

Summerbank Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123980
Local Authority	Stoke-On-Trent
Inspection number	340463
Inspection dates	18–19 January 2010
Reporting inspector	John Dunne

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Gill Jenkins
Headteacher	Mr Robert Shenton
Date of previous school inspection	20 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons and 12 teachers were seen. The proportion of time spent by inspectors on direct observation of learning amounted to over 50% of available inspection time.

Inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at assessment data, case studies and monitoring and evaluation documents. Inspectors analysed 115 questionnaires completed by parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress pupils are making
- the effectiveness of measures taken by leaders and managers in improving achievement since the last inspection
- the capacity of leaders and managers at all levels to secure recent improvements in progress
- the effectiveness of measures taken by leaders and managers in improving attendance since the last inspection and how well they are embedded.

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average primary. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is approximately twice the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is higher than average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises of separate Nursery and Reception classes with continuous access to two open play areas. The school has gained the Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' attainment and achievement in Key Stages 1 and 2.

Standards have declined since the time of the last inspection and attendance has also declined to an exceptionally low level during the last academic year. The literacy and numeracy standards of all groups of pupils are significantly below average. This is impairing pupils' preparation for their future economic well-being. Consequently, pupils' achievement is inadequate overall. Appropriate action is being taken to raise standards and there was an improvement in pupils' progress during 2009 which was reflected in the progress made in lessons during the inspection. Action taken by the school has significantly improved attendance but it remains below average. This, coupled with accurate school self-evaluation, indicates that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Staff are conscientious and share the vision for improvement. Not all leaders and managers have enough opportunities to monitor performance in their areas of responsibility. However, these opportunities are increasing and contributing towards recent improvements. Some aspects of improvement plans lack clarity and detail about what the school is going to do to make the necessary rapid gains in attainment. Governors understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school and their support and challenge have contributed towards improved progress and attendance.

Teaching is satisfactory overall and includes some good practice, but there is inconsistency in matching work to pupils' needs and checking on pupils' progress during lessons. Consequently, too many pupils do not attain the levels they should by the end of Year 2 and by the time they leave Year 6. Staff work hard to provide an attractive and welcoming learning environment. Pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe and secure. They are willing to take responsibility, behave well and the vast majority are respectful of their peers, adults and visitors. The curriculum is satisfactory with good provision for music and the arts.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment to at least match the national average at the end of Years 2 and 6 by:

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- improving the rate of progress made by all pupils in their learning.
- Improve teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - in all lessons, assessment information is used to plan work that is matched to pupils' needs so that all are sufficiently challenged
 - pupils' learning in lessons is more effectively monitored so that misconceptions are quickly spotted and corrected.
- Improve the consistency of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - all staff with leadership roles have increased opportunities to monitor and evaluate performance in their areas of responsibility and so contribute more fully to school improvement.
- Improve attendance further by rigorously implementing a wider range of strategies to promote good attendance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Many of the lessons observed promoted learning well. In these effective lessons pupils showed a positive commitment by working productively to complete tasks matched to their abilities. They also worked well both independently and collaboratively, showing enthusiasm. In most lessons pupils behave well and show they are ready to learn. Where teaching is less effective pupils' concentration wanders and they lose their enthusiasm because they are not being challenged appropriately.

Pupils leave Reception with skills and abilities below those expected for their age. Key Stage 1 and 2 test results indicate that attainment has remained low throughout Years 1 to 6. However, school assessments, lessons and pupils' work showed that their progress improved during 2009, is continuing to improve and is now satisfactory overall due to improvements in teaching. Despite this, attainment still remains low. Positive relationships and pupils' good behaviour contribute to their progress. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress equally.

Pupils' happy, welcoming faces show that they enjoy school and feel safe. Their understanding of right and wrong is well understood. The school is a harmonious community where pupils from a range of different social and cultural backgrounds socialise well. Due to their low attainment in literacy and numeracy, pupils' basic skills are weak. Attendance rates, particularly persistent absenteeism, have until recently been a cause for concern. However, well-targeted and successful interventions by the school and local authority staff have resulted in improvements, but overall attendance remains low.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was mostly satisfactory with some strengths but also some weaknesses. In the best lessons teachers plan an interesting range of tasks which have been carefully adapted so that all learners are challenged. Although marking is generally good and informative, not all teachers use assessments to plan work that is matched to pupils' needs. In these lessons pupils' concentration lapses because work is either too hard or too easy and progress slows. Not all teachers regularly check on pupils' progress during the lesson which results in pupils continuing to make mistakes. Measures put in place are improving these areas, but there is still much inconsistency. Classroom teaching assistants are effectively used and have played an important part in recent improvements.

