

Sheriff Hutton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121342
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	380216
Inspection dates	23–24 February 2012
Lead inspector	Lesley Clark

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	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny McMillan
Headteacher	Beverley Stell
Date of previous school inspection	14 October 2008
School address	West End Sheriff Hutton York YO60 6SH
Telephone number	01347 878441
Fax number	01347 878441
Email address	admin@sheriffhutton.n-yorks.sch.uk



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Introduction

Inspection team

Lesley Clark

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed nine lessons taught by four teachers, observing a total of four and half hours' teaching. Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. She observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including: the tracking and assessment of pupils' progress; pupils' writing and work in mathematics; the school development plan; and documentation relating to safeguarding. Questionnaires returned from staff and pupils, and 46 questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed.

Information about the school

This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are of White British heritage. A low proportion are known to be eligible for free school meals. A below average proportion of pupils have special educational needs. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with a statement of special educational needs is low. The school meets the current floor standard.

There have been several staffing changes within the last year. The headteacher took up post in September 2011 and has a part-time teaching commitment.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. The school's main strengths are pupils' above average attendance and good links with parents, carers and the community. Pupils feel safe and clearly enjoy coming to school. The school is not judged to be good because attainment is not high enough in mathematics and more-able pupils do not write as well as they should. Pupils have limited opportunities to work independently and collaboratively on challenging, interesting tasks which slows their progress.
- Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory progress from above average starting points. Their attainment is above average in English by the end of Year 6. Attainment is closer to average in mathematics because pupils do not make fast enough progress in this subject. Pupils read well for their age. Fewer more-able pupils reach the higher levels in writing compared to reading.
- Teachers encourage pupils to listen and to complete tasks. In the best lessons, pupils work at a fast pace and set their own challenges. Sometimes the pace of pupils' learning slows when teachers do not take sufficient account of what pupils know and can do already or need to learn next.
- Pupils are polite and friendly and clearly enjoy each other's company. They have high levels of concentration when the work engages them but take their time over completing tasks that do not challenge them to think and work things out for themselves. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development satisfactorily.
- Senior leaders have accurately assessed the school's strengths and weaknesses and use the information to tackle rigorously the school's complacency regarding its above average attainment. Sharp use of assessment is driving improvement at a fast rate while focusing professional development on accelerating pupils' progress. The curriculum engages pupils' interest and contributes to their often lively and imaginative writing. Parents and carers have positive views about their children's education.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics and accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring teachers make good use of what they know about pupils' progress to provide well-paced learning activities closely matched to pupils' capabilities
 - giving pupils more opportunities to learn through problem-solving and collaboration
 - giving pupils regular practice in using and applying calculation skills mentally and orally and setting out calculations without the aid of worksheets.

- Improve the accuracy of more-able pupils' writing by:
 - ensuring teachers' marking gives pupils clear guidance as to how to improve their work
 - involving pupils in setting short, achievable targets and checking their work against specific criteria.

- Give pupils more opportunities in every class to work independently and collaboratively on challenging, interesting tasks in order to accelerate their progress to a good rate.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Attainment is generally above average and, for most pupils, this represents satisfactory progress from their starting points. Pupils make the best progress in reading because they read regularly both at home and in school. They make good progress in early reading skills in the Reception Year and attainment is above average by the end of Key Stage 1. In lessons, those who struggle are given imaginative contexts to help them understand how letters and sounds link together. For example, younger pupils confidently floated words with 'oa' in the middle 'down the river', sounding them out and checking the spelling carefully. Pupils of all ages clearly read for pleasure. They discuss favourite authors and are keen to borrow books from the newly refurbished library. Attainment in reading is high by the end of Year 6. This is why most parents and carers believe that their children are achieving well. However, this view is not entirely accurate because there are shortcomings in aspects of pupils' achievement.

More-able pupils do not write as accurately as they should because they do not use dictionaries regularly to check words for meaning and spelling. More-able pupils explained, 'We know we should use words like furthermore, moreover and nevertheless but we don't know how to. We would like some guidance about paragraphs and when to split text up.' They know they should 'stop making silly mistakes' but continue, for example, to punctuate dialogue incorrectly, because they do not have specific success criteria to help them. Pupils write confidently because the planned curriculum encourages them to write in a wide range of genres. When their interest and imagination is engaged, pupils show a lively facility with words. For instance, pupils' leaflets for a sci-fi café advised prospective customers that 'We are not open on Mishmash day.' Reception children make good progress in developing early writing skills.

Pupils' progress across the school in mathematics is uneven because they do not have regular practice in using and applying their calculation skills mentally and orally. They do not know their times tables well enough or understand number patterns sufficiently well. In lessons where pupils work in groups on thought-provoking tasks, their learning comes on apace, as when pupils worked out for themselves how to compare accurately metric and imperial measurements. Pupils sometimes make mistakes when they set out calculations because much of their work involves completing worksheets. Progress is more rapid in Years 5 and 6 because mathematical tasks are closely matched to pupils' capabilities. However, pupils have gaps in their knowledge and so relatively few exceed nationally expected levels.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall. They make good progress in lessons where they are given well-directed extra support as well as opportunities to learn independently.

Quality of teaching

As a result of teaching that is largely satisfactory but with pockets of very effective teaching, pupils achieve satisfactorily over time. Parents and carers have an overly positive view of teaching quality, given its variability. In the Reception class, children show high levels of independence. They clearly set their own challenges when they work together. For example, one group was engrossed in constructive play, writing notes on a clipboard while others staffed 'the garden centre' and directed planting. In other classes, teachers tend to over-direct pupils' learning, missing opportunities for pupils to work independently and collaboratively on challenging, interesting tasks.

