



Summerbank Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123980
LEA Stoke-On-Trent
Inspection number 281599
Inspection dates 30 November 2005 to 1 December 2005
Reporting inspector Roger Sadler AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Summerbank Road
School category	Community		Tunstall
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST6 5HA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01782 233611
Number on roll	336	Fax number	01782 233612
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Gill Jenkins
Date of previous inspection	22 January 2001	Headteacher	Mr John Corbett

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by a team of three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Approximately half the pupils are from White British backgrounds and the remainder are from minority ethnic backgrounds, mostly Pakistani. A small proportion is in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. A quarter of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average. When children start in the Nursery they have well-below-average skills overall, with particularly low attainment in language and communication. The school has been severely disrupted for the last year during a major rebuilding project. The headteacher leaves his post at the end of this term and a new headteacher will commence his appointment from the beginning of the summer term 2006. The school plans to appoint an acting headteacher for the spring term. There is currently no permanent deputy headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) 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 or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Good provision for children in the Nursery and Reception class means that they enjoy school and learn quickly. Through the rest of the school, average and above-average pupils often fail to reach their potential and make unsatisfactory progress, especially in writing. The progress of pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities and those in the early stages of learning English as an additional language is satisfactory and their progress in reading is improving. The school emphasises the pupils' personal development and well-being and has successfully created a climate of considerate behaviour and good relationships. Assessment information is not used well enough by the school to target resources towards pupils who are underachieving.

Leadership and management are inadequate because insufficient attention has been paid to ensuring all pupils achieve their potential. Since the last inspection the building has improved dramatically but standards have declined and some important issues, such as the quality of the teachers' marking, have not been adequately resolved. Some improvements are in hand to help raise achievement, but uncertainties over the future leadership and management, and weaknesses in checking that the school's actions have been effective, mean that the school lacks sufficient capacity to improve. In view of the declining standards, the school provides unsatisfactory value for money. Before the inspection, the school had over-generously judged its overall effectiveness to be satisfactory and based much of its self-evaluation on out-of-date information. Leaders now accept that special measures are required to bring about the necessary improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Monitor pupils' progress and ensure they achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- Improve the ways in which the school examines its own work and the quality of its provision.
- Help teachers make full use of assessments to focus teaching on eradicating underachievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Given their well-below-average starting points, children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes and, although their attainment is still below average, they do well because of consistently good teaching. In the Foundation Stage, children make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development because adults cater for their individual needs very well. At Key Stage 1, the pupils

make unsatisfactory progress overall. The gains made in mathematics are satisfactory, but progress in writing is very slow and too few pupils reach the expected levels, especially the boys. Standards have steadily declined over the last four years, although the pupils currently in Year 2 are making satisfactory progress and are set to achieve higher standards than last year's class.

Pupils who left Year 6 in 2005 made inadequate progress and failed to reach their potential. There are signs that the current Year 6 are doing better and will come much closer to achieving the ambitious targets the school has set for them. Lower-attaining pupils, pupils who have additional learning needs and pupils in the early stages of learning English make satisfactory progress throughout the school because resources are focused on meeting their needs. For more than a year the school has provided an effective, structured programme of teaching reading based on letter sounds and this is helping pupils to improve.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school creates a climate of considerate behaviour and responsibility. Pupils demonstrate care and concern for each other and are mindful of those in need of help and support. The school helps pupils become involved in, and contribute to, the community. They are regularly consulted through the School Council and are proud that their opinions have led to improvements such as those to the playground. Moral, social and spiritual development is good. Nearly all pupils behave well and the atmosphere in lessons and at social times is relaxed and friendly. They are sensitive to the lifestyles of other cultures. The pupils' ability to work together is preparing them well for their future working lives, but this is counter-balanced by their inadequate achievement in basic skills. Despite recent improvements, attendance is below average and unauthorised absence is too high.

Nearly all pupils are aware of the benefits of healthy eating and most participate in regular exercise. However, drugs education programmes require more development.

