

Sutton Park Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135075
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	366372
Inspection dates	30–31 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Rashida Sharif HMI

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	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tracey Onslow
Headteacher	Marie Buckland
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Fifteen lessons were observed and 11 teachers were observed at least once, with some being observed twice. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at policy documents, assessment and tracking information, pupils' books and a range of other records. In addition, 141 questionnaires from parents and carers, and those returned by staff and pupils, were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The current rates of progress and attainment of all pupils, including those with special education needs and/or disabilities and the small but growing number of those who speak English as an additional language.
- The use of assessment information by the school to inform planning to meet the different learning needs of all pupils.
- The effectiveness of the leadership team at all levels in ensuring greater rigour with monitoring and evaluation to bring about improvements, and whether the governing body discharges its duties adequately.
- What the school is doing to prepare pupils for living in a multicultural United Kingdom.

Information about the school

Sutton Park is an average-sized primary school. Almost all the pupils are from White British backgrounds. The school has a Communication Centre with places for eight pupils on the autistic spectrum and 10 with speech, language and communication difficulties. In addition, the school has a high proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs and a similar proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of a full-time Nursery and a Reception class. The Nursery offers part-time places through local authority funding and parents have the option of paying for additional sessions. The Wyre Forest Nursery Language Unit, which is partly funded by the health authority and partly by the local authority, is also based at the school. This is a specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs which occupies a room in the school and forms part of the Communication Centre. It has places for 16 children who come from a number of Early Years Foundation Stage settings in the area. The headteacher took up her post in September 2010.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing and governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The school does not have a positive record of improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is inadequate. Pupils' attainment since the last inspection has not improved. In national tests, attainment in Key Stages 1 and 2 has been significantly below average for the last three years. Children enter the Nursery with skills that are well below those expected for three-year-olds. They settle quickly; however, their skills in reading and writing are underdeveloped. Consequently, over time, too many children do not achieve as well as they should.

Pupils are underachieving because the quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum are inadequate. Although expectations of pupils' capabilities are beginning to improve, they have been too low for too long. Teaching styles are uninspiring and assessment is not used effectively to match tasks to pupils' needs. Much of the teaching observed did not demand enough from the pupils to promote their progress. Teachers' lesson planning fails to motivate or promote pupils' enjoyment of learning. Pupils attending the Communication Centre, however, do enjoy their lessons and make good progress. This is because the Centre is well managed and teachers plan their lessons so that activities are interesting, varied and engage pupils' interest. Resources are good and support pupils' learning well. The curriculum closely meets their needs.

Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their achievements are beginning to improve, but they are at a very early stage of development. Despite a good start, the headteacher has not had sufficient time to make a positive impact on improving attainment or the effectiveness of subject coordinators. Until recently, the governing body has not robustly monitored the school's work or taken timely actions to improve outcomes for pupils. The governing body has been restructured and reorganised and is starting to become more involved in the life of the school and in monitoring its performance. The headteacher and the governing body have started the process of engaging with parents and carers to bring the school community together and to refocus on pupils' learning.

The curriculum has significant shortcomings and does not meet the learning needs of the pupils. For example, it does not enable pupils to apply what they have learned through practical tasks or by reinforcing key skills. There is a lack of exciting investigative activities to motivate and promote enjoyment in learning. The curriculum promotes pupils' personal development satisfactorily. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning in lessons are generally satisfactory although some pupils become restless when teaching is dull. This

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occurs when teachers talk for too long with over-lengthy explanations and repeat unnecessarily what they have already said. The day-to-day care and supervision of pupils is satisfactory, but there are shortcomings in the quality of the school's pastoral care and guidance. For example, systems for checking on pupils' attainment and the quality of provision and planning for school improvement lack rigour.

Until recently, there has been too little urgency in the drive to raise attainment and there is no evidence that unsatisfactory practice has been challenged assertively. Consequently value for money is unsatisfactory. The governing body has relied too heavily on second-hand information and has not challenged the school sufficiently in response to declining attainment.

Although the headteacher and the newly formed governing body have been in place for a relatively short time, they are beginning to make improvements. The headteacher has made a swift and accurate evaluation of the school and, with the support of the governing body and the local authority, she is making appropriate plans to tackle the most important areas of weakness. The school's capacity to bring about sustained improvement is inadequate given the scale of the task to be accomplished. The effectiveness of leaders and managers across the school is highly variable. Too few have received appropriate training to fulfil their responsibilities well. As a result, the school has not improved.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English, mathematics and science across the school, including in the areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, by:
 - improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - ensuring that assessment procedures give teachers the necessary information to make sure that lessons are challenging and matched closely to pupils' prior attainment
 - ensuring that the curriculum is modified effectively to meet the needs of all pupils and in particular those with special educational need and/or disabilities and the growing number of those who speak English as an additional language
 - planning work that motivates and inspires pupils and promotes their enjoyment of learning.
- Improve procedures for the care, guidance and support of all pupils by:
 - taking a more rigorous approach to promoting regular attendance
 - ensuring that effective systems are in place to support and record the progress of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable
 - ensuring that pupils are prepared well for living in a multicultural United Kingdom.
- Improve leadership, management and governance by:
 - embedding ambition throughout the school, through introducing rigorous procedures for checking on pupils' attainment and progress, the quality of provision and planning effectively for school improvement

