its monitoring role has developed since the last inspection through its links with subjects, although it is not yet formalised enough. Curriculum leaders work together effectively to strengthen practice. They have a good understanding of progress and standards in their subjects through effective tracking and their action plans are driving subjects forward more quickly than previously in both core and foundation subjects. Good team work and an enthusiastic staff are important factors in the school's good capacity for improvement.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### 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	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	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?	2
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>	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

6 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sutton-on-Trent Primary School, Newark, NG23 6PD

I am writing to tell you the judgements that we have made about your school, following our recent visit. Thank you for your friendliness and for being helpful to us. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn and play. I send special thanks to those of you who gave up part of your lunchtime to share your thoughts about your school with us.

Your school is a satisfactory school and it is improving. This is because the headteacher and other leaders are working constructively together and leading the school well. You enjoy your time there. You feel safe, secure and have good relationships with each other and with the staff. You appreciate the range of activities that are on offer, whether they are learning in lessons and in after-school activities, being part of the 'Pupil Voice' or taking responsibility in the school. Such activities help to prepare you soundly for secondary school. You are reaching standards that are in line with what is expected by the end of Year 6. The progress you make over time is satisfactory but in lessons you are making quicker progress because of the improving quality of teaching and learning. Targets are helping you to focus on how to make more rapid progress.

There are ways in which your school can improve. Standards need to rise further by the end of Year 6, in English, mathematics and science. To help this to happen, we have asked your headteacher to make sure that the work you are given is challenging enough for you to make as much progress as possible. This is especially so for those of you who are capable of reaching higher levels, and who would benefit from more creative tasks. We also want you to be able to develop a greater knowledge and understanding of the lifestyles and beliefs of people from different backgrounds by regular planned opportunities in lessons.

We hope that you will work with the staff to bring about these improvements.

Lynne Blakelock

Lead inspector