

# Southwark Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 122454                |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | CITY OF NOTTINGHAM LA |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 314299                |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 14–15 April 2008      |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Kenneth Thomas        |

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

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|---|---|
| <b>Type of school</b>                     | Primary   |
| <b>School category</b>                    | Community   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 3–11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed   |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |   |
| School                                    | 502   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body  |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mrs Ailsa King  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Mrs Michaela Saunders   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 1 March 2004  |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Southwark Street<br>Old Basford<br>Nottingham<br>Nottinghamshire<br>NG6 0BS |
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| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 0115 9155792  |

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|--------------------------|------------------|
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| <b>Inspection dates</b>  | 14–15 April 2008 |
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors

## Description of the school

Southwark Primary School is much larger in size than most other primary schools. The school occupies a split site and serves an area marked by considerable social and economic disadvantage. There is significant movement of pupils in and out of the school at times other than the usual times of starting and leaving. Most children start school with social and academic knowledge and skills that are very low for their age. About 80% of pupils are from White British backgrounds, and the remainder are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. A few pupils are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils entitled to receive a free school meal is more than double the national average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very high but very few pupils have a statement of special educational need.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The school judges its effectiveness to be good and inspectors agree. It has a number of outstanding features. In this school, each pupil is important and the outstanding curriculum promotes academic achievement and social development exceptionally well. It is carefully planned to meet the wide range of pupils' needs and enriched to expand their experiences. This is reinforced by clear rules and principles, which are very noticeable throughout the school and underpin pupils' excellent social development. These features make a significant contribution to the happy and harmonious environment that pupils enjoy. Parents support the work of the school. One captured the views of many by writing, 'Southwark just gets better and better.' The school has good capacity for continued improvement and gives good value for money.

Leadership and management are good. The exceptionally well focused leadership of senior managers, together with the strong commitment of staff and governors, provide the driving force behind the school's improvement. Much has been done to make systems for checking the school's performance more rigorous and this has contributed to the recent rise in standards. From their low starting point, all groups of pupils make good progress. The good start in the Foundation Stage is maintained in Key Stage 1 and then accelerates in Key Stage 2. This is because across all year groups, teaching is mostly good and often outstanding. As a result, pupils are making better progress than in previous years and standards have risen to be broadly average at the end of Year 6.

In the many successful lessons, teachers make it clear to pupils what they have to learn. They use their expertise well to plan tasks that stimulate pupils' interest and develop their academic and social skills. However, in some lessons, teachers do not make enough use of questioning to assess pupils' understanding and the extent to which the purpose of the lesson is being achieved. Effective classroom management is a strong feature of all lessons. This has a significant impact on pupils' behaviour, which improves as they move through the school and supports their progress in lessons.

Pupils make good contributions to the school and wider communities and understand the value of a healthy lifestyle. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral and cultural development is good. This, together with excellent social development, helps to prepare them for the next stage of their education. Underpinning pupils' good progress are effective care, support and guidance. Assessment information is now being used more effectively to set individual pupil's targets, track their progress and identify early any who are falling behind. Parents and carers are involved in this process. However, in the marking of their work, the guidance given to pupils on what they need to do to achieve their next steps in learning is not consistently good across the school. There is highly effective support for vulnerable children and those who have additional learning needs. Pupils feel safe and secure.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

An increasing number of children enter the Foundation Stage without pre-school educational experience. Consequently, although children make good progress, skills continue to be well below those expected at the end of the Foundation Stage. Staff have a very good understanding of how children learn and ensure that they experience an imaginative and tremendously stimulating environment that is rich in language. Children develop confidence and independence