In the best lessons, quick-paced demonstrations ensure that pupils make rapid progress because they spend the bulk of the lesson learning and practising new skills. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 fired questions at each other, challenging partners to calculate accurately at speed. In these lessons, teachers set clear time limits, have high expectations and involve pupils in assessing their learning. In satisfactory lessons, teachers miss opportunities for pupils to learn through solving problems. Sometimes teachers do not take full account of what pupils know already to provide well-paced learning activities that are closely matched to pupils' capabilities. In one mathematics lesson, for example, pupils of all abilities largely did the same activity, even though more-able pupils clearly showed their good understanding of three-dimensional shapes when they answered initial questions. Teachers' marking encourages pupils and motivates them to learn. However, they do not always give pupils, especially the more able, sufficiently clear guidance as to how to improve their work. They miss opportunities to involve them in setting and checking their work against short, achievable targets and specific criteria.

The planned curriculum enlivens both teaching and learning because it encourages creative approaches and opportunities for reflection. The impact is seen in pupils' reading, their imaginative writing and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, this response to a planetarium typifies pupils' capacity for wonder: 'I was lost for words, breathless and just speechless! How amazing for all of us to see the whole solar system!'

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Parents and carers have an accurate perspective on behaviour, recognising that some areas require improvement. The large majority are confident that the school deals with all types of bullying effectively but a very small minority have lingering concerns about behaviour at lunchtimes and occasionally in lessons. Pupils' behaviour over the last six months shows a distinct improvement in response to sharply defined rewards and sanctions. Pupils say these clear cut guidelines are helpful. They are keen to win team points and are fiercely competitive to demonstrate that they deserve them by being helpful and kind to one another and working hard. As a result, behavioural incidents have diminished.

Behaviour at lunchtimes, playtimes and sometimes during lessons can be over-exuberant. Pupils tend to rely on teachers to remind them to calm down rather than settling automatically to work or play productively. Some pupils have perfected the art of 'switching off' while apparently listening, explaining, 'When teachers start explaining something and we understand but they go on and on then it's boring.' At other times, when pupils' attention is riveted, their behaviour is impeccable as they show themselves eminently capable of concentrating and working assiduously for long periods of time. Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying and know exactly what to do should it occur. They have a strong sense of fairness, explaining, 'Sometimes there's name calling for a joke but it's not funny.' Older pupils have specific responsibilities, such as organising equipment or staffing the library, which they carry out effectively.

Pupils are safe and the vast majority say they are happy at school. Their parents and carers strongly agree. Extra-curricular activities and educational visits have a strong impact on pupils' behaviour and attitudes. Pupils are proud of their school and keen to represent it as shown in their successful competitive sporting and musical achievements.

Leadership and management

Senior leaders use rigorous assessment and stringent monitoring of teaching effectiveness as the main tools to drive improvement. These highlighted very quickly that the school was beginning to rest on its laurels. It is a measure of the school's previous effectiveness that within six months the school is back on track, although, as senior leaders quite rightly acknowledge, there is some way to go before the school regains its previously good levels.

This turnaround has been accomplished by very effective improvement planning, team work including team teaching, and increasing teachers' accountability for their pupils' performance. As a result, more lessons are good than satisfactory and pupils are rapidly making up the gaps in their mathematical knowledge. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are currently being targeted for extra support, including measures to boost their confidence and self-esteem. As a result, their learning is improving well and most are on track to reach nationally expected levels.

Leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, promote equality and tackle discrimination satisfactorily. Members of the governing body contribute effectively to the school's drive to raise achievement through asking challenging questions and interrogating data. They make good arrangements for safeguarding to ensure that children are safe and that child protection is effective. This makes an effective contribution to the school's happy, family atmosphere. The interesting and well-balanced curriculum motivates pupils to learn and extends their interests beyond the confines of the classroom. It

encourages pupils to research information and to present their work imaginatively using up-to-date technology or experimenting with creative ways to make 'historical documents' look old and worn.

Pupils' advanced literacy skills prepare them well for the next stage of their education. Parents and carers are fully supportive of their children's learning and comment favourably on the weekly newsletters and regular curricular information which enables them to help at home. The school has close links with and plays an important role in the local community. The school demonstrates satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



27 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sheriff Hutton Primary School, York, YO60 6SH

Thank you for your warm and friendly welcome. A special thank you goes to the many groups of pupils who spent time talking to me, reading to me and showing me their work. I have taken your views into account. You go to a satisfactory school. This means that it does some things well and has some things that need to improve. Your attendance is above average. You clearly enjoy coming to school and you feel safe. Your parents and carers are very supportive and the school is an important part of the local community.

Some of you are really good at mathematics and some of you struggle and have gaps in your knowledge. I have asked your teachers to make sure that everyone learns mathematics at the right level for their ability so that those who find it easy do more challenging work. All of you need more practice in doing mental and oral calculations and opportunities to solve mathematical problems. Those of you who find writing easy make too many mistakes. I have asked your teachers to tell you what to do to improve your writing and to involve you in setting short targets which you can use to help you check your work. Children in the Reception Year take more charge of their learning than those of you in the other classes. I have asked your teachers to give all of you the opportunity to work on your own or in groups and to set your own challenges. This will help you to make progress at a faster rate.

You can help by working hard in lessons, saying when the work is too easy and asking for help when you need it. This will help your teachers to know what you need to learn next. You could all be really good at mathematics if you learnt your times tables, practised using them regularly and set out your own calculations. I hope you will relish these new challenges!

Yours sincerely

Lesley Clark
Lead Inspector

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