

Sutton-on-Sea Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120479
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	339704
Inspection dates	15–16 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Ruth McFarlane

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	197
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr J Monk
Headteacher	Mr D Pearson
Date of previous school inspection	15 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The majority of their time was spent observing learning. Fourteen lessons were observed and eight teachers seen. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, with staff, governors and with local authority personnel. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at planning, minutes of meetings, other documentation including that relating to safeguarding, pupils' work and progress records, and 48 parental questionnaires.

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

- the impact of work to improve pupils' attendance
- the impact of initiatives to improve pupils' progress and attainment in English
- the use of assessment in classroom practice
- middle leaders' contribution to the drive for improvement.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than is usually found. Most of these pupils have dyslexia or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The school has gained a Healthy Schools award. The school takes part in the Intensive Support Programme. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a 30-place Reception class. An interim headteacher joined the school just before the inspection because the substantive headteacher is absent through ill health.

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

Sutton-on-Sea Primary is a satisfactory school. Typically, a parent commented, 'This is a happy, friendly school.' From a good start to learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils achieve satisfactorily overall and their attainment by Year 6 is broadly average. Pupils with dyslexia or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties also make satisfactory progress because of the prompt support they receive. They are fully integrated and involved in this inclusive school community.

English attainment has lagged behind that of the other subjects recently, especially in writing. There are two main reasons for this. First, although teaching is satisfactory and no inadequate teaching was seen, sometimes the written work given to pupils, particularly the more able, does not match their needs and it is limited in its scope for creative thinking. Secondly, pupils sometimes spend too much time being taught in whole class activities which results in their progress and independence in learning being impeded. As one pupil said, 'I'd like a bit more time to get on with my work myself.'

In their questionnaires, a minority of parents and pupils expressed concern about behaviour but records show a decrease in behavioural incidents. This inspection judged behaviour to be satisfactory. Pupils were always polite and helpful to the inspectors, to each other and to their teachers during the inspection. Pupils' understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and how they can stay healthy is good. They feel proud that their school has won a Healthy Schools award. Pupils' personal skills develop satisfactorily overall although attendance is low. School action to improve this aspect is having a strongly positive effect but a very few pupils do not yet attend as regularly as they should.

The very recently arrived interim headteacher has already made a significant start on understanding the school and galvanising the drive forward. The governors, established leaders and managers have a satisfactory awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses and they have correctly identified priorities for improvement. Leaders have introduced a good system to measure pupils' progress across the whole school and to provide quick intervention for any underachievement. However, not all staff have grasped their shared responsibility for ensuring pupils' progress and the use of assessment information in lesson planning is patchy. The effectiveness of middle leaders is mixed. Line management in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not clear and, as a result, no-one takes overall responsibility for maintaining an overview and ensuring all the requirements are met. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained pupils' satisfactory achievement and steady improvement is evident. Initial actions by the interim leaders, and strong support from the local authority, mean that staff are beginning to work together well. Consequently, the school demonstrates a satisfactory

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capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attendance to at least average by January 2011.
 - Raise attainment in English, especially in writing, by:
 - providing tasks which are well matched to pupils' prior attainment, that challenge the more able and promote creative thinking
 - raising teachers' expectations as to what pupils can achieve within a lesson and providing more opportunities for independent working.
- Improve leaders' and managers' effectiveness so that:
 - line management is clear and managers are accountable
 - leadership is distributed more widely so that all staff contribute fully to the drive for improvement
 - all staff understand and improve their role in target setting and monitoring pupils' progress and recognise its importance.
- 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 begin Year 1 with attainment that is in line with that expected for their age. National Curriculum test results in Year 6 have improved steadily year on year for the past five years. Overall attainment across the core subjects matches national averages at the end of Year 6, although attainment in English dipped in 2009, especially in writing. Achievement is satisfactory although uneven from year to year because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and in the use of assessment.

Pupils enjoy learning and concentrate well especially when lessons are interesting and engaging. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who are helped to enjoy their learning because their needs are analysed and suitably addressed. The computer suite buzzed with excited activity when Years 5 and 6 used a new search facility on the internet. Pupils looked at a real-time image of the local high street, identifying potential safety issues. Pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 enjoyed having to think quickly to find snapshot phrases that would appeal to younger readers, in their work describing the synopsis of books. In this type of learning, enjoyment is plain to see and pupils make good progress, using their creative thinking skills well. However, in the majority of lessons, pupils make satisfactory progress. They say that at times, the work is too easy and it is clear that some activities provide insufficient challenge. Nevertheless, work seen in lessons and in books confirms the school's view that pupils' attainment and progress are improving.

Pupils feel safe and cared for, and are emphatic that there is no racist or sexist

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behaviour. Bullying is sometimes a concern and when it does happen, pupils say it is dealt with effectively. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is satisfactory. They are taught about different religions and cultures in lessons and assemblies. The school council gathers pupils' views and has opportunities to meet governors and influence the school's decisions in matters of equipment and resources. The school's satisfactory partnerships with local schools, organisations and individuals have made a positive impact on all aspects of pupils' learning and development. Pupils develop satisfactory skills to prepare them for success in later life and their attendance, whilst still low, is showing sustained improvement.

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	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
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	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Most teaching is satisfactory and it is supported by a sound curriculum. The provision enables pupils to make satisfactory progress in English and mathematics and to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Some visits support learning in a number of subjects. For example, a regular residential visit to an activity and information and communication technology centre provides good opportunities for pupils

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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to develop physical skills as well as sparking an interest in new technology. Some good teaching was seen in lessons and is evident from the work in pupils' books. In the better lessons, teachers use interesting and exciting methods to interest and engage pupils. For example, this was evident where pupils worked in groups and had different tasks aimed at identifying the features of poetry. In these cases, the teaching is brisk, and staff have high expectations of work and behaviour. Where teaching is less effective, pupils spend too long listening to teachers talking rather than working on tasks and activities that would extend their knowledge and skills. Teachers use the information they have about pupils' progress satisfactorily in setting work for broad ability groups. In some cases, this work is not well matched to pupils' individual needs, the more able in particular. The quality of marking is variable: some, but not all, teachers offer useful advice and guidance for further improvement.