The after-school club provides a safe haven and encourages pupils to be responsible. They take much pride in their new and improved buildings and facilities and enjoy school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Teaching has some strong features but also some important weaknesses which hinder pupils' progress. The dedicated staff ensure pupils' personal development is provided for well. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and adults take every opportunity to develop the children's speaking and listening skills, promoting good progress. Throughout the school, teachers and bi-lingual support assistants effectively support pupils who are learning English as an additional language by checking their

understanding. Support for pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities is good throughout the school. The teaching of reading has improved. Lower-attaining pupils are effectively taught letter sounds daily by teaching assistants to help them improve their reading. Last year during the building work, insufficient attention was paid to ensuring all pupils did their best and some pupils underachieved in national tests.

Pupils are now making better progress in lessons than the 2005 test results indicate but there are still some aspects of teaching requiring improvement. Assessment is not used effectively in all classes to give the pupils a clear understanding of how to improve their work and the quality of marking is inconsistent. The school has identified those pupils who are potentially underachieving in Year 6 and is targeting appropriate resources at boosting their learning, but this is not the case in other year groups. Year 6 pupils know their learning targets but in other year groups the pupils' understanding of what they are aiming for is vague.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 4

The school covers all the subjects that it should and a good range of activities is provided outside normal lessons. Nevertheless, the curriculum is inadequate because it does not meet the needs of all pupils. The curriculum is well adapted for lower-attaining pupils and those who are learning English as an additional language and so these pupils make satisfactory progress. For average and higher-attaining pupils, however, the curriculum is not planned well enough for them to reach their potential. Pupils do not use their skills in writing sufficiently across the curriculum and this limits progress for all groups. The pupils' personal development is well supported through activities outside school hours in the arts and sport and the programme to promote pupils' understanding of the importance of eating healthily and keeping active is well planned. Pupils say that there is plenty to do and large numbers take part in activities such as the dance club and choir.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school looks after all pupils well. Pupils feel that staff take their concerns seriously and they are happy and feel safe. Child protection procedures are secure and well understood by all staff. There is a strong commitment to providing pupils with a welcoming environment. Staff check pupils' personal development well. Although there are examples of good monitoring of the pupils' learning, for example, the progress of lower-attaining pupils and pupils for whom English is an additional language, not enough attention is given to ensure that potentially average and above-average-attaining pupils achieve their best.

Pupils who have learning, behavioural, physical and language difficulties receive good support. Access to all the school has to offer has been further improved by new and better quality accommodation. Pupils at risk are identified early and the attachment of support staff combined with help from other agencies works very well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The leadership and management of the school are inadequate because they have not ensured that pupils' make good enough progress or that the curriculum caters for all the pupils' needs satisfactorily. The building project has been very effectively managed by the headteacher over the last year. He has shown great dedication and ability in creating a high quality environment for learning. Nevertheless, the monitoring and evaluation of provision are unsystematic and standards declined markedly in 2005. There have been examples of effective staff training, for example, the training for learning support assistants in teaching phonics, but there has been too little emphasis on tackling areas of underachievement. The school's move to the new building has delayed the implementation of the potentially useful plans it has to raise achievement. Almost all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire regard the school very highly. They have been effectively consulted on the building improvements but their views on other aspects of the school's work have not been systematically gathered over the last year.

The governing body generally discharges its responsibilities adequately, but has concentrated too much of its attention on the rebuild and resources have been diverted away from its important task of ensuring that the school improves learning and teaching.

The school ensures that provision for pupils who have additional learning needs is effective and this helps these pupils make reasonable progress. Subject leaders have a sound understanding of their roles and have helped introduce some good initiatives, for example, improving home reading. However, they recognise that they have not sufficiently checked the quality of teaching and learning over the last year. The uncertainties in leadership over the next term and beyond and under-developed monitoring and evaluation mean that the school lacks the capacity to address its most important weaknesses.

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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?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	No	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	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	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	4	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	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?	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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

The Children Summerbank Primary School Summerbank Road Tunstall Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire ST6 5HA

2 December 2005

Dear Children,

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for being so friendly and helpful.

What we liked most about your school:

- you behave well and are polite and easy to talk to
- we are pleased that you are learning how to lead healthy lives
- we see that you work well together and are considerate to others
- the new building is a great improvement
- we think that your teachers work very hard
- most of your parents and carers are pleased that you come to this school.

What we have asked your school to do now:

We think your school needs extra help and checks to ensure it can get better. We think it should concentrate on:

- checking your progress so that you all do your very best
- finding out what the school does well and where improvements are needed
- helping your teachers make sure that work is hard enough for you all.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you about your work and watching you learn. We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Sadler Lead Inspector