

Silver End Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114828
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	338457
Inspection dates	15–16 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Roderick Passant

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 of pupils on the school roll	274
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Clark
Headteacher	Carolyn Joyce
Date of previous school inspection	27 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They saw nine lessons or parts of lessons taught by nine teachers and looked at a range of work from pupils in Year 5 and 6. Inspectors held meetings with members of the senior leadership team and other staff members, two governors and two groups of pupils, along with informal discussions with pupils and parents. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation linked to the safeguarding pupils and the school improvement plan. They scrutinised questionnaire responses from 88 parents, 96 pupils and 27 staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how effectively pupils' literacy skills are supported and developed
- the support for lower and middle attaining pupils.

Information about the school

This school is a little above average in size and serves a large village with some urban characteristics. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. Most pupils are White British; there is a very small proportion of pupils from other ethnic heritages, very few of whom speak English as an additional language. A quarter of pupils are on the register of special educational needs and/or disabilities which is above average; just under half of these have speech and language difficulties. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is high. Although the overall proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school is similar to that seen in many schools, most of these join the school relatively late in their school career. Entry into the Reception class is in September and January. The school has strong links with the Children's Centre and two playgroups in the village. The school has gained Sportsmark and Healthy School status.

At the time of the inspection the majority of pupils in Years 5 and 6 were on a residential trip. The school delivered questionnaires by hand to the parents and carers of these pupils.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. Although many judgements are the same as the previous inspection there have been significant improvements. Pupils achieve well and enjoy learning, making good progress academically and in their personal development. The school is calm, stable and has a purposeful ethos. Children join the Reception class with a range of knowledge, skills and development that are very low in comparison to what is often seen. They make good progress in Reception but many start Year 1 with literacy skills and emotional development well below expectations. Standards by the end of Year 6 are broadly average. The quality of teaching is good and is the main reason why pupils make good progress. However, in this school good teaching does not always guarantee good progress because there are other influences at work. These include: the challenges many pupils face in their personal life; pupils' restricted literacy skills across the school; lack of independence as learners; and the mobility of pupils. The school now has the quality of provision to reduce the impact of these factors.

The quality of the school's care, guidance and support is now outstanding and provides the significant proportion of pupils who face challenges in their personal lives the necessary support to manage their difficulties and to re-focus on learning. Many pupils have limited language skills. Developing speaking and listening, reading and writing are given high priority by staff and interventions, including one-to-one support, are targeted well. The school monitors the progress of all pupils carefully and uses this information effectively to identify and support those pupils who are slipping behind. Pupils are not naturally independent learners. The school has recognised this in its recent reorganisation of the curriculum so that there is emphasis on developing pupils' learning and thinking skills. In addition, the creative links between subjects not only provides meaningful contexts for the work, and particularly development of literacy skills, but has also enthused and interested pupils, providing them with more opportunities to engage practically in tasks. The result is that pupils in Years 3 and 4 are now making good progress, whereas historically, progress has often stalled in these year groups. While the use of assessment is good overall, staff are not developing pupils' independence by negotiating targets with them or ensuring consistently that when work is marked it gives clear information of what to improve and how to do it. Overall progress is also affected by pupils who join the school late in their school career. Although pupils are friendly and welcoming, the new arrivals can sometimes change the dynamic of the class and sometimes need close support to settle them into the school's routines.

Because pupils trust the staff, behaviour is good and pupils feel safe in school. They also have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe, for example on the internet or while swimming. Pupils have also responded well to the school's health promotion

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strategies with nearly a half of pupils regularly attending a physical education based club. They have a clear understanding of threats to their health such as smoking or alcohol.

The headteacher leads the school well. She is supported effectively by the deputy headteacher and the relatively new senior leadership team. Targets are challenging and the senior leadership team has an accurate view of learning and teaching.