The school has recently reorganised its curriculum around topics and themes which give pupils the chance to apply basic skills across a wide range of subjects. This is only beginning to impact positively on attainment in literacy and numeracy. Pupils achieve well in art and music due to the good provision. Pupils say that the adults will quickly sort out the rare cases of bullying or any other problems. Suitable arrangements for transition ensure that children settle into the different settings for learning as they progress through the school. The school places appropriate emphasis on pupils' welfare and upon that of potentially vulnerable pupils and works effectively with a range of agencies to protect them. It offers effective support for individuals with specific additional needs and this has led to improvement in their social development, and to a degree, in attendance.

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

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's commitment to improving the quality of education offered to pupils is strong. He receives good support from other leaders and managers, staff and the governing body. Leaders and managers have stopped the decline in pupils' achievement and improved attainment. In addition, there have been improvements in attendance and the quality of teaching. The most significant improvement is the sizable reduction of the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school.

Although the school is moving in the right direction, the pace of improvement is at present only satisfactory. Leaders recognise that progress needs to be faster. Measures to hold senior and middle leaders to account for monitoring their areas of responsibility are not yet sufficiently embedded. Action plans to tackle weaknesses are based on realistic self-evaluation, but some parts lack the necessary clarity about how improvements will be made and how gains will be measured.

While governors are supportive and knowledgeable about the school's strengths and areas for improvement, they recognise the need for a fuller understanding of performance information if they are to become even more effective. Equal opportunities are satisfactory; all pupils achieve equally and have opportunities to take part in all that the school provides. Staff and governors are well trained in safeguarding and this enables them to provide good. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. The school's work to promote community cohesion is satisfactory. Although the school has a strong understanding of its immediate community context, it has not evaluated how it can create opportunities for pupils to gain a meaningful insight beyond its local community or created a policy and action plan for doing so. Value for money is inadequate because pupils' achievement is inadequate.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3

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 of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good gains in learning and development from entering Reception at levels well below those expected for their age. They thoroughly enjoy the well-planned range of activities which encourage children to explore and investigate. For example, building rockets from soft blocks and playing as space explorers. They quickly settle into their new environment and become curious, independent learners. Children's good development in terms of their self-confidence is a strength. Children are able to engage in collaborative play early on and all share and take turns well. By the end of Reception, children reach levels below those expected for their age but this represents good progress given their low starting points.

Staff involve parents in their children's learning and as a result, they are well informed about their children's progress and many become effective partners in learning. This positive partnership contributes well to children's good progress.

Effective teamwork ensures that children's learning and development are well managed. Assessment and planning go hand in hand so that learning is tailored to children's individual needs. Outdoor learning experiences are effective in promoting all areas of learning. The quality of teaching is good. This good provision underpins children's good progress. All staff throughout Nursery and Reception are committed and knowledgeable because they are well led and managed. Staff are motivated and demonstrate drive and ambition for improving standards of learning and welfare.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

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

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Views of parents and carers

The large majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire feel that overall they are happy with their children's experience at school. A very small minority of parents felt that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. This is not the finding of the inspection which judges behaviour to be good and well managed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Summerbank 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 inspection team received 115 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 320 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	62	54	51	44	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	57	50	56	49	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	37	32	66	57	8	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	46	40	64	56	4	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	53	46	57	50	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	41	60	52	6	5	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	42	37	66	57	5	4	1	1
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)	44	38	60	52	2	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	35	69	60	4	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	33	64	56	10	9	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	28	77	67	2	2	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	42	37	66	57	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	55	48	55	48	3	3	0	0

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.



20 January 2010

Inspection of Summerbank Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 5HA

Dear Pupils

I am writing on behalf of the inspectors who visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you. Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us in your happy school.

The headteacher, governors and staff are working hard to make your school a better place in which you can learn. You told us that you enjoy school, feel safe and that staff are kind and helpful to you. It was good to see how well you behave and how well you all get on with each other – well done!

We were impressed with how well you are doing in art and music. We were also pleased that so many of you have improved your attendance. Those of you in Nursery and Reception are doing well. Despite these good things, the school needs to make improvements, particularly in helping you reach higher standards, because not enough pupils are achieving as well as they should. Therefore, we have given the school a notice to improve. This means that inspectors will visit the school again to check on the progress being made.

We have agreed with the school that it is going to make the following improvements:

- make sure that the standards you reach improve because we know that many more of you could do so much better in your learning
- ensure that all teachers set different work for you so that those that can already do something can get on quickly with harder things and those that still need more practice get the chance.
- make sure that that senior staff check more regularly how well the school is doing
- encourage more of you to attend more regularly.

You can all play your part by not taking days off school unless you are ill.

All the best for the future!

Yours sincerely

John Dunne

Lead inspector

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