



Southgate Primary

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 133971
LEA West Sussex
Inspection number 282407
Inspection dates 15 November 2005 to 16 November 2005
Reporting inspector Sheila Browning RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Barrington Road Southgate Crawley, West Sussex RH10 6DG
School category	Community		
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01293 525966
Number on roll	353	Fax number	01293 538097
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Jeremy Brown
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs Jo Comber

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 15 November 2005 - 16 November 2005	Inspection number 282407
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Southgate Primary School is in Crawley, West Sussex. It opened in 2004 as part of the local reorganisation of first and middle schools. Most pupils are from White British families but several minority ethnic groups are also represented in small numbers. Just over a quarter of the pupils have learning difficulties, but in some year groups it is higher. Of these, most have moderate learning or behavioural and emotional difficulties, and speech or communication difficulties. Attainment on entry is low.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory and this matches the school's own view. Though standards are below those expected nationally, this represents satisfactory achievement, given the low starting points for most pupils. Clear signs of improvement are evident and the school is addressing pupil achievement systematically to raise standards. The provision in the Foundation Stage is sound and as a result the youngest children make satisfactory progress

The quality of teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory. Teaching is having a positive impact on the pupils' achievement but its quality varies. Pupils are catered for well, and all are making at least satisfactory progress, including those with learning difficulties. The provision for pupils' personal development and well-being is satisfactory and the pupils are cared for, supported and guided well. The headteacher's good leadership, supported by the other leaders, ensures that the school has a secure understanding of its strengths and where it needs to improve. This is shown in the wide range of programmes that are bringing about improvement, particularly in pupils' progress. Relationships with parents are increasingly good. The school provides satisfactory value for money. It has a good capacity to improve and is working hard to overcome the pupils' significant barriers to learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the rate of pupil achievement, especially the more able pupils across the school to raise standards.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring consistency and spreading the good skills of the best teachers.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory, as shown by the sound progress the pupils make from their starting points on entry. The children are helped to make a good start to their education in the Foundation Stage but by the end of the Reception Year, few are likely to reach the nationally-set learning goals in communication, language and literacy. Satisfactory progress is maintained through Years 3-6. Those with learning difficulties, and those most vulnerable, make good progress, but the more able pupils could be challenged more.

Standards are below average at the end of Years 2 and 6, particularly in mathematics, but are higher than those reached last year. Throughout the school, many pupils have weak literacy and numeracy skills. Good intervention and support programmes, early identification of individual learning needs and greater rigour in raising the quality of teaching and learning have resulted in improvement at expected levels of attainment, but relatively few pupils reach higher levels. The school's evaluation of standards shows that it is moving them upwards. Pupils are beginning to make better progress

year on year and in lessons. Nevertheless, the test results remain depressed and need to be higher.

The school uses a detailed monitoring programme to pinpoint and address any underachievement by pupils. Challenging targets have been set and pupils are on course to achieve these. The school is taking effective action to raise standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. They have positive attitudes and enjoy school. Pupils know that teachers reward good behaviour so they behave well in lessons and around the school.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Older pupils readily and ably accept additional responsibilities such as supporting children in the Foundation Stage and acting as 'guardian angels' to vulnerable pupils. This year's school councillors are new to their role but previously the council has been very effective in representing pupils' views, for example by applying for funding for playground equipment. Pupils know right from wrong.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and healthy, for example through taking exercise and through healthy eating. However, some pupils do not always feel safe in school because of high levels of vandalism in the locality.

Attendance is satisfactory. Most pupils have good attendance but, despite the school's best endeavours, a number take holidays during term time. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school and wider community. The development of skills contributing to their future economic well-being, whilst satisfactory, is hindered by their low standards in numeracy.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The teaching is satisfactory, a view shared by the school. This is an improvement since the school's first year of opening when its own checks revealed some significant weaknesses. Teaching is more consistent now but too few lessons provide good role models so that the good teaching can be spread more widely. Most pupils are making the progress they should because planning is more secure and builds upon what pupils already know. This moves their learning forward. In the good lessons observed, teachers made learning fun and exciting, for example when pretending to be castaways in Year 4, and making a book about 'the naughty bus' on its travels around the school in Year 1. Targets for improvement are giving a clear guidance to both staff and pupils about what they need to do next. Particularly effective improvements have been made in teaching the basic skills by the intensive in-service training.

