

Sneyd Green Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123988
Local Authority	Stoke-On-Trent
Inspection number	340466
Inspection dates	7–8 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Judith Straw

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	364
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Walley
Headteacher	Mrs Rosina Lee
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 19 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at 64 parent, 90 pupil and 32 staff questionnaires. Inspectors also looked through school and subject improvement plans, curriculum plans, school policies and procedures, and the data and information about pupils' current and recent performance. The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the attainment and progress of boys, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and pupils whose first language is not English to determine the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation
- progress and attainment in mathematics across the school and in writing in Key Stage 1 to determine whether teaching in these areas is challenging enough
- whether improvements to the curriculum and better teaching have enhanced pupils' enjoyment and achievement
- the extent to which provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is bringing about better outcomes for the youngest children.

Information about the school

This is a much larger than average primary school serving an area of some social disadvantage. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, although an increasing proportion of pupils come from other ethnic backgrounds. A few pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The Early Years Foundation Stage is provided for in a Nursery and two Reception classes. The school currently manages a before and after-school and holiday care club, 'Kidswatch', in two rooms in a large porta-cabin situated in the school grounds. The club is registered for up to 48 children.

The school holds the Activemark, Artsmark and ECO schools bronze awards. Sneyd Green is working towards the National Healthy Schools Award at the end of this term.

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

Sneyd Green is a good school that nurtures its pupils and helps them to achieve. Strong and visionary leadership by the headteacher and chair of governors, combined with the hard work of all the staff, have brought about major improvements in most aspects of the school's provision since the last inspection.

From starting points that are broadly typical for their age, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage progress well so that many children are now exceeding the learning goals set for them. Standards at the end of Year 6 have been average in English and mathematics and above average in science for the last two years. They are now rising. The school has worked hard to raise the attainment of all pupils by improving the quality of teaching and learning. The school has been successful in improving the performance of boys in Key Stage 2 and in English overall but, as yet, strategies to improve writing have had less impact on the quality of pupils' work. Standards are rising more slowly in mathematics than in English and this area is currently a focus for school improvement. Mental arithmetic is a weakness. The school's meticulous tracking records identify the progress of all pupils and show that standards are rising in every year group and both key stages, and that the rate of progress is accelerating.

Teaching and learning are good although in a minority of lessons teaching is no better than satisfactory. In such lessons, progress is slower and there are occasionally missed opportunities to challenge all pupils to achieve their best. Pupils speak with real enthusiasm about their enjoyment of school and their pride in being members of this community. One of the reasons for this is the stimulating curriculum which excites children and motivates them to learn. Speaking for many, one parent noted how 'at sport's days, concerts and events you can actually feel the enthusiasm, happiness and care'. This was certainly the case at the harvest festival which took place during the inspection where the singing was magnificent. The curriculum provides well for varying abilities of pupils and has a good focus on sport, the arts and promoting pupils' personal development. The school takes good care of its pupils and ensures they are safe and happy. The care club provides a secure and stimulating environment for the pupils who attend.

Pupils are articulate, friendly and positive about their learning and their school. They behave well and make a good contribution to school life and the local community. Their knowledge of national and international communities is more limited. Pupils say they feel safe and very well cared for, they are free from any kind of harassment and know how to keep safe and healthy.

Leaders and managers have accelerated progress for all pupils since the last inspection

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and have improved teaching, learning, the curriculum and overall provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Self-evaluation is rigorous and provides an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Based on the track record of success the school has a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate learning and progress across the school in mathematics by focusing on mental mathematics.
- Improve the quality of pupils' writing in all key stages by providing more opportunities for pupils to undertake extended pieces of writing.
- Extend pupils' understanding of national and international communities by improving national and international links with other schools.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The majority of pupils demonstrate good progress in lessons. They are willing learners and are keen to do well. The majority of lessons are enjoyable and increase pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Data held by the school, together with evidence gained from the inspection, show that the progress of all year groups is increasing and that standards are rising across the school. Standards in tests at the end of Year 2 show that, compared to the time of the last inspection, pupils are making better progress in all areas except writing. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they are well supported. They attain well in comparison to similar pupils nationally. Pupils who speak a home language other than English achieve well.

