

Sedgefield Hardwick Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114161
Local Authority	Durham
Inspection number	338307
Inspection dates	9–10 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Gordon Potter

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Robinson
Headteacher	Mrs Linda Johnstone
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Hawthorn Road Sedgefield Stockton-on-Tees TS21 3DA
Telephone number	01740 620041
Fax number	01740 629270
Email address	p2593.admin@durhamlearning.net

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 24 lessons taught by eight teachers, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at school policies and documentation, pupils' work, assessment data, monitoring records and strategic planning. They also scrutinised 97 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as questionnaires from staff and pupils.

- if, in the light of the school's view that teaching is inconsistent across school, it is strong enough to ensure that pupils make at least satisfactory progress
- if initiatives to improve pupils' writing and the way in which pupils' progress is tracked have helped to raise attainment, especially for the most-able
- in the light of the recent absence of key members of staff and the establishment of a new senior leadership team, the school's capacity to improve.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average size school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school has Activemark and achieved the International Schools Award in 2009.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school has experienced an unsettled period in leadership which has stalled school improvement. However, parents remain extremely supportive of the school, pupils feel safe and know how to stay healthy. Attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6. Pupils enjoy the opportunities afforded to them in 'Collapsed Curriculum' weeks to research, investigate and work together. However, too many activities in day-to-day lessons, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are not stimulating enough to ensure that pupils make better than satisfactory progress. There is a strong emphasis on reinforcing skills in reading, writing and mathematics rather than allowing pupils to have opportunities to practise them. Activities are not challenging enough, especially for the most-able pupils, and it is not always clear how work becomes harder as pupils grow older. Although teaching is satisfactory overall and helps pupils make satisfactory progress, some inadequate teaching was seen during the inspection. Pupils' behaviour is only satisfactory because they become restless in those lessons where they are not engaged fully. The school is ensuring the information it has about pupils' skills and abilities is accurate and is increasingly using this to target pupils who are falling behind, so that they make expected progress. However, these data are not well enough used to ensure that planning for pupils' individual needs results in good progress. While marking is supportive, it does not always make clear to pupils how they can improve their work. Attendance is above average. Combined with broadly average basic skills, this contributes to pupils' satisfactory development of economic awareness. Pupils are informed about developments in school through the school council. There are too few occasions when they can explore local culture or the wider world so that their understanding of their heritage, life in other countries and the multi-cultural make-up of modern British society is under-developed.

The senior leadership team has identified that improvements in teaching, the curriculum and the use of data to tackle underachievement are necessary to raise attainment. A team ethos is developing and leaders at all levels are involved in planning for improvement. However, they do not as yet monitor rigorously enough to ensure that initiatives are having an impact on raising attainment, especially in the development of those learning experiences that enthuse pupils. Given the satisfactory outcomes for pupils and the recent implementation of strategies for further improving the provision, the school's capacity to improve is satisfactory. It provides satisfactory value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment, by 2011, by:

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- – developing the range of those learning activities, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, that offer pupils exciting opportunities for practical and investigative activities, so that they are involved and challenged in lessons
- – ensuring that data are well used to develop teaching and learning, so that work is well-matched to the needs of individual pupils
- – improving the consistency of marking and target-setting so that pupils are clear about the level of their work and what they must do to improve it
- – ensuring that leaders at all levels rigorously monitor the impact on attainment of initiatives intended to improve the quality of teaching and the curriculum.
- Develop pupils' understanding of faiths and cultures and the multi-cultural nature of modern British society.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils are eager to do well and enjoy their learning when they know clearly what they are to do and can express their own plentiful and creative ideas, for example, when they discussed the difference between drugs and medicines. They behave well around school, are friendly and helpful to one another and respectful to adults. However, their behaviour and the extent to which they achieve and enjoy their learning are satisfactory, because they become distracted in those lessons which offer little scope for them to investigate independently or with their peers, or to use their imaginations and creativity.

Pupils attain broadly average standards at the end of Year 6. There is a trend of improvement in mathematics where standards have almost returned to their level of 2007. Standards in science are above average. Standards in English remain broadly average because too few boys attain the higher Level 5. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is likewise broadly average, but has declined since 2007 because teaching, whilst satisfactory overall, is currently not consistently strong enough to drive high attainment across Key Stage 1. Indeed, across the school, teaching and the curriculum are not inspiring enough to ensure that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make better than satisfactory progress from their starting points.

Pupils are aware of the importance of a healthy diet and of taking plenty of exercise, and regard themselves as part of an artistic and sporting school. This is reflected in their keen involvement in sports, dance and fitness activities, the high take-up of healthy school meals, the many examples of art on display and high rates of participation in the school choir. They are confident that they know what to do in the event of a concern. They make a good contribution to the school community, taking on a range of roles, including playground friends, monitors and school councillors. There are good links in the local area through the Sedgfield Youth Council, participation in the village Medieval Fayre and singing at the Gala Theatre in Durham City. Above average attendance and average basic skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology, prepare pupils satisfactorily for their future economic

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well-being.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Where teaching is good, teachers use a range of explanations and questions which involve pupils and guide them step-by-step through their learning. There are good relationships and pupils' good behaviour and attitudes contribute strongly to the positive learning ethos. Where teaching is less effective although satisfactory, frameworks designed to support pupils' writing limit their creativity, exercises of a similar nature are repeated too often and on the few occasions when pupils can offer their often mature opinions, teachers dominate, ask closed questions and do not allow enough time for pupils to explore their ideas. Teaching was ineffective when teachers talked too much, pupils were given insufficient time to complete activities, work lacked challenge and pupils' attention and behaviour dipped. Teaching assistants are used appropriately to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, although opportunities are missed to use other adults who support in lessons to challenge the most-able.

