



# Sefton Park Infant School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 108960  
**LEA** Bristol, City of  
**Inspection number** 278086  
**Inspection dates** 31 January 2006 to 1 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Shirley Billington AI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Ashley Down Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Bristol
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7		BS7 9BJ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0117 3773290
<b>Number on roll</b>	227	<b>Fax number</b>	0117 3773290
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Janet Bremner
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Jan Lonsdale

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is an average-sized infant school with a nursery attached. Most children attend the nursery part-time before joining classes in the reception year but some come from other pre-school providers. Children's skills and understanding at the start of the reception year are broadly average. The proportion of children with learning difficulties or disabilities is low. A significant proportion of children are from a wide variety of ethnic groups. Recently the number of children joining the school at other than the usual times has increased. Many of these children are learning English as an additional language. The school has had several staff changes over the past two years and there are still some temporary arrangements in place.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 1**

This is an outstanding school that provides very good value for money. The school's view of itself is more modest than this, but the inspection judged all key aspects of its work to be quite exceptional. Children get an excellent start in nursery and reception classes and the vast majority reaches and sometimes exceeds the levels expected in all areas of learning at the start of Year 1. Children continue to make very good progress in Years 1 and 2 and achieve very high standards in reading and mathematics. Standards in writing are slightly above average and the school has rightly identified that there is scope for some improvement here. The hard work that has gone on to tackle this has been hindered to some extent by staff changes. The school is back on track with planned improvements and children throughout the school are now making good progress in writing. Teaching is of exceptionally high quality and the curriculum is very well planned and managed. As a result, children develop a love of learning and achieve exceptionally well. Their progress is very carefully checked and senior managers keep careful records to analyse the attainment of different groups. As a result, they have identified that there is the potential for some more able children from minority ethnic groups to attain higher standards. Although the school is successfully addressing this, there is no specific system for tracking the progress of children who are in the early stages of learning English in terms of their acquisition of the language. The school benefits from very strong leadership by senior staff. This ensures that it checks regularly on the quality of its work and seeks improvement wherever possible. It has very good capacity to build on its considerable successes.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

What the school should do to improve further • Continue the drive to improve standards in writing. • Implement a structured system to track the progress of children learning English as an additional language.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Throughout the school children achieve exceptionally well because of the very good provision for their learning. Children in the nursery and reception classes thrive in a lively and stimulating environment and their learning moves on at an exceptionally good pace. In Years 1 and 2 children also make very good progress. They do particularly well in reading and mathematics and standards in these areas are consistently well above average. Standards in writing are not as high but are improving as a result of the strategies that have been introduced to raise achievement further. While both boys and girls achieve extremely well, girls do better than boys overall, particularly in writing. The school is working to reduce this gap and there are indications that boys are now doing better. Throughout the school the speaking skills of the majority of children are remarkably good. They explain their ideas, discuss, debate and ask pertinent questions in a mature and impressive manner. Children with learning difficulties and

disabilities make very good progress in relation to the targets set for them. A good proportion of these children reaches average standards in national tests at the end of Year 2. Children from minority ethnic groups do well, but the school has recognised that some potentially higher-attaining children could do even better and this is an area that is targeted for improvement. Children learning English as an additional language make good progress. However, their rate of learning English is not systematically tracked. This means that the school is not in a position to identify whether the progress of some children could be even better. The school sets challenging targets for children's performance in national tests and these are usually met or exceeded.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The school's very positive ethos and the high degree of attention paid to the needs of every child mean that children's personal development is exceptionally good. Children thoroughly enjoy school and their attendance is good. Behaviour is exemplary, both in lessons and around the school. Children are very aware of the needs of others and show a high level of care for those who may need a 'special friend'. Children have very positive attitudes to school. They particularly enjoy the challenge of learning to be successful learners. They respond well to the school's high expectations of them. Many are remarkably mature in overcoming and solving problems by thinking things through or working collaboratively. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. There are very good opportunities to learn about and celebrate a range of faiths and traditions. In an assembly that focused on 'belonging', children rose remarkably well to the challenge to express their feelings and thoughts about being part of families, friendship groups, religious and cultural groups and society in general. The school council makes a very positive contribution to decision making. Children throughout the school are confident in expressing their views and putting forward ideas. Children are very aware of the need to stay safe and to adopt healthy lifestyles. They understand the need for a healthy diet. As one child explained, 'fruit is good for you, better for you than chocolate'. Children make very good progress in developing the qualities that enable them to contribute to the school and the wider community. They acquire a very good base of key skills that forms an excellent foundation for their further learning.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Consistently good and often excellent teaching results in very good learning and achievement. For the youngest children in nursery and reception classes, outstanding teaching gives them a flying start to their learning. Every opportunity is used to teach a range of skills. This was evident at 'snack time', for example, when the teacher used a chance remark about shape to encourage some children to cut up a square to form

