

Seely CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122786
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	340214
Inspection dates	15–16 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Richard Marsden

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	67
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Martin Lassetter
Headteacher	Ms Jane Starbuck
Date of previous school inspection	16 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The majority of the time was spent looking at learning; all three class teachers were observed over a total of nine lessons. Meetings were held with parents, groups of pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at safeguarding documentation, attendance records, evidence of pupils' progress, planning documents, and questionnaires from pupils, staff and 49 parents.

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

- the attainment of pupils on entry to the school and the progress and standards of current pupils
- the procedures for reviewing pupils' progress
- the school's capacity to improve, in the light of the unsettled period of leadership after the last inspection.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than most schools. Only a very few pupils live in the school's sparsely populated rural catchment area; all others travel from nearby Nottingham. The proportion of pupils who join the school at times other than the Reception Year is high, in some year groups over 50%. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than average, and the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is significantly higher than average. Most pupils are of White British origin, and no pupils at the present time have English as an additional language. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes. The school holds the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards.

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

The school provides a good education for its pupils. In keeping with its Christian ethos, it celebrates the self-worth of all its pupils and places a high value on nurturing them as individuals. The promotion of equal opportunities and the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Pupils are very well known as individuals, and pupils, parents and staff speak very favourably about the school's 'family atmosphere'. In a caring environment, pupils thrive not just academically but in all aspects of their development.

After the last inspection, a long-standing headteacher retired and, for two years, there was a lack of continuity in leadership. This, together with falling rolls, eroded confidence. The present headteacher arrived a year ago and has worked hard to re-establish systems and procedures. She has galvanised the staff into a highly committed team with a vision to achieve excellence for all pupils. Through rigorous self-evaluation, staff have a clear idea of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school roll has now stabilised. Staff are keen that the school should continue to improve and have clear plans in place to bring this about. The capacity to improve is therefore good.

Progress in lessons is consistently good. Pupils enjoy their learning. They respond well to the warmth and encouragement of their teachers, and lessons are purposeful and well-planned. From below average starting points, pupils' progress over time is good. The school keeps detailed tracking records, although these are not as well developed or as helpful in science as in English and mathematics.

Literacy has been a special focus in recent years, and in national assessments pupils have attained more highly in reading, writing and mathematics than in science. Work is regularly marked and teachers keep detailed records to help them plan and ensure that pupils progress well. Oral feedback given to pupils is consistently good, but the quality of written feedback is inconsistent across subjects. In science, in particular, it does not consistently show pupils how to improve.

The school works very well with parents to promote pupils' education. It persists energetically with families who find it hard to engage with their child's education. Although attendance figures are skewed by a small number of persistent absentees the school has worked very hard with the families of these children to improve their attendance, and figures are beginning to rise.

Pupils from different backgrounds get on noticeably well with each other and the school has made a careful analysis of its work to promote community cohesion. Despite its isolated location, it provides good opportunities for pupils to engage with groups in the

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local community. It has plans to widen these to include other parts of the United Kingdom and overseas, but these are, as yet, underdeveloped.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the attainment of pupils at Key Stage 2 in science by:
 - tracking their progress more effectively
 - ensuring that written feedback given to pupils shows them clearly how to improve.
- Broaden the opportunities for pupils to have contact with communities beyond the school, including those in other parts of the United Kingdom and abroad.

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

In lessons, pupils concentrate well, enjoy interesting and varied activities, and work well both collaboratively and individually. From below-average starting points, they progress well so that by the end of Year 6 attainment is broadly average. There are no discernible variations in the progress made by boys and girls.

The school attracts relatively large numbers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities who often have had difficulties settling into other schools. However, staff identify their needs carefully and, through flexible curriculum arrangements and good support from well-briefed teaching assistants, ensure that these pupils settle in quickly and progress as well as the others.

Pupils told inspectors repeatedly how much they enjoy being part of a small school where everyone knows each other and where they feel the adults care for them. They state confidently that they feel safe in school and pupils are carefully supervised to ensure their safety at all times. Most pupils say that there is no bullying and if any were to occur, they would know immediately who to go to for help. They are also well informed about internet safety and cyber-bullying. Behaviour is good, both in lessons and at other times. Older pupils show patience and care towards younger ones. Pupils pursue a healthy lifestyle and are proud of the Healthy Schools award. Around two-thirds of pupils eat a nutritious, healthy lunch cooked on site each day. Others bring healthy snacks. They know the benefits of healthy eating and regular exercise.

Pupils take on responsibilities in their school and the wider community. These include writing a regular school newsletter and acting as librarians or dining room helpers. The school council took a leading role in raising funds for the new, and very popular, 'trim trail' in the school grounds. Pupils are active in raising money for a variety of charities. The school is careful to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities take up these opportunities.

Pupils' basic skills are applied well across a range of situations. This, along with the confidence they develop as they take on leadership roles or work together in groups, prepares them well for their future in the world of work.

Pupils reflect frequently on values, including Christian as well as those from other

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traditions, and the school's links with the church help foster pupils' outstanding spiritual development. Pupils have an excellent insight into what is right and wrong. Each year, the whole school takes responsibility for reviewing and updating the behaviour code. Pupils' support for one another is impressive. They act, for example, as 'buddies' to help new pupils settle in, or as play leaders to make sure no-one is left out of playground games. Pupils learn about many other cultures and can explain clearly what it means to see things from another person's point of view.