Self-evaluation is accurate and the developments put in place have led to pupils' improved progress. The school has good capacity for sustained improvement. That said, subject leaders do not have the necessary whole-school experience or confidence in using assessment data to judge the success of their initiatives and observing lessons to further improve learning and standards.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards and improve progress further by:
 - involving pupils in the process of setting their targets
 - ensuring that marking informs pupils of the next steps they should take to improve their work.
- Develop the skills of subject leaders through appropriate training and support and in particular:
 - help them gain confidence in the use of assessment data to evaluate the impact of initiatives
 - give them experience in lesson observation so that they are able to judge the impact of teaching on pupils' learning

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

In a story writing lesson pupils were focused, on task and showed their independence by making good use of dictionaries, thesauri and the table-top aids to encourage an imaginative vocabulary. They were confident to read their work to the rest of the class and listen to the constructive criticism of their peers. In another orienteering lesson pupils displayed good teamwork skills as they negotiated, shared ideas and persuaded each other the direction they should take. In both lessons, pupils behaved well and remained engaged throughout the lesson.

Unconfirmed data indicates that standards at the end of Year 6 in 2010 show improvement in English and mathematics so that English results are close to and mathematics exceed the 2009 national average. The school exceeded its target in mathematics and just missed it in English. The proportion of pupils making expected progress from Year 2 to Year 6 in mathematics was high. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 also show improvement in reading and writing. Historic and current evidence indicates that higher attaining pupils are appropriately challenged. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress as do the very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Middle and lower

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attainers are now being supported effectively to make good progress. School data indicates that pupils who have been in school for a significant period tend to make better progress than recent arrivals. There were no discernible differences between boys' and girls' attitudes or progress in lessons. Pupils' work in the 'Forest School' initiative, which provides pupils with an opportunity to learn about the natural environment and work with others to solve problems, and in religious education and art is outstanding.

The school council is well organised and pupils manage their own budget, making decisions about how to improve their school. Pupils' response to Forest School activities provides an outstanding example of their involvement and contribution to the sustainable development of the local area. Pupils have some involvement in planning their learning but are not involved in negotiating their targets. Pupils take their various roles, responsibilities and duties seriously.

Pupils learn to take responsibility for their actions and develop in confidence and self-esteem. They are given good opportunities to reflect on their lives and the lives of other peoples. It was very clear from discussion with young pupils that they had been very moved by the inherent injustice of apartheid when a visiting speaker talked about his role in the struggle to gain basic rights in South Africa. Cultural development is good because of the outstanding work in religious education, art and other subjects.

Attendance is broadly average. There are a small number of persistent absentees with attendance below 85 % which are mainly due to medical reasons.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2

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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The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Lesson plans use assessment of pupils' prior learning and are adapted to reflect the needs of individuals and groups, although in pupils' books there is often similar work for middle and higher attainers. Other adults contribute effectively to supporting learning and access to the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or other specific needs. Creative approaches, varied teaching styles and cross-curricular activities have generated an increased interest from pupils in their own learning. The school is using specialised assessment materials to provide an accurate fix on where pupils are in their learning and to give a sharper focus to future teaching.

Learning is made memorable through the interesting trips and visitors. Strong partnerships with local sports clubs provide a diverse range of extra-curricular activities. Strong links between subjects evident in the topics motivate pupils to produce work of good quality. The curriculum plan is currently under review. The work on social and emotional aspects of learning makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development.

The school knows its children and families and carers exceedingly well. The systems, pro-active approach and the high level of care are evident in links with specialist agencies and in monitoring pupils' progress. The majority of pupils experience emotional difficulties at some point in their school career and the school's approach to supporting these pupils is embedded across the school. The special needs co-ordinator has reviewed the interventions and support given to these pupils and established strong partnerships with specialists which result in well-targeted support. Specific interventions in literacy and numeracy as well as work to develop confidence and self-esteem are supporting pupils' progress very well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

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There is strong teamwork and a professional ethos. Staff are very committed to the school. Teachers have been encouraged to be reflective practitioners and most have a subject leadership role. Performance management is well established. The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, has an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning. Currently leaders across the school have had little training in lesson observation and rely on an observation schedule which focuses on what the teacher does rather than the impact of teaching on pupils' learning.

