

Sampford Arundel Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123705
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	340403
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Paul Sadler

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	27
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nikki Civil
Headteacher	Eddie East
Date of previous school inspection	3 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited four lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and a group of pupils. He observed the school's work and looked at documents, including records of pupils' progress, school improvement planning and data relating to safeguarding children. The responses to questionnaires from pupils, staff and 20 parents and carers were analysed.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at the following:

- the extent to which recent improvements in attainment and progress are sustainable in the future, including the school's success in matching teaching and the curriculum to the wide range of abilities and needs in each class
- the quality of provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the quality and impact of leadership and management, especially self-evaluation, governance, community cohesion development and the impact of membership of the Wellington Area Rural Federation.

Information about the school

This very small school serves a rural area of hamlets and farms, although a number of current pupils live in a nearby town. All pupils are from White British backgrounds and none is at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, although none has a level of need sufficient to attract additional resources.

The school makes provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in a class with pupils in Years 1 and 2. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught in a second class. In September 2008 the school became part of the Wellington Area Rural Federation with another school of similar size, under the leadership of a single governing body.

The school is a 'dyslexia-friendly' and 'healthy' school, and holds other awards including the preliminary stage of the International Schools Award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school that has improved considerably since its last inspection, and in which pupils now achieve well. While data are greatly affected by the small numbers of pupils involved, attainment at the end of Year 6 in mathematics and especially English has risen strongly over the past three years. Attainment in 2009 was above average overall, and in English, especially in writing, it was high. This represents good progress by all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The work of current pupils shows that these standards are set to be maintained. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make outstanding progress, especially in their communication skills and in their social and emotional development.

Pupils behave well. Very good relationships exist throughout the school, with older pupils caring for younger ones. Children and pupils in the youngest mixed-age class settle to work quickly, but those in Years 3 to 6 sometimes settle more slowly. Pupils' attendance is high ' an improvement on the previous inspection. Pupils feel very safe, and their knowledge of how to keep themselves so, for example when using the internet, is outstanding, as is their understanding of how to lead healthy lives. Pupils are taught about people of other faiths and cultures, but have too little opportunity to experience directly the range of cultures that exist in British society.

Teaching is good and reflects high expectations of what pupils can achieve. The progress of individual pupils is carefully monitored and work is planned well to meet the wide ranges of ages and attainment in each class. Individual programmes are designed for those who need extra help, which enables them to make very good progress. Planning for English offers pupils a wide range of opportunities to learn, but in mathematics there are too few opportunities for them to apply their skills in a range of real-life situations. There are sufficient computers for any pupil to use one at any time, and they are used well as a research tool and to present work. Pupils get good feedback on how to improve their work and targets are used well, but pupils have little idea of how their work relates to national standards. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Their skills develop quickly ' the result of the many opportunities to learn through play and more structured activities.

Parents and pupils feel rightly that the school provides excellent care. A typical comment from a parent is that 'staff are approachable and informative and go beyond the call of duty to optimise the pupils' educational opportunities'. Leaders and managers have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have taken effective action to address the latter. The good record of improvement in pupils' attainment and progress in recent years, and in the quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage, shows that the school is in a good position to improve further. The governing body is effective

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in supporting the school and challenging it to improve. Legal requirements, such as to safeguard pupils, are fully in place. While there have been some joint activities involving pupils and staff of the two schools in the federation, the potential this presents has not been fully realised. For example, there is no overall strategic plan for the future development of the federation, and opportunities to review its contribution to community cohesion have not been taken.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further raise pupils' attainment and progress by:
 - giving them more opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to a variety of situations
 - increasing the range of opportunities for pupils to experience the range of faiths and cultures present in British society.
- Develop the opportunities presented by membership of the Wellington Area Rural Federation by:
 - contributing to a strategic plan for the future development of the federation
 - evaluating the school's contribution to the federation's promotion of community cohesion.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Children start school with skills and abilities that are broadly as expected. They make excellent progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and by the end of Year 2 are attaining above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Good progress continues in Years 3 to 6. At the end of Year 6 in 2009, almost all pupils attained standards higher than those expected nationally in English. Their writing is a particular strength, with imaginative work written with confidence and accuracy in a range of styles. In mathematics, pupils make good progress with basic calculation but are more hesitant in applying their skills to a range of situations because of their limited opportunities to do so. Pupils are confident in their use of information and communication technology (ICT) and have the skills needed to learn independently, so the skills they will need in later life are developing well.