rectangles and triangles. Throughout the school, teachers are imaginative in the approaches that they use to engage the children's interest and support their learning. Teachers make particularly good use of the interactive whiteboards in each classroom to demonstrate key teaching points and to allow the children themselves to extend their learning through practical experiences. Work is closely matched to the full range of learners' needs so that all can succeed. Progress is regularly assessed and marking of work is very thorough and informative. Children are given a clear view of what they have achieved and what they need to do next. On a piece of written work, for example, the teacher had commented 'some great word choices for the setting...to improve, try to use some different joining words'. Expectations are exceptionally high and the level of challenge continually stretches children without inhibiting them.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is imaginative and innovative and extremely well matched to the needs of young children. Creative links across subjects help children to apply and use their developing skills. First-hand experiences are also used well to promote interest and enjoyment in learning and to ensure that there is a sense of purpose in all activities. A recent visit to @Bristol, for example, provided a good opportunity for children to learn the importance of following a logical sequence when writing an account. The essential thrust underpinning all activities is that learning should be both purposeful and fun. The school is very successful at finding imaginative ways to ensure that there is a sense of challenge and success in the children's experiences. Many varied clubs and extra activities have been introduced to enrich the curriculum. Children have the opportunity, for example, to take part in a range of sporting activities, to join a French club and to make music with a specialist musician on a regular basis.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Excellent arrangements for ensuring children's welfare and well-being lead to outstanding personal development and achievement. Child protection procedures and arrangements for health and safety are robust and fully meet requirements. All staff are committed to supporting individual children. Support staff play a key role in helping individual children who may need extra attention. The very good progress made by children with learning difficulties results from excellent provision to meet their needs and to help them to achieve their learning targets. Children learning English as an additional language are also well supported but their progress in learning English is not systematically tracked. This means that the next steps in their learning cannot be targeted as accurately as they might be to ensure the best possible progress. Children in Years 1 and 2 are very aware of their individual targets to help them to improve their writing and are very honest in assessing their own successes in achieving these!

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

Outstanding leadership by the headteacher and senior managers ensures that this school maintains its strengths and special qualities whilst continually moving forward. The school's systems for checking on its effectiveness are very thorough and leaders at all levels, including governors, are very aware of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The governing body includes several fairly new governors. They are currently undertaking training and audits of their effectiveness to further strengthen their strategic role in leadership. Parents and children are regularly consulted and their views are acted on. Responses have resulted in increased provision for music, more varied vegetarian lunches and new playground equipment. The inclusion of all learners is central to the school's vision of success and it is rigorous in pursuing this and tackling barriers to achievement. This is evident in the careful analysis of the attainment of different groups and the targeting of extra support to further raise the achievement of children from minority ethnic groups. Strong leadership ensures outstanding achievement in key areas, for example, in the nursery and reception classes and in mathematics. Good attention has been paid to raising standards in writing. Whilst a range of strategies has been put in place to tackle this, staff changes have meant that some of these have not been firmly embedded. However, with a stable team this year, the school is moving forward well and demonstrating very good capacity to improve further.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Children Thank you very much for the way you helped us when we came to look at the work of your school. We enjoyed visiting your classrooms and talking to you about your work and all the exciting activities that you do at school. We found lots of very good things going on – too many to write about in a short letter! These are some of the things that we think are particularly good:

- In the nursery and reception classes, you get a wonderful start to your learning
- You do exceptionally well in your reading and maths work
- You learn how to be learners – to enjoy a challenge and to solve problems by thinking things through and working together
- Your teachers plan lots of interesting ways to help you to learn and this means that you enjoy school very much
- Your headteacher and the other staff who help her are always looking for ways to make school an even better place to be. We have asked the school to work on two areas:

- To make your written work even better – lots of you are using your targets well to help with this
- To make sure that teachers keep careful records on children who are learning English as an extra language to show how well they are doing.

It was a real pleasure to visit your school. Keep on working hard at your learning and – more importantly – keep on enjoying it. Yours sincerely Shirley Billington Lead Inspector on behalf of the team Alexandra House 33 Kingsway London WC2B 6SE T 0207 421 6800 F 0207 421 6707 [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)