

# Sutton Green Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111103
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	331279
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Frank Carruthers

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)	245
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 Steve Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr M Forber
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 May 2008
<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>	Armthorpe Drive Little Sutton Ellesmere Port Cheshire CH66 4NW
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 3382121
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 3481401

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is about the average size for its type. It serves a mixed community and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Nearly all pupils are White British with a few from minority ethnic backgrounds. Of these very few are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are in two classes: one with Reception children only and one that also includes Year 1 pupils. The school has achieved the Activemark and the International Schools Award at foundation level.

When the school was visited in May 2008 it was given a notice to improve and asked to address issues related to the quality of teaching and learning, pupils' achievement in mathematics in Key Stage 2, procedures to help pupils to understand how they can improve their work and the impact of subject leaders on their subjects. It was subsequently visited in December 2008 when it was judged to be making satisfactory progress.

The private nursery provision on the school site was inspected at the time of this inspection and a separate report will be available on the Ofsted website.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005 Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. The school has taken all the necessary steps to address successfully the four areas for improvement highlighted in the previous report.

Children make good progress in the Reception Year and by the time they start Year 1 the great majority are working at or above the levels expected for their age in most areas of learning. Pupils' achievement in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. This is also the case in Key Stage 2, which is an improvement since the last inspection when it was found to be inadequate. Progress in each year group has improved, thanks to better tracking of how pupils are doing. Those who are underperforming are identified and their needs catered for through targeted teaching, extra support and effective intervention programmes. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics in the current Years 2 and 6 are average overall. However, not enough pupils are reaching the higher levels and the more able pupils could achieve more, particularly in English and mathematics. Standards of writing throughout the school lag behind standards in reading and could be higher. Standards in science are above average and pupils' achievement in this subject is good. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the very few learning English as an additional language make at least satisfactory progress. Some make good gains as a result of targeted support programmes led by effective teaching assistants.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. This is an improvement since the last inspection, in part because teaching has improved and all pupils now display real interest in their lessons. Their behaviour is good both in class and around school. Pupils attend school regularly and punctually. They have a good awareness of eating healthily and know about the importance of physical exercise. They also have a good understanding of how to stay safe. Pupils flourish as a direct result of the good quality of care, guidance and support that the school provides. Tracking of pupils' academic progress has been strengthened. Pupils are now clear about their targets and teachers provide good feedback through marking about how they can improve their work.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and shows significant improvement since the last inspection. The proportion of good teaching is much higher than was found at that time and no lessons are inadequate. As a result pupils' learning and their attitudes to school are much improved. Strengths of teaching include the quality of relationships among staff and pupils. However, some elements of challenge for the more able are missing at times and this is an area for improvement. The curriculum is satisfactory but does not provide enough opportunities for the more able pupils, for example, in subjects such as information and communication technology (ICT) to allow them to be independent in their learning. A good range of enrichment activities and after-school clubs are provided.

Leadership and management are good and all staff have striven hard this year to bring about improvement. The school's leaders and governors have successfully demonstrated good capacity to maintain this drive. Leaders and managers at all levels are effective in promoting pupils' better achievement. The headteacher, ably assisted by the acting assistant headteacher and senior leadership team, has been very successful in driving forward improvements to teaching, learning and assessment. A recurring theme in parent questionnaires is the improvement seen

in their children's learning, summed up in the comment, 'The school has achieved such a lot in the last twelve months.'

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children settle well into school and quickly learn classroom routines like washing hands and tidying up. These promote their awareness of staying healthy and encourage their independence. Children respond positively to the high expectations of all staff who help them to achieve well in all areas of learning in relation to their starting points. The attainment of children on entry varies year-to-year from broadly in line to above expectations. The current year group began with skills that were generally expected for their age, although a significant proportion had weaknesses in areas such as communication and language, and their personal and social skills. The children make good progress and, by the time they start Year 1, the great majority are working at, and often exceeding, the levels expected. Achievement in writing, however, is an area for improvement. Staff work well together as a team to provide the children with learning activities that capture their imagination. When working in the jungle area or outside in the tent, children demonstrated good teamwork and social skills through play initiated by themselves. Children behave exceptionally well. Leadership and management are good. Staff conscientiously make notes and take photographs to illustrate children's achievement and to inform the next steps in their learning. Improvements have been made to the outdoor provision this year and good use is made of the school grounds, including a woodland area. Parents are welcomed through an open door policy and receive regular updates about the progress and welfare of their children.

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

- Provide greater challenge for the more able pupils in English and mathematics so that a higher proportion reaches higher levels in national tests and assessments.
- Raise standards in writing so that pupils achieve as well in this area as they do in reading.

