

# Southgate Primary

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133971
<b>Local Authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	328788
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 December 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kevin Hodge

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	318
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Terence Fisher
<b>Headteacher</b>	Denise Harber
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 November 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Barrington Road Southgate Crawley RH10 6DG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01293 525966
<b>Fax number</b>	01293 538097

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 December 2008
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average-sized school, where pupils start with skills and experiences that are below those typically found for their age. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provides for four- and five-year-old children, taught in two Reception classes. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average and these pupils have a range of needs, including speech, language, behavioural and physical needs. About 20% of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds or at the earlier stage of learning English. The school provides an early morning breakfast club for those children identified as needing this support.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Southgate is a satisfactory school, which is improving. Due to the concerted effort of staff, led by the recently appointed headteacher, the school is steadily emerging well from a period of disruption. Pupils and parents alike are enthusiastic about the changes for the better. Parents typically point to the 'incredible improvement' and are 'impressed with how much more information parents are given'.

Children make a secure start in the EYFS and make satisfactory progress in most areas of learning. Although they make up some ground in their learning, not all securely reach average standards. This is because the activities set are not always guided by good assessment of their needs and developing abilities. In national tests, results for pupils in Years 2 were just below average. By the end of Year 6, recent results were improving, but last year they dipped sharply. This was mainly due to the large proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and several changes of teacher. Current classwork paints a more positive picture and pupils, although not always reaching the expected levels, are now on track to reach broadly average standards when they leave. Pupils' writing skills have improved, although their problem solving and investigative skills in mathematics and science are not developed well enough. Pupils' progress, including for those at the early stages of learning English, sometimes varies, but they achieve satisfactorily given their starting points. Those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities keep up with classmates, as they too make satisfactory progress through the school.

Pupils' comments about the school are positive. They often say the best things they like are their teachers, because they make them laugh. Some clearer expectations and routines now ensure their good personal development. Pupils behave well around school, enjoy their activities at playtimes and know whom to turn to for help. The curriculum is satisfactory. Despite recent efforts to introduce more creative and engaging lessons, some activities are not matched well enough to pupils' abilities or do not provide them with enough problem solving activities. Teaching is typically satisfactory and promotes positive relationships and pupils' work attitudes. However, not all teaching is successful at setting work that stretches the more able pupils or involves them more actively in their learning. Although teaching is improving, not enough guidance is provided by subject coordinators for it to consistently improve to higher levels.

Pupils and parents say they value the good day-to-day pastoral care and support provided and pupils are rising to the challenge of having specific targets to guide their learning, although these are relatively new. The school's more recent improvements, particularly in raising writing standards, reflect a satisfactory but improving capacity to improve further. Governors give suitable support to school staff and senior leaders.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

The leadership of this age group is satisfactory. Children make at least satisfactory progress in most aspects of the EYFS curriculum. Good links with parents and carers ensure that children have a smooth start. The effective way the early morning start is arranged means that children's welfare needs are picked up quickly. Progress in personal, social and emotional development is generally good. Most children take turns and share, although not all work well independently. Some children, particularly boys, do not always stay focused on their activities. This is partly because assessment routines are not yet rigorous enough in identifying those children needing

extra help or which activities will extend their learning. In small groups, children have skilful support but when they work independently, adults do not intervene quickly enough to guide their learning. Children develop good basic communication skills such as matching letters to sounds and enjoyed writing their cards for Santa Claus. They are beginning to learn simple skills to help them read and write. There is a strong commitment to outdoor physical activities, despite the outside area being limited in resources which reduces the scope of the activities that can take place.

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

- Ensure there are consistent opportunities for pupils in Years 1 to 6 to apply their skills in solving mathematical and scientific problems.
- Develop the skills of subject leaders in monitoring the quality of teaching and ensure they give clear guidance to teachers on how to improve pupils' learning, particularly for the more able.
- Use assessment more rigorously in the EYFS so that activities can be more closely matched to children's needs and level of ability to boost their progress.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Based upon their current work, pupils achieve satisfactorily in relation to their starting points. They make a sound start in the Reception classes. By the time they leave in Year 6, pupils are on track to reach broadly average standards, despite some subjects such as mathematics being slightly below average. Their pace of progress varies in Years 1 to 6 because some teaching and planning does not stretch pupils' thinking or increase their work rate. This is particularly so for the more able pupils. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress as well as their classmates, as activities are well matched to their abilities. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in information and communication technology (ICT). The pupils for whom English is an additional language keep up with classmates well and are supported effectively. The school, having fallen short of missing some of its recent academic targets, is now more on track to reach them next year.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils behave well, have positive attitudes to school life and relate to each other happily as their spiritual, moral and social development is good. They say they like to keep active and healthy and appreciate the 'healthy' tuck shop and recent healthy eating week. Playground activities are popular and help them keep activity levels high. Many pupils attend extra-curricular clubs to extend it further. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory, but is affected by a small number of families who take holidays in term time. Close links with the local community and their willingness to support the local air ambulance by wearing 'funky footwear' reflects their concern for others. Their good levels of behaviour and cooperative skills help prepare them for their next stage of education, and their current levels of basic skills means this aspect is satisfactory. Although pupils are aware of others from different backgrounds, their knowledge of places much further away is not as well developed. Pupils who can speak different languages like their