Pupils are reflective and demonstrate their ability to consider their own strengths and weaknesses and how these may impact on the well-being of others. They behave well and have very positive attitudes to learning. They willingly take on a range of responsibilities such as being play leaders or members of the school council. Older pupils say they want to set a good example to the younger ones. Pupils are keen participants in the many activities available to them and speak with pride about their school and its achievements. A typical comment in the pupils' questionnaires was 'school is good to learn in and I love it'. At the last inspection many pupils said that they did not enjoy school. This is resoundingly no longer the case. Business and enterprise activities give pupils a good understanding of life beyond school. Their good basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills ensure that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils who attend the after school care club say that they enjoy the many activities on offer.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is consistently good across most subjects and all key stages with some that is outstanding. Lessons are planned with a clear focus for learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and inject pace and challenge into lessons so that most classrooms are busy and interesting, full of activities well-matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported by teaching assistants and able to take a full part in all that the school offers. Teachers use information and communication technology well so that learning is enriched. Pupils are equally adept in their use of this technology and gain good knowledge and skills. Assessment systems are good. Pupils' work is marked frequently and helpfully so that they are praised for what they can do and advised how to do better. In a small number of lessons, teaching is satisfactory rather than good because learning is slower and there are missed opportunities to challenge pupils. Although teaching is good overall, strategies to raise standards in writing are not yet fully established.

The curriculum, judged to be unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection, has been transformed. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about their work in school and enjoy the many activities provided for them. They receive a good grounding in the basic skills. Themed weeks enhance pupils' understanding of the world, increase their enjoyment of learning and provide opportunities for them to apply their skills across a range of subjects. Pupils have the opportunity to learn French and the strong curriculum for personal, social and moral education contributes effectively to their safety, well-being and social development. Pupils have a good understanding of their local community but there is more to do in developing their understanding of wider national and international

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communities. The school is a leader in the city's 'College in the Community' scheme in which families have access to training and support. Enrichment is an outstanding feature of the curriculum. There are many visits and visitors and frequent residential trips. This year pupils will visit France as the school works to promote closer links with a school in Normandy. The school provides enrichment in arts and sports particularly well, for example, a Scottish opera company worked with pupils and parents to present a memorable performance.

The school takes good care of its pupils. Pastoral care is of a high calibre and, as a result, pupils say they feel safe and can go to adults with any problems they may have. Good links with other agencies provide support as required. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective and ensures these pupils make good progress. They are fully included in all that the school provides. Pupils whose first language is not English make rapid progress due to tailored guidance and they and their parents are effectively supported. The school has many strategies to promote attendance which is steadily rising so that it is now above average.

The after-school club provides a well planned range of activities that link with topics the pupils are learning in school. A wide range of activities is offered both inside and outdoors. Pupils enjoy good healthy snacks and there is ample supervision from the staff for those who need a little extra care and attention.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The good leadership and management team is reflective and nurtures a clear sense of a united school community. There is effective team work and everyone shares the same vision of a continually improving and developing school. Rigorous procedures to monitor all aspects of the school's work mean that the leadership team has an accurate view of strengths and has identified weaknesses and deals with them effectively. Staff are totally focused on raising pupils' achievement, promoting pupils' personal development, and ensuring that they enjoy their education.

The school ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed. Policies to ensure pupils are safe are rigorously adhered to and safeguarding procedures are robust and effective. All current government requirements are met. The school is promoting community cohesion well: it ensures that pupils gain a deepening understanding of citizenship and a good awareness of major world faiths. The school's good strategies to

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promote knowledge of national and international communities have not yet had enough impact on pupils' understanding. It has conducted a thorough audit and has identified the need to improve national and international links. There is an effective partnership with parents who are kept well informed and have opportunities to learn how to help their children at home.

