



Southfields Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110691
LEA PETERBOROUGH CITY OF PETERBOROUGH LEA
Inspection number 278489
Inspection dates 2 November 2005 to 3 November 2005
Reporting inspector Ms. Margaret Jones LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Whittlesey Road
School category	Community		PE2 8PU
Age range of pupils	7 to 12		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01733 562873
Number on roll	232	Fax number	01733 703329
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs.Cherry Palmer
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Ms. Laura Ryan

Age group 7 to 12	Inspection dates 2 November 2005 - 3 November 2005	Inspection number 278489
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Southfields is a large junior school situated on the Stanground estate, Peterborough. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average, but the area suffers from a high level of unemployment. Special educational needs within Southfields junior are much higher than the national average. The school hosts a Speech and Language Resource for pupils with specific language disorders. Only a few pupils have English as an additional language. Many pupils who attend the school are from third generation Italian families. The Italian Consulate provides a teacher who teaches Italian to all pupils. The school has achieved Healthy School status and has been awarded the Active Mark Gold for its commitment to sports and the Arts Mark for its work on Music, Drama, Art and Dance. It is working towards achieving the Inclusion Charter Mark, Investors in People and has put forward an Extended School bid for health and sports.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features. The headteacher provides exceptionally good leadership and vision to promote rising standards. Teaching is generally good, and the pupils enjoy learning; as a result they all make good progress. Pupils with learning and communication difficulties achieve well because of the very effective support they receive. Expectations of the more able pupils are not always high enough. Standards in mathematics are not as high as they could be. The pupils' personal development is outstanding. This is due to the school's very caring approach, the excellent opportunities the pupils have to take on responsibilities and the rich range of activities in which they all participate. The school's self-evaluation is accurate, enabling both staff and governors to identify what needs to be done to raise standards. Monitoring by the headteacher is robust, but monitoring by subject leaders is not extensive or sharp enough. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Standards have been maintained and all the key issues highlighted then have been addressed. Parents are happy with the school. Their views are taken into account regularly and they are kept fully informed of developments. The school provides good value for money

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards further in mathematics by providing targets that the pupils can understand - Ensure that more able pupils are challenged fully in all lessons - Develop the capacity of subject leaders to monitor teaching and learning using classroom observation.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When children enter school many do not have the language and social skills typical for seven year olds. A third of pupils have learning or communication difficulties. Given these starting points, pupils make good progress across the school and achieve well. In 2004, pupils achieved very good results in the national tests in English and science, and reached average standards in mathematics. In the provisional 2005 results, there was a big improvement in science, a slight improvement in mathematics but, as predicted by the school, results in English fell below the national average. These results did not meet the very challenging targets the school had set itself. Targets in the future will be more realistic because they will be based on more accurate information about the capability of pupils across the school. Pupils take pride and care with their work. The standard of writing and presentation inspectors saw in lessons and in exercise books was good. Pupils produce some very impressive art work, and are very competent at using computers to help them in their work. They complete some interesting and enjoyable work. For example, in a Year 3 history lesson pupils were engrossed in writing descriptions of how the ancient Egyptians mummified their dead. Pupils with special needs and speech and language difficulties make good progress because of the high

quality support they are given. The progress pupils are making, whatever their ability, is carefully measured and extra help is given to pupils who are falling behind or not achieving as much as they could. Brighter pupils are not always given work which is hard enough for them, especially in mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils behave very well, are enthusiastic and have excellent relationships with staff and one another. Pupils really enjoy school and attend regularly. School makes them feel good about themselves and as a result they love learning and make good progress. Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy accepting responsibility and helping one another. This is shown by the outstanding role played by the class and school councils in making decisions about the school. The Play Pals team of pupils manage and organise fun activities for pupils to play at lunchtimes. This makes a substantial contribution to pupils' social development and helps to ensure calm and trouble-free play and lunchtimes. Pupils are involved in many interesting projects which make an outstanding contribution to the community. They take part in the 'Peterborough in Bloom' competition, raise money for charities and have used their initiative to produce their own school magazine. They are encouraged to develop their entrepreneurial skills. For example, they grow their own vegetables and sell them to the school kitchen. Pupils know about eating healthy food and the importance of exercise. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. There are many opportunities for reflection in assembly and discussion time in class groups all help to foster pupils' spiritual awareness and self-esteem. For example, the excellent assembly about Diwali, observed during the inspection, was thoroughly enjoyed by all pupils. Pupils responded sensitively to the teacher's engaging presentation and reflected thoughtfully on the traditions and beliefs held by Hindus.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The lessons that inspectors observed reflected the school's own analysis that the quality of teaching is good overall. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent. In the best lessons the pace of teaching is lively; teachers use a range of interesting teaching methods and resources to capture pupils' interests. For example, in an outstanding lesson in Year 6 the teacher used a computer program, drama and written activities on the board to explain new ideas about language to the pupils. Pupils were very keen to learn and giggled with delight when the teacher used humour and role-play to teach them about formal and informal language. In more mundane lessons, activities lack sparkle and teachers spend too much time explaining to pupils what they want them to do. As a result pupils become restless and lose concentration because they spend too long sitting still and listening. In these lessons the more able pupils mark time. Teachers use good assessment procedures to check on pupils' learning

