

Summerhill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135032
Local Authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	341604
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2009
Reporting inspector	George Logan

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

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	352
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roy Rickus
Headteacher	Kerry Rochester
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2007
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Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2009
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**Number of children on roll in the registered
childcare provision****Date of last inspection of registered
childcare provision**

Not previously inspected

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 21 lessons and held meetings with the chair of governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' written work, records of their progress, lesson-planning, playtime activities and the school's self-evaluation documents, including records of teaching and the main improvement plan. Inspection questionnaires were received from staff and from 50 parents and carers.

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

- how well pupils make progress through the school, particularly in areas such as reading and mathematics
- how consistent and effective the teaching is and how well staff use assessment to plan work for pupils at the right level
- the effectiveness of school leaders, including senior leaders, middle managers and governors.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average primary school. The pupils are predominantly White British and the great majority speak English as their first language. Considerably more pupils are entitled to free school meals than in most schools. A slightly above-average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The majority of these have moderate learning difficulties or emotional and behavioural issues. Most children join the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery class. There is a children's centre on the premises, which is managed by the headteacher and the governing body, and a separate pre-school nearby, operated by an independent provider. Neither provision was included in this inspection. The school relocated to new premises in September 2008.

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. It has several outstanding features. Over four years, standards have risen dramatically as a result of the high expectations of school leaders. The school goes to great lengths to support the well-being and personal development of its pupils. Consequently, pupils enjoy school very much and feel extremely safe there. The heritage of poor behaviour and frequent exclusions has largely been eradicated. Pupils show excellent attitudes to learning, work diligently and behave outstandingly well. They have an exceptionally good understanding of healthy lifestyles. In spite of the school's best efforts, however, attendance remains low. The school has very limited external support in tackling this problem.

Pupils' achievement is good. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with low levels of skills for their age. Much-improved provision ensures that they make outstanding progress through Nursery and Reception, so that standards are at least at the expected level by the end of the Reception year. Pupils sustain a mostly good pace of learning in Years 1 and 2, although progress is constrained to an extent by the irregular attendance of a small number of pupils. Standards at the end of Year 2, below average in 2009 tests, particularly in reading, now look to be broadly average. Consistently good teaching ensures that pupils learn effectively and pupils' progress is now good overall and especially in Year 6. Increasingly rapid learning is beginning to erode the legacy of low attainment. Standards for current Year 6 pupils are slightly above average. Progress is also good for particular groups, such as those pupils with additional learning needs. The school has made a start on developing a programme to support pupils who are gifted or talented. Pupils take part in a satisfactory range of activities, strongly focused on securing robust basic skills. However, there is scope for greater richness of experience in a more creative programme which builds on pupils' increasingly good basic skills. There is a good programme of enrichment activities and visits. Extra-curricular provision is satisfactory.

Teachers use day-to-day assessment well to check learning and to plan lessons. Work is marked regularly, although teachers do not always give explicit guidance as to how pupils could improve. The analysis of assessment data is rigorous and identifies underperformance promptly. Self-evaluation by pupils, particularly in writing, is a strength.

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. The school runs very smoothly and self-evaluation is realistic. Incisive action is taken to tackle identified weaknesses. The monitoring and improvement of teaching and learning is outstanding, so that the consistency of classroom practice guarantees good pupils' progress in a high proportion of lessons. The engagement with partner institutions to enhance learning is satisfactory.

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While the school supports other schools quite successfully, it has relatively few opportunities to enhance its own provision through the input of other schools. Governance is good. Governors have an increasing involvement in shaping the school's future direction. Given how much has been achieved and the clear determination of the leadership team, the school has good capacity for improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build upon current strategies to increase pupils' attendance, in line with the annual targets set by the local authority.
 - Enhance and extend the curriculum so that pupils, particularly those who are gifted or talented, are able to apply their skills in more innovative and engaging ways.

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

Pupils' achievement has improved significantly. Although pupils' progress is most rapid in Year 6, pupils now build well upon their previous learning, across the school. As a result, the progress of Year 6 pupils in science and English in 2009 was outstanding. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given carefully targeted work and receive effective support in class. There is a range of intensive, one-to-one interventions across the school to tackle weaknesses in basic skills. Equally effective support for the few, identified, able pupils is not yet such a strong feature.

