



Scalford Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120156
Local Authority Leicestershire
Inspection number 291650
Inspection date 22 November 2006
Reporting inspector Roger Sadler

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	School Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Scalford
Age range of pupils	4-11		Melton Mowbray LE14 4DT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01664 444282
Number on roll (school)	67	Fax number	01664 444 282
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Elizabeth Bryan
		Headteacher	Irene Thompson
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Half the pupils come to this small school from the village of Scalford and the remainder come from the surrounding area. They are taught in three mixed-age classes. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and none speaks English as an additional language. The majority of pupils come from economically advantaged backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is above average. The majority of such pupils enter the school midway through their primary education and many join the school in years five and six.

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 where standards achieved by pupils have steadily risen to above average levels. This is because the school is well led and managed and the staff work together well as a team. This has ensured that teaching is good, that pupils achieve well and make good progress during their time at school. Children enter Reception with knowledge and skill levels in line with what is nationally expected and by the end of Reception, pupils progress well so that almost all achieve, and most exceed, the expected standards because provision is good. In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to progress well and standards by the end of Year 2 are above average. Care, guidance and support are good. Work is marked carefully and constructively and many pupils know their targets and demonstrate a clear understanding of where and how they need to improve. As a result, pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress and achieve well. Writing results, especially those of boys, improved well last year because staff worked well together to bring about this improvement. The current Year 5 and 6 pupils are attaining above national expectations in writing and mathematics. Standards in science, however, are average and a few pupils could do better. Some pupils, particularly boys, present much of their work poorly and staff could expect more. Pupils with learning difficulties and higher-attaining pupils make good progress and achieve well because teachers make careful assessments and ensure they are well supported in lessons and during extra one-to-one sessions. The curriculum is good and well enhanced by a good range of clubs, visits and visitors.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good because the school puts pupils' progress in this area as a high priority. One pupil reflected the opinion of many when she said, 'I like coming to school because we all know each other so well here and all the teachers try to get everyone involved in everything that is going on'. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their high levels of attendance. Pupils concentrate well, work hard and behave with consideration for their own and others' safety and feelings. The school's increasing emphasis on exercise and healthy eating is helping pupils adopt healthy lifestyles. Pupils' social, moral, and spiritual development is good. Their cultural development is satisfactory because, although pupils show good awareness of their own culture, their knowledge and understanding of other cultural traditions are too limited.

Staff, governors, pupils and parents are all effectively involved in making important decisions about the school. Almost all parents who responded through the Ofsted questionnaire are fully supportive of the school. Parents' views reflect the inspection findings and the positive picture of a school that has made good improvement since its last inspection and has good capacity to continue to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in science by developing pupils' investigative skills.
- Expect more of how pupils, especially boys, present their work.
- Improve pupils' cultural development by extending their knowledge, understanding and experience of other cultures.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall, pupils achieve well, make good progress and attain above average standards by the age of 11.

Children enter Reception with knowledge and skill levels in line with those expected nationally. They make good progress in Reception and almost all meet national expectations in all areas of learning by the time they move into Year 1, and many exceed these. In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to progress well. Although Year 2 test results have been broadly average up to 2005, these improved in 2006 and these results and inspection evidence indicate that pupils achieve well and now attain above average standards by the end of Year 2. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to make good progress because of good teaching and the careful use of assessment and attain above average standards by the age of 11. Test results up to 2005 were broadly average but in 2006, standards improved to above average levels mainly because more pupils attained the higher level (Level 5) in writing. Inspection evidence, including pupils' work, indicates that standards are above average in English and mathematics but average in science in Years 5 and 6, due to pupils' limited skills in investigation in science. Ambitious targets in English and mathematics have been set for the current Years 5 and 6 pupils. School assessment information and pupils' current work indicate that they are on track to reach above average standards.

A significant proportion of pupils join the school in the older classes with below average attainment or learning difficulties. The school quickly makes accurate assessments and carefully tailors teaching to ensure that each pupil's needs are met. This helps pupils settle in quickly, make good progress and achieve well. Standards of handwriting and presentation are average overall. Throughout the school, pupils achieve well in speaking and listening because they are given frequent opportunities to discuss issues in small groups and this has positive effects on all their work.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children settle happily into the Reception class and quickly become confident and eager to share ideas and experiences. By the time they enter Year 1, they work independently and relate well to each other and adults. Throughout the school, pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. This is supported well by the school's strong Christian ethos. Pupils have a good understanding of their own culture but do not have sufficient awareness of the traditions and influence of other cultures. Behaviour in and around the school is good. This comes from a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils say that they know each other well and any problems are solved quickly. Older pupils act with maturity and make a valuable contribution to helping the school run smoothly as a community by taking on additional responsibilities, such as membership of the School Council or helping younger children.