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- giving all leaders the training, time and resources they need to significantly improve the quality of teaching and learning
- ensuring that systems to track pupils' progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 and 2 are based on accurate assessments and are used effectively by all teachers, when planning lessons, to meet the needs of all pupils and raise attainment
- ensuring that the governing body oversees the work of the school effectively and collects the necessary first-hand evidence to hold the school to account for what it achieves
- ensuring, as a matter of urgency, that the school builds leadership capacity to enable staff to make a telling contribution to school improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Pupils' achievement is inadequate. Attainment in Year 6 has been significantly below average in English, mathematics and science for the past three years. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the small number of those who speak English as an additional language also make inadequate progress. This is because assessment systems are weak and teaching is not firmly based on a clear understanding of the stage of learning that pupils have reached and what they need to learn next. Standards of work seen in pupils' books during the inspection were low. The latest school predictions indicate that attainment is not rising fast enough to improve outcomes for the current Year 6 pupils. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has also remained well below average for the last three years. A lack of continuity in teaching and the support provided for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 have slowed their progress. In too many lessons, expectations are too low and lead to slow and often inadequate progress. There is a lack of challenge for the more-able and often a failure to engage the lower-attaining pupils. Teachers' long introductions to lessons frequently use up a considerable amount of time and delay pupils' engagement with their learning. In some lessons, the slow pace leads to a waning of interest and leaves pupils confused about what to do. For example, in a literacy lesson the teacher attempted to explain to pupils about time connectives. A number of lengthy examples given by the teacher left most pupils bewildered. Consequently, the majority of pupils were not able respond to the task. The assessment of pupils' learning in lessons is inconsistent and does not always convey precisely how well they are doing and how they could improve their work.

Pupils have a satisfactory grasp of the importance of keeping themselves safe and leading healthy lifestyles, though the school provides very few opportunities for sport and exercise beyond the regular physical education lessons. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is satisfactory. Pupils have little understanding of the diversity of modern society or of other cultures and faiths. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are satisfactory. They are aware of the needs of others and understand the difference between right and wrong. Relationships between pupils and staff are constructive but there are too few opportunities for pupils to make a positive contribution to the school or the wider community. Although pupils report that their views, ideas and suggestions are valued staff do not routinely feedback to pupils about the school's response. Opportunities are missed to develop their contribution more fully.

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The promotion of skills that prepare pupils for the next steps in their education and the future world of work are also inadequate. Pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are at a low level. There are too few opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively to solve problems. Attendance, although improving, remains low as too many pupils have not yet formed the habit of regular and punctual attendance.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	4
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is inadequate. A number of paired observations were carried out during the inspection with the headteacher. No good or outstanding teaching was observed in Key Stages 1 and 2. Satisfactory teaching is underpinned by positive relationships between pupils and teachers. Teachers use a range of activities, including the interactive whiteboard, to engage pupils' interest. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, there is a tendency for teachers to talk for too long and this inhibits pupils' learning. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to think and work independently. The pace of lessons is frequently too slow. Pupils are often left on the same task for too long so that they are neither challenged nor sustain an interest in their work. Teaching styles lack creativity and excitement, and assessment is not used effectively to match tasks to pupils' needs. The support given by teaching assistants is sometimes inadequate. In too many lessons, support staff were passive observers rather than proactively supporting whole class teaching. Teachers' subject knowledge is frequently inadequate. Over time, the quality of

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teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 has not been good enough to raise attainment. Although the local authority has given support to improve teaching, the delivery of lessons often does not match the content of teachers' planning or meet the needs of individual pupils. Consequently, tasks do not fully engage pupils' interest and they lack challenge. Although work in books is regularly marked, teachers do not routinely follow up untidy or unfinished work and pupils are given little guidance on how to improve. Whole school target setting lacks clarity and does not accurately reflect pupils' capabilities. Some of the good practice that exists in the Communication Centre is not shared consistently across the school in order to promote better teaching.

The curriculum is inadequate and has yet to be reviewed to ensure all pupils' needs are fully met. Pupils have limited opportunities to visit places of interest or have visitors to the school to enhance their learning. Extra-curricular opportunities are limited.

The school's care and support systems have shortcomings which mean that some groups of pupils do not thrive in their learning, development and well-being. The quality of advice and guidance is weak and pupils are insufficiently prepared for the next stage of their learning. The transition arrangements for pupils from Early Years Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are poor.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	4
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	4

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has worked with considerable determination to respond to the pattern of underachievement across the school. She has quickly gained the trust of governors, parents and carers, teachers and pupils. No time has been wasted in ensuring that the staff are clear about the school's potential and what needs to be done to achieve the best for the pupils. Due to staffing difficulties, the headteacher does not currently have a permanent team of senior leaders and middle managers to work with her. Recent monitoring has identified that some staff lack subject specialist knowledge. Teachers do not always use assessment information consistently to inform their planning to drive up attainment and improve rates of achievement. Systems are not yet fully in place to ensure that each member of staff is held accountable for pupils' progress. The headteacher has made a start to improving the quality of education by ensuring that detailed information about pupils' achievement is used to reset targets and ensure they are suitably challenging.