Standards by the end of Year 6 have risen steadily. They were broadly average in 2009 and look to be higher still this year. The school continues to focus strongly on embedding essential, basic skills. Pupils' low attainment on entry has meant that standards in Year 2, currently broadly average for the first time, have been slower to change. However, the last two cohorts have left the Reception year with at least average standards. This is, in the current year, providing the bedrock for significantly raised standards in Year 2. Evidence from lessons and pupils' work shows that progress in Years 1 and 2 is mostly good, although irregular attendance by a small group of pupils constrains the overall pace of progress. However, in a Year 1 literacy lesson, pupils were learning well as a result of well-organised tasks, carefully structured around each pupil's needs.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with moral and social aspects outstanding. There is a strong sense of inclusiveness and community at the school. Pupils feel extremely safe, in the context of much-improved, effectively managed behaviour. Current exclusion figures are low. Pupils have great confidence in adults and show consideration for others. Routine events, such as the daily massage sessions in every class, strongly reinforce the bonds that bind this community. Better social skills, leadership opportunities within school and increasingly secure academic skills, indicate that pupils are now adequately prepared for their future education. The school council provides a very good forum for pupils' views.

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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	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Most lessons are at least good. This is a considerable achievement, given that many members of staff are relatively new to teaching. A key strength is the consistency with which all the staff work. Central to this is the highly effective use of agreed behaviour management strategies, allied to high expectations of behaviour. This guarantees a positive environment for learning, within which pupils make good progress. Teachers know the pupils very well. There is a good understanding of the need to match work to pupils' needs and lesson-planning is thorough. Available adults are deployed well to support learners, mainly those with additional learning needs. Most lessons, even if not inspirational, are methodical, make effective use of resources and sustain a good pace. Interactive whiteboards are often used well to bring a teaching point to life. This was seen, for example, in a lower-ability Year 6 English lesson, in which a range of graphics was used successfully to sustain pupils' attention. Assessment is used very well to set lessons at the right level to meet pupils' needs. Occasionally, the tasks set can be too ambitious and this constrains pupils' progress. Teachers use questioning very well to evaluate pupils' understanding. There is effective use of individual targets and

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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self-evaluation by pupils, most obviously in English. Pupils' work is marked promptly and thoroughly, although pupils do not always get specific guidance on how to improve their work.

The curriculum is systematically focused on embedding key, basic skills in literacy and numeracy and, as a result, supports consistently good progress by pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. There is good provision for developing information and communication technology skills. There is some promotion of writing skills in other subjects within the afternoon curriculum. In general, this works well, although it is not always evident that pupils are inspired by what is on offer. While there are some opportunities for pupils' creativity, this is an area which could be developed further. The school has a gifted and talented pupils register, although little, as yet, by way of dedicated provision. There is very good provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education, supporting pupils' outstanding personal development. The range of visits and visitors, including a residential visit, is good, although there are relatively few after-school clubs.

The staff care for pupils outstandingly well. There are satisfactory links with parents and carers, although parental and carer response, particularly in relation to ensuring regular attendance, does not fully reflect the school's efforts. The school does a great deal to support families facing difficulties and to embed good practice in caring for their children. The 'emotional learning mentors' provide valuable support for pupils with social or emotional needs. The school works extremely well with outside agencies to support pupils whose circumstances mean they need additional support.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership team has worked tirelessly to challenge an inherited culture of endemic low standards and poor pupil attitudes and behaviour. It has demanded resolution, drive and determination to move the school forward, constantly reiterating the vision. The school's commitment to its community, to pupils' personal development, pastoral care and to the welfare needs of families is a key driver of its success. There has been resolute action to tackle underperformance in all areas. This has included an array of initiatives to boost achievement. Since 2005, there has been an unbroken trend of improvement. Highly effective systems are in place to ensure that the school runs smoothly. The monitoring and improvement of teaching is outstanding, supported by

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rigorous analysis of data and challenging targets for improvement. Expectations are high. Middle managers are effective practitioners and have a high level of accountability for their areas of responsibility.