in each subject and to guide their teaching. They mark pupils' work well, showing clear points for improvement. In literacy lessons teachers use improvement targets successfully to help pupils make good progress. However, individual targets are not used as well in mathematics.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The work pupils do covers all the subjects and areas that it should. There is strong emphasis on English and mathematical skills. An outstanding feature is the opportunity all pupils get to study Italian. Pupils learn about lots of different topics during the school day. Support staff run sessions which include Italian, pottery, cookery, and a health and environment club. All this encourages pupils to lead an active and healthy life and to develop an interest in their community and different cultures. There is an impressive range of out-of-school activities and clubs, including French, 'Starlight Twirlers', sewing and homework club. Pupils enjoy sports and all get the chance to play musical instruments. Visits to museums, residential centres and other local places of interest enrich pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Teachers and support staff know the pupils very well and work hard to provide an outstanding level of care and support. Child protection arrangements are well established and understood by all staff. Pupils who need extra support are looked after by a named teaching assistant. This first rate level of care makes pupils feel well looked after. The school works very successfully with the speech therapist, educational psychologist, the local secondary school and other outside agencies. The full-time Welfare Assistant provides an excellent level of guidance and support for parents and pupils. This innovative support helps pupils and parents feel valued and they know they have someone to talk if they have any worries or concerns. Younger children are helped to settle in very quickly when they join the school, and older children are well prepared for their move up to secondary school so they feel positive and confident about the change. The school has a good reputation locally for taking in pupils who have failed to thrive in other schools. Pupils' behaviour and personal development is monitored closely. If pupils are experiencing difficulties, timely intervention ensures they get the help they need. The healthy range of food cooked by the school kitchen helps pupils to develop healthy eating habits.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads the school with energy and dedication. She knows the school's strength and weaknesses and is honest and open about what needs to be done to improve further. She is introducing new ideas with enthusiasm, but always does this by regularly taking the views of pupils, parents and staff into consideration. As a result,

the school has a caring and supportive ethos in which pupils feel safe, and can concentrate on their learning. The headteacher is well supported by two assistant heads. There is a very good team spirit among the staff and governors, who are well motivated and want to do their best by the school and all its pupils. The assessment of teaching carried out by the headteacher is accurate. Where unsatisfactory teaching was found action has been taken to remedy the situation. In order to ensure that all teaching is consistently good, subject leaders need to take responsibility for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in their areas. Currently the monitoring they carry out does not have enough impact. The well trained and carefully deployed teaching assistants help the pupils to succeed with their work. The school improvement plan is detailed and thorough and the school has the capability to put these plans into action. Running costs are high because of the large size of the school site but this means that pupils benefit from excellent accommodation. The attractive school grounds provide a secure and stimulating environment for children, who participate in a range of fun outdoor activities.

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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>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	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	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	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	2	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

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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

Thank you for letting us visit your school. We enjoyed talking to you and your teachers and watching you learn. We thought you would like to know what we liked about your school and how we thought it could get even better. What we liked about your school: - You made us all feel very welcome in your school and greeted us with a friendly smile; - You talked to us about all the exciting things you do, such as learning Italian, making decisions in your school council and producing your own magazine. - You are all learning to read and write very well; - You all behave very well around the school. You play nicely with your friends and the grown ups at lunchtime and speak very politely to your teachers and visitors; - Your teachers and teaching assistants work very hard to make sure that you all get the right sort of help you need to help you learn; - Your headteacher runs the school very well; - Your parents and carers are right in thinking that you go to a good school. What we have asked your school to do now to make it even better: - You must all try harder with your mathematics; - Some of you could do even harder work; - A better check needs to be kept on what is happening in all your lessons