Procedures to safeguard pupils are secure. Provision for tackling discrimination and ensuring equality of opportunity is however inadequate because attainment has continued to decline since the last inspection. Despite a plethora of data, target setting is not used

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well enough to accelerate pupils' achievement. Teachers have not been held sufficiently to account for pupils' performance. The school is making an inadequate contribution to promoting community cohesion. The school has made very few links that have been sustained locally and none with organisations in other parts of the United Kingdom or overseas. Pupils have very little knowledge and understanding of different cultures or religions represented in modern British society. The school's engagement with parents and carers is satisfactory although some parents reported that the new headteacher is not as visible as they would like her to be.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	4
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Many children join the school with knowledge, skills and understanding that are lower than those normally expected for their age. Their communication, language, literacy, personal and social skills are particularly weak. Children are happy in the school and relate well to the adults who support them. The learning environment is generally adequate. The indoor space is organised satisfactorily to cover all areas of learning. Children however do not always have sufficient access to outdoor learning. The phase leader has established a good working relationship with parents and carers. However, staffing in the Early Years Foundation Stage has lacked consistency and this has delayed children's progress.

Teaching is inadequate overall because it does not fully meet the needs of all pupils. The balance between adult led activities and those that children choose for themselves is poor. This is because the children have not been given the skills to enable them to develop their independence or to make informed choices about different activities. There are adequate systems for observing children at work and play and for recording their progress. This gives staff information about what children need to learn next although this is not always used effectively to plan and meet their needs. While some children make satisfactory

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progress, too many do not generally make the gains of which they are capable, particularly in literacy, numeracy, creative development or their knowledge and understanding of the world. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are inadequate.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The response to the parental questionnaire was higher than that in most primary schools. A large majority of parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaire agreed with all 13 statements in the survey. A significant majority of those who responded reported that they were happy with their children's experience at the school and in agreement that the school keeps their children safe and meets their needs. Parents and carers recognise that there have been considerable staff changes, including the appointment of the new headteacher. The most common cause for concern amongst parents related to the new headteacher not being as visible as they would like her to be. Inspectors support the view that more effort needs to be made by the school to ensure better communication with parents to help them understand the changes that the school is currently undergoing. A few concerns were raised relating to individual matters rather than those relating to the whole school. Her Majesty's Inspector discussed some of these with the headteacher and members of the governing body, while preserving anonymity. The school intends to respond to the issues raised by a very small minority of parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sutton Park Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 141 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 230 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	47	64	46	8	6	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	73	52	66	47	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	47	34	79	56	14	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	30	75	53	17	12	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	42	30	76	54	14	10	2	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	26	73	52	19	14	3	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	42	30	81	58	10	7	1	1
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)	33	24	72	51	16	11	3	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	29	81	58	8	6	4	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	26	84	60	10	7	4	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	21	76	54	17	12	6	4
The school is led and managed effectively	31	22	74	53	17	12	10	7
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	32	82	59	7	5	3	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



1 April 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sutton Park Community Primary School, Kidderminster, DY11 6PH

Thank you for all your help with the inspection. It was a pleasure to see that you are polite, courteous and caring pupils. Your behaviour is satisfactory and on the rare occasions you are given the opportunity, you make a satisfactory contribution to the school community through your helpful manner. The school looks after you and helps you understand how to keep safe. Some of you attend regularly and gain a satisfactory understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, but the school does not always give you the opportunity to put this into practice.

Younger children settle quickly in the Nursery and Reception classes but do not learn as much as they should. Those of you who attend the Communication Centre make good progress in some areas of your learning, but this positive picture does not continue throughout the school because the teachers and the school's leaders have not made sure that every one of you has the same opportunity to do as well as you can.

The school has not improved since the last inspection and the inspectors judge that it requires 'special measures'. This means the school is not providing you with an acceptable standard of education. Inspectors will visit your school on a regular basis to check on the progress being made. We have asked the headteacher, the staff and the governing body to help you improve your achievements in English, mathematics and science. They have been asked to make sure that teachers know their subjects well and to improve teaching. Teachers also need to use assessment information regularly to plan lessons so that these are interesting, challenging and exciting. We have also asked the school to help you understand better the different religions and cultures represented in the United Kingdom.

There is something that you and your parents can do to help. At the moment, too many pupils stay away from school, so attendance is too low. I ask you all to do your very best to come to school every day of the school year.

All this can only happen if the school's leaders and governors check very carefully on how well everything in the school is working, and on how well you are doing. This will help them to find any problems and make plans to improve the school further.

Yours sincerely

Rashida Sharif

Her Majesty's Inspector

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