Assessment is good overall. Ongoing records, end of year tests and early identification of those pupils who need additional support are beginning to move pupils on in their learning. Pupils know and understand their individual targets for literacy and numeracy. Marking of work is helpful because teachers ensure that pupils understand what it is they have to do to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory because the teachers have reviewed and improved it several times since the school's amalgamation last year to ensure it better meets the pupils' needs. The curriculum meets national requirements and is enriched by a range of visits and visitors. For example, a visit to a local fast food chain supported pupils' work well in food technology. Subjects are taught through themes and this enables teachers to provide activities that successfully capture pupils' imagination. The approach known as 'activating prior knowledge' provides teachers with good opportunities to establish what pupils already know and so to adapt subsequent lessons. The school has few more able pupils and, although the teachers' lesson plans identify them, the tasks set do not always present them with sufficient challenge. The curriculum effectively meets the needs of pupils with learning difficulties, contributing to their good progress, but the few more able pupils are not served so well.

There is a satisfactory range of out of school activities, some open to all age groups. These support learning in music, art, and sports, and the pupils clearly enjoy them.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school cares for its pupils well and places a high priority on ensuring that the pupils feel safe and secure. Clear policies for this area, whilst still being modified, enable staff to give consistent support. The care and guidance for vulnerable pupils is very good. Governors have been instrumental in developing safety procedures following early concerns.

Increasingly, ways have been found to involve parents in guiding and supporting their children, including the family learning project, which is linked to raising achievement in mathematics. Healthy lifestyles are encouraged through various subjects but also by events such as the 'healthy eating week'. Assessment systems, whilst making little use of comparative information, are being used well to highlight where specialist support is required. All these new initiatives are clear signs of improved provision and progress but have not yet had time to impact markedly on higher standards.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provided a strong steer to the school's amalgamation and has a clear vision for the school's future. The

re-adjustment of the leadership team and the steps taken to improve the quality of teaching have enabled developments to move on rapidly. The relatively inexperienced leadership team is beginning to influence improvements by revising curriculum planning and raising achievement. Teaching assistants have been encouraged to undertake training, so improving their contribution to pupils' progress.

The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory. Little comparative data is available but, by introducing internal assessments, leaders have identified where significant underachievement occurred during the school's first year and, supported by the local authority, they have put in place measures to address it which are beginning to bear fruit; for example, standards in writing and mathematics are rising because of the well focused intervention and support. Governors are working on many improvement issues and they support the school well.

Innovative methods have created a strong staff team with a shared purpose. Rigorous monitoring is bringing about improvements and also ensuring that all pupils are valued. As the school has become established, so parents and pupils' views have been sought. Suggestions are seriously considered and acted upon in the best interests of overall developments. The progress so far shows there is a good capacity to continue forward and that the school provides satisfactory value for money.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	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	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	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?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	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?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	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	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

Southgate Primary School Barrington Road Southgate Crawley West Sussex RH 10 6DG

16 November 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you for your help and friendliness shown to the inspection team and myself. We enjoyed talking with you and looking at your work. We are pleased that you are proud of your school and enjoy coming to school each day.

These are the things that we are most pleased about:

- you enjoy your work and try to do your best
- you behave well, and are polite and helpful to one another and visitors
- the way the adults look after you and make sure you are safe.

This is what we have asked your headteacher and staff to think about:

- help you to improve your work and reach your targets and do well
- teachers need to make sure that the work you have is just right for you, not too easy and not too hard.

Thank you again for your help throughout this inspection.

Yours faithfully,

Sheila Browning Lead Inspector