Effective and well-informed leadership in the after-school club ensures that all possible policies relating to safeguarding, health and safety and providing a safe environment for pupils are met and often exceeded. The club is particularly effective in ensuring that pupils understand about how to live a healthy lifestyle

Governors support and challenge the school well. They have a very accurate picture of strengths and weaknesses and are proactive in seeking ways to improve all aspects of provision. Strong financial management ensures that the school gives good value for money.

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	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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. All the children are happy, enthusiastic and are developing into active learners. Children enter the Nursery with skills broadly in line with what is expected for their age; when they leave, a higher proportion of children reach the early learning goals set than is found nationally. This represents good progress. Writing and number work are the weakest areas. This has been identified by the school and teachers are developing strategies to address this. Children behave well and are eager to take on responsibility as class helpers. They

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cooperate well and develop good independent learning skills. They have good relationships with adults and feel safe and secure. Children enjoy the numerous activities provided for them to explore, play and learn. Staff devise imaginative activities which absorb the children's interest. For example, one little girl was entranced as she described the singing of a mermaid that she could hear in a sea shell.

All adults support the learning and development of the children well and have access to appropriate training. This is a bright, stimulating and vibrant department which is well resourced. Teachers plan lessons which provide a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. There have been major improvements to the outdoor provision since the last inspection and children now have access to a safe, stimulating environment outdoors.

High quality planning and organisation ensures that every child is suitably challenged. Observations of children's learning are accurate and frequent. There are very effective partnerships with parents and outside agencies to ensure that all pupils make progress. Diligent arrangements for promoting children's welfare are in place so that children are safe, healthy and well cared for.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led. There is a common sense of purpose shared by all the adults involved. Good leadership has an accurate understanding of the strengths of the provision and the ways in which it can be further improved. All statutory requirements regarding welfare and learning development are met in the after-school club.

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

The majority of parents are warm in their praise of the school. Many expressed complete satisfaction with what the school offers. Parents particularly appreciate the improvements to teaching and the curriculum, the commitment of all the adults in school to helping their children to achieve and the support given to children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Parents value the increasingly wide and engaging curriculum and the outstanding range of opportunities for children to learn outside the classroom. A minority of parents felt there was insufficient notice before events, some raised concerns about mixed-age classes and some would like more information on the progress their children make between reports and parents evenings. The school has taken note of these concerns and will attempt to address them.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sneyd Green 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 64 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 364 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	48	30	47	3	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	56	27	42	0	0	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	19	30	33	52	10	16	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	36	30	47	7	11	3	5
The teaching is good at this school	24	38	35	55	4	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	25	33	52	11	17	4	6
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	36	35	55	5	8	1	2
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)	22	34	31	48	8	13	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	33	31	48	9	14	3	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	36	33	52	5	8	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	27	36	56	8	13	3	5
The school is led and managed effectively	22	34	33	52	6	9	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	42	28	44	3	5	3	5

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.



10 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sneyd Green Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 2NS

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to me and my colleagues when we visited you in school this week. You were very helpful to us and made our short visit very enjoyable. We particularly enjoyed your wonderful singing and speaking in the harvest concert. This letter is to tell you what we found out.

We agree with you that Sneyd Green is a good school. You are working hard and achieving well. Your behaviour is good and you told us how much you enjoy school and how much it has improved since the last time it was inspected. We were pleased to see you so energetic at playtimes and you have a good understanding of the importance of keeping fit and eating a healthy diet. Your teachers and other staff take good care of you and we are pleased you feel safe. Teachers are good at making lessons interesting and enjoyable and this is one reason why you are making faster progress. You all enjoy the creative curriculum and learn in many different ways. Your school is well managed. By the time you leave you are well prepared for the next stage in your education. There are three things we have asked the school to do:

- help you make faster progress in mathematics, especially mental arithmetic
- continue to help you to improve your writing
- further develop your understanding of national and international communities.

For you the most important things are to carry on doing your best and enjoying all that school has to offer. We wish you every happiness for the future.

Yours faithfully

Judith Straw

Lead inspector

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