

Sutton CofE VC Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121058
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	339850
Inspection dates	30 June –1 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Godfrey Bancroft

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	50
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	George Cunningham
Headteacher	Barbara Carter
Date of previous school inspection	15 November 2006
School address	Denise Close off Laxfield Road Sutton
Telephone number	01692 580608
Fax number	01692 580608
Email address	office@sutton.norfolk.sch.uk

Age group	4–7
Inspection dates	30 June –1 July 2010
Inspection number	339850

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

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

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector observed five lessons and three teachers. The inspector held discussions with parents and carers, members of staff, members of the governing body and with pupils. School documentation was analysed, including data about assessment and pupils' progress, plans for future developments, minutes of governing body meetings and other external evaluations of the school's work. The inspector also considered the views of parents and carers by analysing 34 questionnaires.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at the following:

- the impact of the school's actions to raise standards in writing and science
- the success of the school's action to close the gap in attainment between boys and girls
- how staff, in addition to the headteacher, contribute to the leadership and management of the school
- how the governing body gains an insight into the work of the school.

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than others of its type. The percentage of pupils known to be entitled to a free school meal is broadly average. The great majority of pupils are White British. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs is broadly average, although within this group the percentage who have a statement of special educational needs is above average.

The school is emerging from a period of instability due to illness, absence and the restructuring of staffing.

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 that is improving rapidly following a period of instability caused by illness, absence and the restructuring of staffing. The headteacher and governors have brought together a dedicated team of teachers, resulting in increasing progress and steadily rising standards. The work of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and those pupils currently in Year 1 shows that the rise in standards is set to continue. Standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly average with pupils achieving well and making good progress from their various starting points. All teachers make a good contribution to school development by providing, for example, strong leadership for the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and working together to lead improvements in subjects. The attainment of boys has improved to the extent that it is close to that of girls and some boys are making outstanding progress in mathematics. The school's assessment information, pupils' work and the progress seen in lessons provide clear evidence that standards are also rising in writing and science. Teaching is good, particularly the teaching of the basic skills of reading, mathematics and information and communication technology, which builds effectively on pupils' previous learning and knowledge. However, the scrutiny of pupils' work shows there are not enough opportunities for older pupils to undertake sustained, independent writing. Consequently, too few pupils do well for their age in writing. Similarly, teachers do not focus closely enough or often enough on pupils' individual learning targets and what they need to do to achieve them.

The care of its pupils is at the heart of the school's work, to the extent that care, guidance and support are outstanding. Even so, some parents and carers are still concerned about some aspects of the school's work. That said, parents are generally pleased with the education their children receive. One parent said, 'I can't ask for a better school or teaching staff.' Another commented, 'This is a lovely happy school.' These views are supported by pupils, who clearly enjoy their learning. One of the pupils in Year 2 reflected the views of many in saying, 'I like everything about my school.' Other outstanding features of the school's work are pupils' knowledge of the importance of eating healthy food and taking regular exercise, and their contribution to the school community. Pupils' behaviour in lessons, at break times and lunch is also outstanding.

The governing body is very supportive of the school's work and plays a part in evaluating all aspects of its performance. Arrangements for self-evaluation are rigorous and accurate. Given the clear vision for improvement of the headteacher and governing body, and the continuing pattern of rising standards, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is good.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sustain the pattern of rising standards in writing by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to undertake independent writing and to develop and apply their writing skills through longer writing activities
- Ensure that pupils are involved fully in understanding the progress they are making and what they need to do to improve by:
 - making sure they know their individual learning targets and how to achieve them
 - involving them fully in reviewing the progress they are making towards their targets.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy their learning and achieve well. Because of good teaching, the rate of pupils' progress is accelerating. Higher attaining pupils do well and are challenged appropriately, other than not having enough opportunities to apply their well developed basic skills in independent writing. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do well because their needs are recognised and they are supported effectively by teachers and by teaching assistants.

Attendance is broadly average. This is mainly because of some long-term illness and the successful reduction of unauthorised absence. In discussion, pupils report feeling safe and well cared for. Their behaviour is excellent. They are enthusiastic learners and apply themselves well during lessons. They also behave very sensibly in the playground. Pupils have an exceptional understanding of the importance of eating healthily and the benefits of taking frequent exercise. Every day all pupils eat fruit, which helps to lay the foundation for their knowledge. Pupils have a good understanding of the wider world and other cultures and beliefs. For example, they provide support for a child in the Congo. They make an outstanding contribution to their own school community. They are ever willing to assume responsibility, taking great pride in being part of the school council, the eco-committee or being a librarian. The older pupils take care of the younger children and their commitment to managing the school's gardens, with its vegetable crops and range of flowers, is exceptional. Pupils are also very knowledgeable about, and take great satisfaction in visiting, the school's outstanding wildlife area.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' singing in assemblies is excellent. Their thoughtful and reflective contributions to the 'thought for the day' provide a telling example of pupils' excellent spiritual development. Pupils acquire a strong grounding in the basic skills of reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology. These skills, along with their exceptional social skills, prepare them well for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan lessons with content that is matched well to the full range of abilities in each class. Pupils clearly find learning enjoyable. They are well motivated because activities capture their interest and build on their previous knowledge and progress. Assessment is accurate and used well to track pupils' progress and to respond to their needs. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to evaluate for themselves how well they are doing as they progress towards their individual learning targets. The promotion of basic skills is an effective feature of many lessons, especially the promotion of pupils' mental and oral mathematical skills.