The school provides satisfactory pastoral care, guidance and support. Pupils agree that they have an adult to turn to if they want to talk about something or need help. The support provided to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities meets their needs satisfactorily. Typically, parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs speak well of the school and appreciate the care and support their children receive, and how the school successfully includes them in learning and other activities.

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?

Records show that governors and senior leaders are working together satisfactorily to realise their vision for the school. This is one reason why standards in Year 6 have been gradually rising. The interim leadership, supported by intensive assistance from the local authority, has immediately got to work in assessing where gaps are, for instance in recording attendance and in the accountability of the Early Years leadership, and already staff have embarked on effective improvement strategies. Strategies introduced to improve outcomes for pupils, particularly behaviour, have been particularly successful recently. Monitoring of teaching and learning is carried out satisfactorily and evaluations are accurate. However, monitoring has not always been carried out with the rigour and regularity needed to provide a sufficiently detailed and reliable picture of the school's performance. As a result, inconsistency in teaching and learning persists, reflected in the fluctuating attainment in some classes. Not all staff are aware of the priorities to accelerate progress because only a few are held accountable.

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The school's promotion of equal opportunities and the way it tackles discrimination is satisfactory. This is illustrated, for example, by the satisfactory achievement of its pupils with additional needs. The school's effectiveness in promoting community cohesion is satisfactory. It has developed a clear awareness of its local community but broader links and understanding are at an early stage. The governing body offers a sound level of challenge and support. It has worked successfully to try and involve more parents and carers in the life and work of the school. Along with the substantive headteacher, governors have developed and extended the satisfactory partnerships which are benefitting pupils. The interim headteacher is already working with governors to enhance the benefits further. Safeguarding is given satisfactory emphasis, including careful checks of adults' suitability to work with children, and statutory requirements are met.

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 learn well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress from a level which is low for their age. As a result, by the end of Reception, they attain broadly expected levels in all areas of learning, most notably in language and personal development. These good outcomes are largely because teaching is good and significant improvements to the outdoor and indoor learning environment have resulted in children accessing a wider range of experiences that enhance their skills and development well. Children are secure and happy, and their confidence, motivation and social skills all grow as a result. One child excitedly told the class, 'There are four vowels in my name!' Children apply themselves well to the interesting tasks and develop concentration and

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perseverance. The curriculum meets children's needs well. Activities are well planned, with an appropriate balance between teacher-led and child-initiated activities. Speaking skills are encouraged well. The well-established routines and good modelling by the staff mean that children learn to cooperate. Adults care very much about the children and ensure their physical, social and emotional needs are met. Relationships with parents and carers are good. Leadership is satisfactory because it is shared between three practitioners and no-one has the overview of Early Years Foundation Stage requirements. Ultimate line management responsibility is not clear. This has meant that leaders have not been aware of some requirements, although they moved speedily to put them in place as soon as they were made aware of them.

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	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Nine out of 10 responses to the parental questionnaire strongly support the school's work. Parents and carers expressed full support for the way the school keeps their children safe. A few parents or carers expressed concern about the way the school deals with unacceptable behaviour, helps their children to have a healthy lifestyle and takes account of parents' and carers' suggestions. The inspection team found clear records that show unacceptable behaviour is dealt with promptly, and inspectors noted that pupils generally behaved well during the inspection. This, taken with the previous high number of pupil exclusions, led to their judgement of behaviour as satisfactory overall. There are good opportunities for parents' and carers' suggestions to be considered, and the school's Healthy School award supports pupils' good awareness in this aspect.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sutton-on-Sea Community 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 48 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 197 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	25	52	21	44	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	34	71	13	27	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	19	40	29	60	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	31	29	60	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	19	40	27	56	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	42	26	54	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	31	28	58	5	10	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)	11	23	30	63	3	6	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	33	29	60	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	25	26	54	6	13	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	21	30	63	4	8	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	14	29	32	67	1	2	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	22	46	24	50	1	2	1	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 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.



18 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sutton-on-Sea Community Primary School, Mablethorpe, LN12 2HU

I am writing to thank you for being friendly and helpful when the inspectors visited your school. I would particularly like to thank those of you who spoke with inspectors and those who completed the questionnaire.

We found that your school is satisfactory. That means some things are good and some could be better. The inspectors found positive things about your school such as your good attitudes and your willingness to learn. Most lessons are satisfactory and some are good. You told us how much you enjoy school, and you like to exercise and eat healthily. Some of you take part in the extra activities your school provides, and said especially how much you like the Tai Kwon Do. We looked carefully at your behaviour because some of you alerted inspectors to concerns about it in your questionnaire responses. Your parents and teachers also mentioned this. We judged your behaviour to be satisfactory overall. During the inspection, it was often good.

Some of you do not attend school regularly enough and this has been going on for some time.

We have asked the governors and senior staff to do some things to make your learning better:

- to make sure attendance improves so that it is about the same as average
- to help you improve your writing skills by expecting plenty of work and higher standards
- to make sure that you are always given work in class that matches the next steps in your learning so that you make the best possible progress
- to help teachers who are also managers to do that part of their job well and check carefully how well you are doing.

You can help by continuing to work hard, doing your best and coming to school every day.

Yours sincerely

Ruth McFarlane

Lead inspector

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