The curriculum is focused on improving pupils' skills in English and mathematics. For

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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example, additional teaching of letter sounds for specific pupils is helping to improve their writing and reading, and computer programmes are effectively used to develop skills in mathematics. There is a strong emphasis on supporting pupils' personal development and their understanding of Christianity. All pupils learn French and enjoy singing, drama, art and physical education. They enjoy welcoming visitors to school to learn about Sikhism and Bollywood dancing, their own visits to places such as Vindolanda to support their study of the Romans and residential visits to Dukeshouse Wood outdoor activities centre. They particularly enjoyed the recent week when they were enthused by developing their reading, writing and artistic skills and scientific knowledge through learning about the jungle. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to learn in this way or to develop their mathematics and writing skills in their learning across the curriculum, in order to see the links between subjects. Pupils participate in a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities in sport and the arts. Provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language and those pupils with a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, including autism and dyspraxia, is well managed. There are many appropriate programmes for intervention and support so that these pupils make satisfactory progress. The school has dealt successfully with the minority of pupils who are persistent absentees and this contributes to pupils' above average attendance. The school has close links with the adjacent secondary school. These, together with developing practices to involve parents and carers when their children start school and well-established procedures as pupils move through school, ensure that pupils are prepared satisfactorily for the next phase of their education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The extended absence of the headteacher has meant that progress towards school improvement has been slow and key initiatives such as the implementation of a more exciting and creative curriculum have been delayed. However, the senior leadership team does have an accurate view of the need to raise attainment and has begun to implement strategies to secure improvements in provision. This is now starting to become evident in improved outcomes, for example in attainment in mathematics. Leaders at all levels are now involved in driving improvement. The school development plan, to which all leaders contribute, identifies appropriate areas for improvement,

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although criteria that will measure the success of initiatives are not clearly delineated. Most importantly, the school's analysis of teaching is not rigorous enough. There is too little focus on how teaching can best develop pupils as learners and consequently there are too few lessons where learning is any better than satisfactory. While governors offer satisfactory challenge and support to the school's ambition to raise attainment, their procedures to monitor what happens in classrooms are not systematically or rigorously applied.

The school is proud of its inclusive nature and has effective links with outside agencies to meet the individual needs of pupils from a range of backgrounds and their families, showing the school's commitment to promoting equal opportunities, tackling stereotypes and ensuring that discrimination against any group is avoided at all times. However, the school has developed too few partnerships that enrich and broaden pupils' learning experiences. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet government requirements. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. The sense of community in the school and the local community is strong, but there is less awareness of Sedgefield's rich history, of life in other countries, or of Britain's diverse and multicultural society. The school has satisfactory relationships with parents and carers who are provided with frequent and detailed information about their children.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children feel safe, are confident, happy and settled and enjoy activities in all areas of learning. They are learning to share their toys, work together and behave well. The

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revamped Nursery area provides an attractive, well set out learning environment. A range of healthy snacks and drinking water help children develop an understanding of how to stay healthy. Children enter Nursery at or above levels expected for their age and as a result of satisfactory teaching make sound progress overall towards most of the learning goals expected for five-year-olds. They do less well in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative development because there are missed opportunities for children to engage in quality role play both indoors and outside. Requirements to ensure children's safety are met although there are some shortcomings in staff's knowledge of hygienic practices and daily risk assessments lack rigour. As a result of adverse weather, outdoor areas are muddy and dirty and pose a risk to health and safety. There are also too few activities outside which support children's development in all areas of learning. Staff are still developing their understanding of the framework and guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Opportunities for using observation and assessment to inform their day-to-day planning are at an early stage and there is a lack of challenge for more-able children. However, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader has identified most areas for improvement and is working satisfactorily to implement an action plan to improve provision.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

A total of 97 parents and carers responded to the Ofsted questionnaire and analysis showed that support for the school is very strong. Most parents and carers support the work of the school and the way in which it helps pupils to feel safe and enjoy a healthy lifestyle. Parents and carers are strongly supportive of the headteacher and the leadership and management of the school, the quality of teaching and the way in which the school meets their children's needs. A few parents and carers believe that the learning experience is not exciting or challenging enough for pupils, especially for the most-able pupils. Inspectors agree with this view.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sedgefield Hardwick Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 97 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 179 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	67	32	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	67	69	30	31	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	49	51	42	43	5	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	48	44	45	5	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	48	49	44	45	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	45	51	53	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	48	49	51	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	47	48	40	41	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	45	51	53	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	39	56	58	3	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	34	58	60	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	40	41	52	54	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	54	56	39	40	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



11 March 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Sedgefield Hardwick Primary School, Stockton-on-Tees, TS21 3DA

On behalf of the team, thank you so much for making us welcome when we inspected your school.

You go to a satisfactory school which knows what to do to improve. You are polite and helpful and we enjoyed talking to you about your school. You told us that you look forward to coming to school because you like your teachers and because you get on well together. Your parents and carers like the school very much. The staff care for you and concentrate on helping you to develop your skills in reading, writing and mathematics. You like to take on responsibilities and enjoy visits and visitors who help to make your learning more interesting. However, some of you told us that your work in lessons is often too easy and activities are not interesting enough.

I have asked your teachers to do the following things to help your school to improve:

- help you to attain higher standards at the end of Year 6
- make sure that your lessons are more exciting and challenging, including for the youngest children, with teachers matching tasks and activities to your needs in all classes and making sure that you know how to improve your work
- make sure they check that the new ideas they introduce to make your lessons better are working well
- help you to learn more about your local heritage, life in other countries and the people from different cultures who live in Britain.

You can help by doing your best and attending regularly. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Gordon Potter

Lead Inspector

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