



# Alfred Sutton Primary School

## Inspection Report

---

**Unique Reference Number** 109776  
**Local Authority** Reading  
**Inspection number** 288492  
**Inspection dates** 19–20 September 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Jill Arnold HMI

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	148 Wokingham Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Reading
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		RG6 1JR
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 9015411
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	385	<b>Fax number</b>	0118 9015410
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Ray Asplin
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Val Preston
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 November 2002		

---

<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 19–20 September 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 288492
--------------------------	---	------------------------------------

---

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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 one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Established in 1902, this is a large urban school located in a built up area near the centre of Reading. During the inspection, major building works were in progress to extend the accommodation. Pupils have a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Approximately half of the pupils are White British, and the others are mainly of Pakistani, Black African, Caribbean, and Indian descent. Over a third of the pupils speak English as an additional language, and half of them are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Their main languages include Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi and Bengali. There is a higher than usual turnover of pupils.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Alfred Sutton Primary School is a welcoming and harmonious community which provides its pupils with good care and a satisfactory standard of education. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. They are confident, articulate young people whose opinions are listened to and acted upon. Achievement is satisfactory, and standards at the end of Year 6 are above average.

The tenacious leadership of the headteacher is successfully driving school improvement. She is supported enthusiastically by her leadership team and governing body, whose skills are developing and beginning to have an impact on improving key areas of the school's work. The staff work as a supportive team committed to pupils' well-being and academic achievement. Realistic and accurate self-evaluation has provided the school with a clear view of its strengths and areas requiring improvement. Recent strategies to improve pupils' writing have been successful and there are suitable action plans for improving achievement in mathematics and science.

The school has identified underachievement by a minority of pupils for whom English is an additional language. For these pupils, additional support has not always been provided early enough in the past but this is now in place. Although the teaching seen during the inspection was mostly good, the use of assessment, tracking and target setting is insufficiently consistent to ensure that all pupils make sufficient progress over time. Marking has improved since the last inspection but there is variation across the school.

Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. The success of recent initiatives to improve writing illustrate that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. Parents are supportive and their responses to the questionnaire that was sent out before the inspection were largely positive, although a small proportion of parents would appreciate more information on school issues.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate the progress of underachieving pupils by making more effective use of assessment, tracking and target setting.
- Improve marking by providing more specific guidance to pupils on how to improve their work.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

When children start school in the nursery class their skills are wide ranging, but overall their skills are broadly average for their age. The school's data indicate that more recent intakes include a larger proportion of children whose skills are below average than in the past. By the time they leave in Year 6, most pupils have made at least satisfactory progress. About half of them attain standards that are above the levels expected for their age. Pupils achieve particularly well in English. However, the school

has identified a significant proportion of pupils who do not achieve as well as they should, particularly those who speak English as an additional language, and is taking action to address this. Pupils who receive additional support from teachers funded through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant make rapid progress in catching up to the levels expected for their age.

The provisional results of the 2006 Year 6 national tests indicate that standards were above average in English and average in mathematics and science. The Year 2 results were above average in writing, average in reading and just below average in mathematics. The achievement of pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities is satisfactory in relation to their starting points.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The personal development and well-being of pupils are good. They have positive attitudes and behave well. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds work and play together well. They are friendly towards each other in class and around the school and are sensitive to others' feelings, using initiatives like the 'buddy bench' to support those who feel isolated at particular times. Attendance is satisfactory.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a keen sense of right and wrong and use opportunities to reflect quietly, as in the assemblies on World Peace Day. They speak positively about the many different faiths and cultures represented in the school and have a good understanding of the multi-cultural world in which they live.