Governance is good, providing appropriate challenge and support. There is a good range of personal and professional expertise on the governing body. They monitor the school improvement plan closely and the Chair of the Governing Body meets regularly with the headteacher. Governors consult the parent body through an annual questionnaire and over specific issues such as the school travel plan. All governors participate in an induction training course. They provide strategic direction, for example taking the lunchtime meals 'in house'. The governing body gained the financial management of schools award. The governors take their responsibility regarding safeguarding very seriously, recently reviewing the site security. Staff training, policies, health and safety procedures, risk assessments and careful monitoring of visitors are rigorous and effective.

The school has put in place specific strategies which are leading to pupils' improved and less variable progress. The school is very inclusive in philosophy and very committed to its pupils. The school knows its local community well, is a natural focus and acts to promote community cohesion within the local area. The school has established links with a culturally diverse outer London school and joint working with this school is planned for the next academic year. Religious education, and the work in personal social and health education as well as the work in topics provide pupils with a good understanding of the diversity of modern society. The school has an action plan in place and has conducted an audit which requires further input and refining before planning the next phase of actions.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2

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The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the Reception class. There are good links with parents and carers based on knowledge of the families and a strong focus on care and children's welfare requirements. Adults have good relationships with children; a warm and caring approach helps children feel safe. Areas of learning are linked with a thematic approach so that children learn in relevant, meaningful and fun ways. Ongoing assessment is used to personalise the curriculum but opportunities are sometimes missed, for example, to challenge higher attaining children. Teaching is good with close partnership between teacher and classroom assistants; good use of praise sets a positive tone and they encourage speaking and listening skills well. Good use is made of the outdoor area and transitions from one activity to another are smooth. Children interact well, enjoy their various tasks, respond quickly to instructions and share and take turns. Leadership is reflective, ensuring that the programme of work matches the needs of the children and effectively raises their achievement. The leadership has had a good impact on children's progress through the introduction of various initiatives such as the phonics work. There are good transition arrangements into the Reception class with home visits and good links with the local play-groups. Insufficient use is made of assessment data by the leadership largely because this aspect is managed by the school's assessment leader.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents who responded felt that the school keeps their child safe and promotes a healthy life style; most parents agreed with all the statements in the questionnaire. A few parents disagreed that the school helps them with their child's learning, deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour or responds to their suggestions and concerns. In association with the Children's Centre, the school provides a number of family parenting classes and learning through play sessions. Behaviour in the school is good. Pupils who present challenging behaviour learn to control their behaviour over time because staff manage behaviour in a consistent positive manner, encouraging

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pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour. The school regularly surveys parents' views and uses this information in making its decisions.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Silver End 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 88 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 274 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	58	31	35	3	3	3	3
The school keeps my child safe	57	65	29	33	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	36	41	39	44	9	10	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	43	35	40	7	8	4	5
The teaching is good at this school	39	44	38	43	7	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	40	38	43	13	15	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	57	36	41	2	2	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)	31	35	46	52	5	6	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	41	39	44	9	10	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	38	37	42	10	11	4	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	39	39	44	10	11	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	48	55	30	34	7	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	58	25	28	8	9	2	2

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



19 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Silver End Primary School, Witham, CM8 3RZ

Thank you for making us so welcome in your school. Our particular thanks go to those pupils who gave up some of their lunchtime to talk to us. We were impressed by your thoughtful answers. I would like to share our findings with you.

This is a good school. It helps you make good progress in your work and helps you develop as young people well. Standards at the end of Year 6 are similar to those seen in many schools. You behave well in lessons and around the school and, because the school is a friendly place and staff look after you exceptionally well, you clearly feel safe in school. You also have good understanding of what makes a healthy lifestyle. You have skilled teachers and lessons are interesting because teachers make links between subjects and teach you the skills that you need to be more independent and take more responsibility for your learning. I have asked the headteacher to work with staff and help this process further by involving you in setting your targets and ensuring you know what to do in order to improve your work. The school is led well by the headteacher. She is supported effectively by other staff. I asked the headteacher to help all staff understand the information that the school gathers when it checks on your progress. This will help them focus on the correct things to help improve your learning.

You can all help the school improve further by maintaining your interest and enthusiasm and by asking your teacher if you are unsure how to improve your work.

Yours sincerely

Roderick Passant

Lead inspector

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