A small proportion of schools where 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**

In Year 2 most pupils reach expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics but too few attain the higher levels. Overall, however, this represents satisfactory progress for these pupils from the time that they started in Year 1, when levels of attainment were in line, or in some cases above, expectations. In Year 6, standards are average in English and mathematics. The school has successfully addressed weaknesses in mathematics, which was a key area for improvement identified in the previous inspection report. When compared with pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2, the gains made represent satisfactory progress. Targets for the school are challenging and have been used well to raise the expectations of all staff. However, not enough of the more able pupils are reaching the higher levels in English and mathematics. Standards of writing have been below average in recent years. While initiatives introduced this year are beginning to show improvement, there are still weaknesses in pupils' ability to write sustained pieces such as reports and arguments. Preliminary results of Year 6 tests in science show

standards are above average with almost all pupils reaching the expected level and half of these reaching the higher level.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils say that they are happy and like coming to school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and they become confident, thoughtful members of the school community. They help one another in class and share their ideas well, for example, when discussing ideas with their 'talking partners'. Pupils are pleased to take on roles as school councillors. They are pleased with the way their ideas have been acted upon by staff and they have been able to help all pupils to enjoy playtimes more. Pupils report that they have few concerns about being bullied and know what to do if they feel they are not happy with another pupil's behaviour. Pupils have raised funds for local, national and overseas charities on many occasions. Participation in local events supports their social, moral and cultural development. Pupils begin to engage in simple financial matters, for example, when the school council plans its own Christmas Fayre. These experiences, together with pupils' satisfactory skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT, mean that they are adequately prepared for the next stage in learning and for later life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning, enjoy their lessons and behave well. Where lessons are good, pupils make good progress and the lessons move at a brisk pace. Teachers' planning is good and teaching assistants make a particularly effective contribution to class lessons, groups' and individuals' work. At times, however, pupils are kept too long listening to the teacher and not enough time is left for activities to be completed. Pupils' work is assessed and recorded in a much more consistent manner than previously. Teachers have developed a better understanding of where pupils are in their learning and what they need to do next. However, this information is not used accurately enough to plan and adjust teaching to meet the needs of all pupils. This means that teachers' questioning and pupils' work are not consistently set at the right level to challenge the more able pupils effectively.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum meets the needs of most learners and gives good support to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities through a range of intervention programmes. However, not enough opportunities are provided for the more able pupils to apply and extend their knowledge and skills. Initiatives to improve writing are providing pupils with focused opportunities to write for a variety of purposes, but it is too soon to see the full impact yet. A good range of enrichment activities adds to pupils' enjoyment and enhances their personal development by giving them confidence and raising their self-esteem. For example, all pupils in Years 5 and 6 learn to play a musical instrument and the signing choir has had opportunities to perform in public. A wide range of activities after school, for example, in art, drama and sport, provides pupils with extra opportunities to develop their skills. Pupils in Years 4 and 6 attend an annual residential visit which helps to develop their independence and social skills. The curriculum is well resourced

and new computers and wireless laptops are providing opportunities for the development of ICT skills and links with other subjects.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pastoral care is a particularly strong feature and this promotes pupils' personal development well. Vulnerable pupils are closely monitored and are supported well, for example, by the learning mentor. Current government requirements for safeguarding are met fully. There is good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which ensures they make satisfactory and in some cases good progress. The school works well in partnership with outside agencies to promote the welfare of all pupils. Pupils have individual targets for learning that they clearly understand. These help them to make progress and are regularly updated. Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good arrangements to link with the on-site private nursery and other local nurseries to ensure the children enjoy a secure start in school. Transition arrangements with local secondary schools equip pupils in Years 5 and 6 well for the next step of their schooling. Parents are pleased with how they are informed about their children's progress and general school matters and the curriculum through, for instance, the school's website.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Subject leaders have markedly improved their performance and now monitor their responsibilities better. They have played their part in raising the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects through promoting good practice and giving feedback, following scrutiny of pupils' books and teachers' planning. Their impact is evident in the increasing proportion of good teaching. School self-evaluation procedures are good and the school has taken full advantage of support from the local authority. Governors are now much better informed about the school's performance and are making a more constructive contribution to its strategic oversight. While the school is successful in providing good opportunities for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the more able pupils are not all achieving their full potential. The school's contribution to community cohesion locally is satisfactory. International links are good and raise pupils' global awareness, but there are limited opportunities for them to learn about the diversity of communities within the United Kingdom. A deficit in the budget is being appropriately reduced to achieve a balance over three years. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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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

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<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?	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>	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	3
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	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

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

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you very much for your help when we inspected your school. We enjoyed our visit very much. You told us that you feel happy and secure in school and that it is a friendly place to be. You talked about how you find lessons and after-school clubs interesting and enjoy learning new things.

Now we would like to share with you what we found. Your school is giving you a satisfactory standard of education. It has improved since a year ago when inspectors last visited and found there were several weaknesses.

These are some of the good things about your school.

- All staff take good care of you and help you all to be fit, safe and healthy.
- You are growing into sensible students who want to learn and who take on responsibilities well, for instance as school councillors.
- Your behaviour in class and around school is good.
- You achieve well in science.
- Your headteacher and all the staff have done a lot this year to improve your school and make it a livelier, vibrant place for learning.

Part of my job is to make suggestions about how the school can be even better. These are the important things I have asked the staff to do.

- Make sure that those of you who are quick to learn do as well as you can, especially in English and mathematics.
- Help you all to improve your skills in writing stories, reports, letters and similar pieces of work.

We were pleased to see how well you know your targets in English and mathematics so keep up the good work, do your very best and carry on enjoying school!