Pupils have a good understanding of the need for safe and healthy lifestyles. They fully appreciate the need for heightened awareness of safety whilst building works are in progress at the school. They have a good understanding of healthy eating having undertaken activities such as analysing the contents of lunch boxes. They readily take responsibility through participation in the elections for the school council and take initiative in forming and running their own lunch-time clubs. Their secure skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) prepare them satisfactorily for life beyond the school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Good relationships underpin the teaching and learning assistants provide pupils with sensitive support. Pupils are well motivated and usually work productively. They rise to challenge and benefit from opportunities to discuss their work. Although teachers plan a range of different activities for their pupils, these do not always take sufficient account of the assessment of individual pupils' learning needs. The use of targets is more effective in some classes than others.

Where it works well, pupils make good progress because they are very clear about what they are working towards and how they are going to achieve it. The better teaching is sharply focused on the step-by-step development of specific skills and understanding, informed by accurate assessment and clear objectives.

Work is marked regularly with encouraging comments and there are some good examples of pupils acting on advice. However, on some occasions marking is too general and does not identify specific aspects for improvement. The pupils themselves would welcome more clarity in this respect.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets the needs and interests of most pupils. There is appropriate emphasis on the development of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Although the support programmes for underachieving pupils have not been in place early enough in the past, there is now additional support for children in the nursery and reception classes. Recent initiatives to improve writing standards have been successful, particularly the increased provision of meaningful experiences for pupils to talk and write about. The school rightly plans to extend the range of practical and investigative opportunities provided in mathematics and science to enable pupils to apply and develop their skills more effectively. The programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being.

The curriculum is enriched and extended through the inclusion of a modern foreign language, a good range of extra-curricular activities and a variety of visits and visitors to the school, for instance most Year 6 pupils were away on a residential visit to a centre in Staffordshire during the inspection. Participation in sporting activities is particularly high.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. High priority is given to ensuring a safe environment with child protection procedures and risk assessments securely established. Pupils are well supervised with staff being particularly vigilant whilst building works are in progress. Pupils say that adults are fair and support them when dealing with misbehaviour or the occasional instances when bullying occurs. Staff and pupils work hard together to make the school a caring and welcoming place. Detailed academic records are kept to track the progress of individual pupils and further procedures are being developed to improve the progress of pupils identified as underachieving. The school is successfully promoting safe and healthy lifestyles and provides good opportunities for pupils to contribute to the life of the school and beyond.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory.

The headteacher's appointment two years ago followed an unsettled period in the school. Since then she has worked hard and provided strong leadership to create a 'can do' ethos in the school. All pupils are expected to achieve well. She has introduced systems for monitoring, evaluation and setting challenging targets which are beginning to have a positive impact and are becoming part of the school's culture.

The leadership team is newly formed and enthusiastic. There is strong commitment from leaders and managers at all levels in the school to promoting high quality care and education for the pupils. Action plans for improving mathematics and science are well considered and securely based on accurate evaluation but it is too early to judge their impact. The governing body is actively involved in the work of the school and provides an appropriate level of challenge as well as support. Partnerships with parents and outside agencies are generally productive and the school has plans to improve these further. One parent wrote, 'The school has cultivated a wonderful ethos where people are welcomed and accepted whoever they are and wherever they come from.'

**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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Inspection judgements

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

### 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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. We enjoyed visiting your lessons, talking to you and hearing your views. I am writing to tell you what we thought about your school.

Yours is a friendly, caring school where everyone is made to feel welcome. The staff work hard to make sure you are safe, happy and able to do your best. We were impressed with how well you get on together, look after each other and work hard in lessons. It was good to see how responsible you are and confident in expressing your views.

There are a few things which we thought would make your school even better. Although most of you are achieving well, we think some of you could be doing even better. We have asked the school to keep a closer watch on how well you are doing and to set you clearer targets so that you know exactly what you are aiming at. We agree with you that marking isn't always helpful enough, so we have asked your teachers to give you more specific feedback on how to improve your work.

You can help by making sure you understand your targets, asking if you are not sure and by acting on the advice that teachers give you.

Thank you once again for your help.

Jill Arnold

Her Majesty's Inspector