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
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	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan lessons well. They take good account of pupils' prior learning and draw upon their own detailed knowledge of how pupils learn best. Activities are therefore motivating and well matched to pupils' abilities and individual needs. They include group work, paired work and plenty of hands-on learning, both indoors and out. Pupils use computers confidently to support their learning. Relationships are relaxed and pupils respond well to their teachers' praise and encouragement. In the mixed-age classes, teachers take care to ensure that tasks are appropriately challenging. Teaching

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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assistants provide valuable support so that pupils very frequently work in small groups according to their capabilities. One-to-one support for those at risk of falling behind features strongly.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and stimulating. It includes regular 'themed days', on, for example, the Victorians, the Vikings and the ancient Greeks. Every opportunity is taken to exploit the school's location adjacent to a country park. Regular nature walks ('welly walks') ensure that pupils are well informed about the local environment and the changing patterns of nature. The school's small size means it can respond flexibly as opportunities arise. At the time of the inspection, lessons were suspended briefly for the recording of a song by the local radio station. This made pupils feel proud of their school, as well as part of a wider community. The number and range of extra-curricular activities is good. The school links with others to provide opportunities in sport, music, and the arts, and take-up is good.

The school takes exceptional care to ensure that no pupil feels left out of any activity. The support for pupils facing challenging circumstances is particularly strong. When pupils arrive from other schools, great care is taken by staff and other pupils to ensure that they settle in quickly and feel at home. Pupils say they feel very well advised and supported as they prepare to move on to secondary school.

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?

The staff form a cohesive and well-led team. They talk enthusiastically about pupils' learning and their plans and ambitions to improve this further. They share ideas and support and challenge each other as they strive for excellence for all pupils. Regular and accurate monitoring of teaching and learning gives them a clear view of strengths and areas for improvement, and clear time frames within which to bring about changes.

Governors are committed and knowledgeable about the school and the challenges it faces. They offer a high level of support and challenge to the headteacher. The school works in partnership with a range of others for the benefit of the pupils. These include, for example, the Wildlife Trust, local businesses and schools, and services which help support pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable.

In promoting equality of opportunity and ensuring that all thrive, the school is outstanding. Pupils say how they feel valued. Boys and girls, and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully involved in all aspects of the school,

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including taking leadership roles. Procedures for the safeguarding of children meet all statutory requirements and are kept under regular review. Records and documentation are particularly well kept and clear.

The school is a harmonious and cohesive community and has made a clear analysis of its contribution to community cohesion in terms of its religious, ethnic and socio-economic context. The impact is still uneven, however, because pupils do not have enough opportunities for contact with community groups beyond the immediate locality, including those in other parts of the United Kingdom and abroad.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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	1
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

On entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are assessed carefully so that their progress can be tracked accurately. They arrive with attainment which is below the expected levels for their age, but they progress well so that by the end of the Reception Year they are working broadly in line with expected levels. They are taught in a class which also contains Year 1 and 2 pupils, but different activities are provided according to children's prior attainment, and teaching assistants are well deployed to ensure that children work at a level appropriate to their needs. Rhymes, singing and movement feature strongly in their day-to-day work. Children have opportunities to work and play independently, and they benefit from outdoor learning. However, the building restricts opportunities for children to move flexibly between indoor and outdoor learning areas. This narrows the opportunities for them to make choices in their learning and thus to develop independence. The Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator has a clear overview of the strengths and area for development, and clear timescales for

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improvement.

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

Questionnaires were received from a high proportion of parents and carers. A very small minority expressed concern about the way the school deals with behaviour although inspectors found nothing but good behaviour during the inspection. In the main, parents' questionnaires were overwhelmingly positive and show very high levels of satisfaction with the school. The following comment was typical of many:

'My son moved to this school after having difficulties at his old school. The school has been fantastic. The pastoral care is outstanding and they have reawakened his interest in learning.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Seely CofE 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 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 66 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	61	15	31	4	8	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	82	9	18	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	34	71	14	29	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	67	15	31	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	35	71	14	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	63	18	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	59	20	41	0	0	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)	25	56	20	44	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	53	23	47	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	58	15	31	5	10	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	54	19	41	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	31	63	16	33	2	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	71	14	29	0	0	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

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



17 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Seely CofE Primary School, Arnold, NG5 8PQ

Thank you all for being so welcoming and helpful to us when we visited your school recently. Your parents value the work your school does for you and many of you were very proud to tell us how much you like coming to school. You go to a good school and here are some of the things we liked about your school:

- you work hard in lessons and make good progress because you are taught well
- your behaviour is good, you show lots of care towards each other, and you help to make your school a happy place
- you live healthy lives and know how to stay safe
- your headteacher and the people who manage your school are doing a good job
- you have lots of opportunities to take responsibility either in school or in the wider community
- you are well prepared as you move up to your secondary school.

This is what we have asked your headteacher and teachers to do to make your school even better:

- make sure that older pupils do as well in science as in reading, writing and mathematics
- provide more opportunities for you to have contact with people who are different from you, for example people in other parts of United Kingdom or other countries.

You can play your part by attending well and working hard.

I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Richard Marsden

Lead inspector

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