The curriculum meets pupils' needs well. It strikes a good balance between supporting their personal development and promoting their academic progress. The topic based approach to learning in subjects such as geography, history and science, helps pupils to see how learning in different subjects is linked. The majority of topics begin with a memorable educational visit or special focus day, which helps to capture pupils' enthusiasm and interest. Their learning is also supplemented well by visitors to the school and by additional activities, such as computer club, gardening club and multi-sports. Many pupils comment on how much they enjoy these activities.

Pupils have every confidence that they can turn to adults for support if they have any problems, be they academic or personal. The needs of any pupils, who because of their circumstances, might potentially be at risk, are given meticulous attention. In this

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

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

respect, liaison with parents and carers is strong. The needs of any pupil who shows signs of falling behind are quickly recognised and responded to very effectively. Teaching assistants provide excellent support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	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?

The headteacher, staff and governors work together closely to ensure that each pupil enjoys their education and can do as well as possible. Staff support each other well in evaluating the quality of teaching and this has contributed to improvements in provision. Self-evaluation is accurate, and planning for development is thoughtfully structured. As a result, suitably challenging targets are set which are usually met. Underpinning the current pattern of school improvement, and overcoming former staffing difficulties, is the sensitive and supportive leadership of the headteacher, which ensures that staff are well motivated and committed to school development.

While several parents are concerned about aspects of its work, the school nevertheless promotes a strong partnership with parents and carers. The sharing of information about pupils' progress and about school events is good. There is a parents' council that ensures their views are brought to the attention of the governing body. Governors and staff are readily available every day to listen to parents' and carers' concerns and to respond to their views. Partnerships with external support agencies to promote pupils' progress are also good.

The governing body does a good job. Governors are forward thinking and knowledgeable about all aspects of the school's work. In partnership with the headteacher, they see to it that procedures to ensure pupils' safety are effective and meet requirements. They are fully committed and successful in ensuring the school meets its obligations to promote community cohesion. As a result, pupils are involved very well in all aspects of school life and have a good understanding of the wider world. The governing body and staff also ensure that there is good equality of opportunity for all and eliminate all forms of discrimination. The effective management of the school's finances and resources is a notable strength with spending monitored closely to assess its impact on pupils' learning. The school provides good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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
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

Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, with children achieving well and making good progress. The current group of children joined the Reception class with attainment that was broadly in line with that expected for their age. They are on course to start Year 1 with a significant number exceeding the early learning goals for their age, while others are working within the expected range. This is because teaching is good and planned activities meet children's needs well in all areas of their learning. There is a good balance between activities that children can choose for themselves and those in which they have close adult support. All the areas of learning are covered effectively in the classroom and are supplemented by carefully planned activities using the school's excellent outdoor provision.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is managed well. Everything necessary is done to ensure that children can play and work safely. Just like older pupils, children are very well informed about the importance of eating healthily and taking regular exercise. This is typified by their response to the daily supply of fruit, which they eat happily. Children's progress is assessed frequently and the response to any who raise concerns, be they academic or personal, is prompt and helpful. In this respect, liaison with parents and carers is also good. Progress in the personal and social development of some children is excellent. The children work well together in groups and sustain their concentration and independence to good effect. Good progress is also evident in the acquisition of basic skills. For example, children communicate well and their speaking and listening exceeds the level expected for their age. A similar picture is evident in number work and the use of computers. Very effective use of the outdoor learning areas makes a significant contribution to children's good progress in their physical

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

development and their knowledge and understanding of the world.

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

A large proportion of parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaire. The majority say their children enjoy school. With the exception of this question, quite a high proportion of respondents either disagree or strongly disagree with the other questions about the school's work. More than 20% of respondents feel the school does not give them enough help to support their children's learning. A similar proportion feel the school does not deal with unacceptable behaviour effectively. During the inspection, there was no evidence to support these concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sutton CofE VC Infant 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 inspector received 34 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 50 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	56	12	33	2	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	50	11	31	4	11	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	7	19	21	58	3	8	3	8
My child is making enough progress at this school	7	19	20	56	2	6	4	11
The teaching is good at this school	10	28	17	47	4	11	3	8
The school helps me to support my child's learning	8	22	17	47	5	14	3	8
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	12	33	18	50	2	6	2	6
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	31	14	39	4	11	2	6
The school meets my child's particular needs	10	28	18	50	3	8	3	8
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	6	17	19	53	4	11	4	11
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	22	20	56	4	11	4	11
The school is led and managed effectively	9	25	16	44	4	11	4	11
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	42	12	33	3	8	3	8

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	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.



2 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sutton CofE VC Infant School, Norwich, NR12 9QP

My thanks to those of you who took time to tell me about your school and to show me your work when I visited recently. Yours is a good school in which the teaching helps you to do well. There are many things about your school that I think are good.

You behave exceptionally well and work hard in your lessons.

Your computer and number skills are good.

Your writing is getting better all the time.

Your knowledge of how to stay healthy is outstanding.

You are always ready to offer your assistance to make the school run smoothly

Your headteacher, teachers and teaching assistants give you lots of help for you to do your best.

Your headteacher and governing body do their best to make sure that you have everything you need to learn successfully.

Your headteacher and governing body are always looking to make the school even better and to improve your learning opportunities. With this in mind, I have asked them to:

- give you more opportunities to use your spelling, punctuation and sentence making skills to produce longer pieces of writing
- involve you more in deciding how well you are making progress and in knowing what you need to do to achieve your targets.

I would like to wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Godfrey Bancroft

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.