and greatly enjoy choosing imaginative activities which promote all the areas of their learning. For example, children delighted in wearing wellington boots and 'splashing' through 'puddles' in the hall, as they explored different movements and ideas to the music of 'Singing in the Rain'. Children enjoy the outdoor area where they have the freedom to explore and discover for themselves, but can turn to adults if they need help. Good leadership ensures that teamwork between teachers and support staff is very effective. All adults demonstrate good levels of care, which results in children feeling secure and happy. The school works hard, but with limited success, to actively involve parents and carers in this stage of their children's education.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that the guidance that pupils receive on their next steps in learning, through the marking of their work, is consistent across all year groups.
- Ensure that the ongoing assessment of pupils' learning is a feature of all lessons so that teaching can be modified to make sure there are no gaps in understanding, and good progress is made.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' good progress through Key Stage 1 is reflected in a gradually rising trend in standards, which is now approaching the national average at the end of Year 2. Progress accelerates in Key Stage 2. The positive impact of strategies to improve writing standards, together with more detailed target setting and tracking systems, have led to a sharp rise in standards at the end of Year 6. In relation to the national picture, standards in English, mathematics and science are close to average, with an increasing proportion of pupils achieving higher levels. The 2007 national test results represent exceptional achievement. All groups of pupils, including those who join the school part way through and those with particular learning needs, make equally good progress. The school is on track to achieve the challenging targets set for the current year.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils work well together and respect one another's ideas. They respond exceptionally well to the school's clear code of conduct. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong, and willingly take responsibility in the school and wider community. This is seen in their enthusiasm for working as monitors, 'buddies' or as members of the school council. They take full advantage of these opportunities and gain skills that are the basis of responsible citizenship and provide a sound foundation for their future lives. Pupils also enjoy participating in the major musical productions that involve the whole school, and the carol service in a local church. They realise the importance of taking exercise and know how to make healthy choices in eating. Pupils participate fully in the many opportunities for exercise and sport. They are confident that any problems are dealt with quickly. Instances of bullying are rare and if any do occur, they are dealt with rapidly and generally to the pupils' satisfaction. Attendance is average, mainly because of family holidays taken during term time. The school tries hard to discourage this.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Enthusiastic staff who are willing to try out new ideas and approaches to learning are key to the pupils' good progress. Teachers are very aware of the wide range of abilities in each class and prepare imaginative and practical activities. In most lessons, and particularly in Key Stage 2 where progress is most rapid, there is a high level of challenge. Sharp, incisive questioning is used to assess pupils' understanding, share ideas and shape pupils' learning. However, the pace of some lessons is too rapid and not enough use is made of questioning. Therefore, opportunities are lost to identify gaps in pupils' understanding so that teaching can be modified as the lesson proceeds to ensure that all are making good progress. Teaching assistants are a valuable asset and work very effectively to support pupils' individual needs and help those who are learning English.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is particularly responsive to the social context in which the school operates and pupils' individual needs. It is enriched by themed weeks that bring an extensive range of visitors into the school, and educational visits. These weeks give the curriculum much greater relevance and reinforce the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. An emphasis on learning through the use of interactive whiteboards is having a positive effect on motivation among older pupils, especially boys. Specific teaching of letter sounds in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, and the new approaches to reading and writing across Key Stage 2 are helping to raise standards. A strong emphasis on pupil's personal development, including residential visits in Key Stage 2, dramatically improves their social and emotional skills, and enhances their self-esteem. This reinforces the belief that all pupils can aspire to be 'the best in Nottingham'. The curriculum is further enhanced by a good range of additional sporting, musical and other extra-curricular activities

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a secure, positive and caring environment for all pupils. Procedures to ensure pupils' safety, welfare and protection are all in place, as are the required safeguarding procedures. Pupils know who to go to if they are worried or upset. Those new to the school are supported exceptionally well as are those who have specific learning needs, are particularly vulnerable or have particular gifts or talents. The school's innovative 'Sky Rocket Club' provides children facing challenges at home and school with finely tuned individual support and encouragement each morning. Arrangements to prepare pupils for secondary school are very good. Support and guidance for pupils' academic development have been strengthened. The school tries very hard to involve parents and carers in their children's education, and works successfully with a range of external agencies to maximise pupils' learning at school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The outstanding leadership of the headteacher and her deputy, with highly effective support from others with management responsibilities, ensure that this school has a very clear sense of direction. Together they provide the school with an accurate agenda for improvement, although initiatives have been too recent to have had a full impact. There are systematic reviews of performance by senior and middle leaders, together with rigorous evaluation procedures. Roles and responsibilities have been redefined to enhance support for teaching and learning and ensure that there is clear accountability for performance. There is exceptionally good teamwork amongst all staff. Provision is enhanced by very strong links with other schools and outside agencies. Governors capably fulfil their role in guiding the school's work and providing challenge for continued improvement.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|----------------|

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

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve?  | 2 |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners   | 3 |
| 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 2 |
| The attendance of learners  | 3 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 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? | 1 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?   | 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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 2   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1   |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards  | 2   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 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

16 April 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Southwark Primary School, Southwark Street, Nottingham, NG6 0BS

Following our visit to inspect your school I am now writing to tell you what we found out. Before I do, I would like to say thank you for making us feel so welcome and making our visit one that we will remember for a long time. We have told your teachers how you were all so helpful and polite, and, through our discussions with you, it was good to hear how much you enjoy school, the after-school clubs, and other activities that are available for you. We particularly noticed the way you enjoyed the music in assembly and seeing the way you celebrated pupils' achievements.

Our main finding is that this is a good school and one that is helping you to do well. You told us how in most of your lessons, teachers and other staff make learning challenging but fun and this helps you to make good progress. One of the ways in which teachers help you is by checking that you understand everything as lessons go along and we have asked the school to make sure that this happens in all lessons.

Another way in which your teachers help you is by spending a lot of time marking your work. We have asked them when they mark, they give you more guidance on the things that you need to do to make your work better.

You know that your headteacher, governors and all of the adults who work with you want you to do as well as you possibly can and help the school to become even better. You have a very important part to play in the school's success. Having met you, we know you will all want to try your very best to help your teachers. Through your good behaviour, hard work and the care you show each other, together with willingness to take on responsibility, you all help to make this such a happy school.

With our best wishes for your future success.

Dr Kenneth C Thomas

Lead inspector