The governing body is very supportive. Governors are closely engaged with the local community and have a good knowledge of pupils' learning. They ensure that statutory requirements are met, including the good procedures for safeguarding pupils. They understand the school's strengths well and have a good involvement in shaping its future direction and driving improvement. Potential discrimination is tackled resolutely. Equality of opportunity is promoted well. The school tackles community cohesion issues satisfactorily. While there is significant engagement with local issues and also some global links, this aspect is not so strong in relation to the diverse cultures within contemporary Britain with which children might have to engage.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with a very limited range of skills and knowledge. Overall, these are considerably below the levels expected for their age. Most children settle rapidly because of the excellent induction arrangements and the high level of adult support. Children are very well-cared for and have very good relationships with staff. They feel very safe and secure, can concentrate for extended periods and behave extremely well. Outstanding teaching helps children, including those with additional learning needs, to make outstanding progress. The Nursery is particularly effective in supporting children's personal and social development, their physical development and

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their speaking skills. Even though many children are still well below the expected levels on entry to the Reception year, the skills they have acquired enable them to access the curriculum more fully.

The pace of learning accelerates in the Reception year, so that by the end of the year, children's attainment is typically in line with the expected level. For a substantial minority of children, attainment is higher. This represents outstanding progress, particularly in children's personal development, in physical and creative development and in their knowledge of the world. The regular focus on sounds and letters supports a rapid improvement in children's literacy skills, while the emphasis on speaking and listening brings dividends in their readiness to socialise. The outdoor area, like the whole unit, is very well resourced and is seamlessly integrated into the daily provision. Leadership and management have an outstanding overview of the provision. The monitoring and recording of children's progress across the areas of learning is extremely thorough and the information collected is used to adjust planning on a daily basis. This ensures that the brisk momentum of improvement is effectively sustained.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents and carers have very positive views of the school. Most written comments were positive. As one commented, 'The school's approach to the well-being of the whole child is outstanding.' Typically, parents and carers were appreciative of the care their children receive, particularly those with additional learning needs. Other comments included issues around homework, the changing of reading books and the extent to which the school takes account of working parents when it plans events. The inspection team considered all the points carefully. The school recognises that it would be useful to clarify its policies on homework and on the renewal of reading books to ensure that both staff and parents understand the procedure. It also intends to consider ways of meeting the needs of working parents who wish to participate in school events. Overall, the consensus suggests that this is an extremely caring school where pupils' personal development is very well supported. Inspection findings strongly endorse parents' and carers' positive views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Summerhill 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 352 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	68	15	30	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	66	17	34	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	25	50	24	48	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	54	22	44	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	60	15	30	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	54	21	42	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	64	18	36	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)	24	48	19	38	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	58	20	40	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	50	20	40	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	46	19	38	3	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	56	18	36	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	32	50	32	50	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

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 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Summerhill Primary School, Tipton DY4 9PF

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you and spending time in your lessons. We found that yours is a good school, with some outstanding aspects.

Our main findings are these:

You behave exceptionally well and work very hard.

Standards are at least average in Year 6 and have improved a great deal in the last four years; most of you make good progress.

Teachers work hard and support you very well in your learning.

Children in the Nursery and Reception years make outstanding progress, particularly in their personal development and in developing their language skills.

The school makes sure that you are cared for exceptionally well.

You conduct yourselves extremely safely and have an excellent understanding of how important it is to eat healthily.

The curriculum is satisfactory, although you go on a good range of visits and have interesting visitors to school.

Those of you who find learning difficult are well provided for with extra help.

Those who lead the school work extremely hard and set high standards.

We are asking the school to make the following changes so that you do even better:

- renew efforts to ensure that all children attend school as regularly as possible
- ensure that your lessons give you the opportunity to apply your skills in English and mathematics in interesting and creative ways.

You can help by continuing to work hard and do your best. We hope that you will have every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

George Logan

Lead inspector

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