Pupils are confident and friendly. They have a particularly good knowledge of how to keep healthy and enjoy exercise and, usually, a healthy diet. They know the dangers of substance abuse and the importance of personal hygiene. They really enjoy school and the opportunities it offers, as shown by their high attendance. They make a good contribution to the community through care for younger pupils, membership of the school council and through sport and music. Although pupils have limited experience of people of other faiths and cultures, their overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is well planned and, especially in the youngest mixed-age class, proceeds at a fast pace. Activities are interesting and varied and meet pupils' needs well. Teaching assistants give very good support, especially in ensuring that the wide range of needs in each class is met. Occasionally in Years 3 to 6, the pace slows when pupils engage in personal conversations rather than getting on with the task. Marking is used well, more so in English than in mathematics, to help pupils to improve their work. Regular assessment ensures that progress is carefully monitored and that any need for extra help is quickly identified. A strength is that this help is carefully tailored to address each pupil's individual need, rather than using an 'off the shelf' programme. This is an example of the excellent care, support and guidance that pupils receive. The school also has good relationships with local pre-schools and secondary schools, smoothing the transition from one stage of education to the next.

The curriculum is rich and varied, and uses the rural location and outdoor environment of the school very well. Trips and visits, including residential experiences, add to pupils' experience and promote their social skills. The range of additional activities is as varied as could be expected in a school of this size and includes a range of sporting and musical opportunities. A number of these activities are organised jointly with other schools, both within and outside the federation, increasing pupils' opportunities for contact with other children of their age. The limited opportunities for pupils to apply

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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their mathematical skills are a relative weakness within the curriculum.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers are experienced and knowledgeable about the full range of education the school provides. In spite of its small size, new requirements for the education of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have been implemented extremely well. Past weaknesses, for instance in writing and calculation, have been identified and rectified, leading to raised attainment and improved progress by pupils. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are effective, although given the small size of the staff, the perspective is somewhat narrow. Leadership of aspects such as the Early Years Foundation Stage, literacy and special educational needs is especially effective. Relationships with parents and carers are excellent. Parents' and carers' attendance at sessions explaining the curriculum is invariably close to 100%.

All arrangements to keep pupils safe meet requirements and governors have a good understanding of the school and the challenges it faces. The school promotes equal opportunities for its pupils well, for example by taking action to minimise the impact of an imbalance of boys and girls in different year groups. While the school is aware of its duty to promote community cohesion, there has been no formal evaluation of its impact in this area. This is an example of the potential for membership of the federation to have a wider impact on the school's work and hence on pupils' achievement, which has yet to be fully realised.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate	
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength of the school where children get a brilliant start to their education. They make excellent progress, as contact with older pupils supports the rapid development of their communication, language and literacy skills, and of their social and emotional development. They are confident and articulate young learners. Learning has good pace and is well organised, and children get good opportunities to make choices and learn through a range of activities, both those led by adults and those which they choose themselves. This is especially effective in improving their communication skills. A child made a drawing on the interactive whiteboard. 'It's a map. That's France', she said, pointing to part of the drawing. 'You ought to label it 'La France'', said her friend, which the first child then attempted to do. Outdoors, children threw a bean bag at a target, while a pupil in Year 2 kept score. 'You scored five four times. That's 20', said the older child, showing how children and pupils learn from each other. An adult-led session on linking sounds and letters was quick-fire and enjoyable, especially when the teacher made deliberate 'mistakes', to gales of laughter.

Resources are excellent for provision of this size. There is plenty of ICT, and the exciting classroom leads to a covered outdoor area with a soft surface and plenty of toys and equipment. Staff track children's progress carefully and design activities to help them progress effectively to the next stage. There is good communication with parents, who appreciate the high level of care their children receive. There is, therefore, good evidence of the excellent leadership and management of the provision.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Parents are almost entirely unanimous in their praise of the school. They particularly like

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the small size of the school, engendering a 'family atmosphere', the approachability and commitment of staff, the high level of care, and the range of activities on offer. Concerns were raised by very few, and the inspector found no evidence to support these.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sampford Arundel Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspector received 20 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 27 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	14	70	4	20	0	0	1	5
The school keeps my child safe	14	70	6	30	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	11	55	6	30	1	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	70	4	20	2	10	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	80	3	15	0	0	1	5
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	75	4	20	1	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	70	6	30	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	11	55	7	35	1	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	70	4	20	2	10	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	50	9	45	0	0	1	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	40	11	55	1	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	60	7	35	0	0	1	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	13	65	6	30	0	0	1	5

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



23 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sampford Arundel Community Primary School, Wellington, TA21 9QR

I very much enjoyed meeting you and talking to you when I visited your school recently. You are confident, articulate and friendly young people. I agree with you and your parents that Sampford Arundel is a good school. These are some of the best things about it.

- Children get off to a really good start in Reception.
- You all make good progress and in Year 6 you reach standards in the national tests (SATs) that are above average. Your writing is especially good.
- You behave well and look after each other. Class 1 get on with their work quickly but some of you in Class 2 sometimes prefer to chat with each other first rather than getting on with your work.
- You are really good at keeping yourselves safe and healthy.
- Teaching is good and you have interesting things to do, especially on trips and residential visits.
- You are looked after particularly well by the staff.
- The school has a good relationship with your parents.
- The headteacher, staff and governors lead the school well.

I have asked that school to do three things to make it even better:

- To take more advantage of being in the federation with Stawley School
- To give you more opportunities to use your maths to solve everyday problems
- To give you more experience of how other people in Britain live.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Paul Sadler

Lead inspector

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