Pupils feel safe at school and are confident there is no bullying and that if there was any, it would be dealt with promptly. They are confident that they can approach any member of staff if they have a worry. Pupils have a good understanding of what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle. They take care to conduct themselves safely in lessons and keep fit by taking regular exercise in physical education lessons, swimming and sporting activities. They are clear about the need to eat healthily and choose fruit at break times. Pupils use computers confidently. This, along with their good skills in literacy and mathematics, prepares them well for the next stage of education and the world of work beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have good subject knowledge, particularly in English and mathematics, and this enables them to plan work well. Teaching meets the broad range of learning needs in each mixed-age class, including the needs of higher-attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties. Inspection evidence supports the views of one pupil who said, 'I think the work's just right because sometimes you need a challenge'. Teachers assess learning well and help pupils to see what they need to do to improve, both through their marking of work and by giving them oral feedback. Pupils are given frequent opportunities and shown how to analyse, assess and discuss their work with a partner. Consequently pupils show a clear understanding of their learning targets and good awareness of where they need to focus their efforts. Throughout the school, teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) confidently, and the use of interactive whiteboards often helps pupils enjoy lessons and understand work more easily. Teaching assistants work in close cooperation with teachers and work successfully, often with lower-attaining pupils. This helps these pupils to enjoy lessons and make good progress. Pupils' behaviour and concentration in classes are very good and this enables them to progress well. Teachers do not always expect enough of how pupils present their work and this leads to work that is sometimes untidy.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum supports pupils' personal development and achievement well. Despite limited accommodation, learning opportunities for the youngest children are good. Popular clubs, run by pupils and staff, give good support to pupils' efforts to keep fit. A wide range of visitors to the school, such as African dancers, and out of school visits enrich pupils' interest and broaden their horizons. The school ensures that pupils understand the dangers of alcohol, substance and tobacco misuse and there are regular visits from the school nurse. Good links with local primary and secondary schools ensure pupils are used to mixing with a larger group of pupils and are confident about their transfer to secondary schools at the end of Year 6. Pupils are given good

opportunities to use their own ideas and to work independently, except in science where there is not enough challenge in the investigative element.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support for its pupils. Reception children thrive on the caring support from adults and older pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties receive effective and sensitive care and support. This enables them to make good progress and participate fully in all school activities. Procedures for safeguarding pupils, including risk assessments, are effective and reviewed regularly. The school liaises closely with parents to maintain above average attendance. Assessment of pupils learning is meticulous. When the school judges that any pupil (whether a slower learner or a higher-attaining pupil) could benefit, extra individual help, either within or outside lessons, is given to ensure that they do their best. For example, a Year 6 higher-attaining girl is receiving extra individual help to further extend the quality of her writing. The school is currently looking at improving the way in which it assesses and monitors pupils' personal development to give a formal and complete picture of their all-round development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management have resulted in all staff working together as an effective team, with a shared commitment to improving the school and their own work even further. The school knows itself well. The school has some well-developed and effective strategies for judging its success and checking that pupils are equally successful, and this means that the school is well placed to continue to improve. It is working on appropriate priorities and this is resulting in continually improving teaching and rising standards. For example, the school targeted English, especially boys' writing, as an area for improvement. Better provision for English has ensured that pupils enjoy writing, punctuate better and use more lively vocabulary when writing. The school analyses pupils' performance in tests and assessments very thoroughly and continually seeks ways to help pupils learn well.

The senior management team, the special needs coordinator and subject leaders take an important part in improving the aspects of the school for which they are responsible. The newly-formed governing body makes a valuable and committed contribution to the school's development and provides good support and challenge to the headteacher and staff.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	2

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
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	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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 so welcome when we came to inspect your school. We are pleased that you like your school. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and your teachers, and watching you learn. We think your school is giving you a good education. You make good progress in your learning and the headteacher and staff are working hard to improve the school so that you can make even better progress.

- Here are the things that we think are best about your school:
- your teachers work well to help you work hard, concentrate in lessons and make good progress
- your behaviour is good and you are polite and considerate towards one another
- you know right from wrong, show consideration for others and understand what it means to be friendly to each other
- many older pupils take responsibility for helping others within the school
- you enjoy school and attend regularly.
- These are the things that we think could be better:
- you could achieve better standards in science if you were taught how to carry out investigations
- some of you (especially some boys) should take more care in the way that you present your work
- you could have more chances to help you to learn about the life and culture of people from different backgrounds.