role as 'translators' and along with links developed with local schools and community, contribute to the school's good provision for community cohesion.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Pupils throughout the school benefit from teaching that fosters good relationships so they work together willingly. However, there is not enough teaching that really stretches pupils' thinking, particularly for those who are more able. An increasing amount of stimulating activities help promote pupils' writing skills and are improving pupils' confidence to put down ideas on paper, particularly the boys. Although staff use audio-visual interactive whiteboards well to make lesson introductions more appealing, follow-on activities in some classes are often slow in pace as teachers take too long to explain things or do not involve pupils actively enough. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from good group and individual support, often by well trained teaching assistants. Teachers generally mark work regularly, although it does not often point to a pupil's success in reaching their targets or lesson aims. Pupils who are at the earlier stages of learning English make quick gains in their learning due to the good levels of support they receive.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

There is an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills, but there are weaknesses in the way problem-solving activities are planned into day-to-day work. Recent efforts to devise a more 'creative' curriculum are taking shape, but these are at comparatively early stage. Activities such as 'Well being' week and visitors leading drumming workshops help broaden pupils' experiences. Pupils' ICT skills are planned for, making use of a purpose-built computer suite, but these skills are not often included in day-to-day work. A good emphasis on promoting pupils' personal development helps them to recognise differences between cultures, although planning to develop their knowledge of countries beyond the United Kingdom is more limited. The number of music and sports clubs, combined with trips away from school such as a residential week, help extend pupils' horizons further.

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

#### **Grade: 2**

There is a caring atmosphere in the school and staff ensure a good level of care and welfare. Good systems ensure that child protection, staff vetting procedures and health and safety provision fully comply with regulations. There is a strong link between these and the fact that pupils say they feel safe at school. The school has positive relationships with a good range of outside agencies, supporting the good care it gives to the pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school works well with parents, and one parent reflected a typical view in saying, 'my three children are thriving and enjoying their time in school.' There are good arrangements to help children start in the EYFS and close links with secondary schools and colleges help pupils settle in quickly after they leave. Pupils' academic guidance is generally good, and their new individual targets are helping them to raise standards. Assessment routines in the EYFS are not yet rigorous enough to help guide future planning.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Following some staff instability, including two periods of temporary leadership, there is now a clear focus on raising standards in the school. This is largely due to the recently appointed headteacher providing a clearer and more determined steer to the school's work. Together with a clear plan of action, based on realistic levels of self- evaluation, improvements are moving more quickly than in recent years. For example, building work has been completed quickly and the improvements in writing are the result of concerted efforts by all staff. However, the role of subject coordinators, particularly their monitoring focus on improving teaching, is not yet rigorous enough to diagnose what is needed to make teaching consistently good. Governors help the school run smoothly on a day-to-day basis, but are slightly hampered in their work as they are finding it difficult to fill governor vacancies. However, governors are keen to seek improvement and have devised clear plans to monitor initiatives and visit the school regularly within their existing resources.

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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
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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?	3
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### Achievement and standards

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

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which 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	3

## The quality of provision

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

## 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

12 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Southgate Primary School, Crawley RH10 6DG

We liked visiting your school recently. Yours is a satisfactory school that is trying to be even better. Here are some of the things we found out.

- You make the expected progress in your work and just reach average standards in your work by the time you leave, but your problem-solving skills in mathematics and science are not good enough yet.
- You are happy at school and like the changes for the better.
- Children in the Reception classes have a enjoyable start to school and enjoy their activities.
- You feel safe and know that all the adults are good at helping you with your concerns.
- You have a good understanding about how to stay healthy. Your 'well being week' looked fun.
- Most of you behave well in class, in the playground and during assembly.
- Teachers try to make lessons exciting, although some of you, particularly those of you capable of harder work, are not 'stretched' enough in your thinking or involved sufficiently in your learning.
- Your new headteacher leads the school well, and the governors give satisfactory support. They all know what needs to be done to make the school even better.

There are three things we have asked the school to do to help improve it even more.

- Give you more opportunities to use your skills to solve mathematical and scientific problems.
- Give the teachers more guidance about they can really stretch your thinking and involve you more in your learning.
- Help teachers keep a closer eye on how well children in the Reception classes make progress and give them activities which will help them make quicker progress.

You can help too by trying your best in every lesson and giving the school ideas about how to make it better.

Yours faithfully

Kevin Hodge

Lead inspector