

Shakespeare Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135351
Local Authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	360716
Inspection dates	30 September 2010–1 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Christine Huard

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	462
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Wicket
Headteacher	Karen Menis
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed twenty- three lessons or parts of lessons and fourteen teachers were seen teaching. Meetings were held with teachers, governors and a group of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at and evaluated a range of the school's documentation, including the school development plan, monitoring and assessment information, governors' minutes and teachers' planning. In addition, 104 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were analysed as well as those from staff and Key Stage 2 pupils.

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

- The success of strategies to raise the attainment of writing across the school.
- The effectiveness of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are more able.
- How effectively information from assessments is used to ensure tasks are matched to the needs of all pupils.
- The success of the school's behaviour management strategies.

Information about the school

Shakespeare Primary is larger than most primary schools. It opened in September 2009 and was an amalgamation of two local primary schools. Almost all of its pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. It has the Healthy School Award and is working towards Healthy School Plus, and also has the International School award. The school runs a breakfast club, which was visited as part of this inspection.

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

Shakespeare Primary is a good school. Since it opened a year ago it has succeeded in becoming a lively and vibrant learning community. The magnificent jigsaw collage hung in the entrance hall, to which each class has contributed, symbolises well how the school has succeeded in solving the problems of integrating two disparate schools and illustrates how it has become one unified establishment.

The key to the school's success lies in the commitment, drive and vision of the headteacher. Her determination to ensure that the provision for pupils should be exciting, motivating and matched closely to their individual needs in order for them to make maximum progress, is shared by the dedicated staff team and governors. The analysis and use of assessment material from both schools, even before the new school opened, to ensure that work was set at the right levels to challenge and support pupils once they started was meticulous. As a result, the first year has seen pupils in Year 6 reaching levels of attainment that are broadly in line with the average, having started their education at levels that were low in relation to their ages.

When the school opened, the emphasis was on establishing behaviour management strategies that were consistently applied across the whole school so that all pupils had the opportunity to learn effectively. This meant that inappropriate behaviour was controlled and pupils began to make good progress. Hand in hand with effective behaviour management went a curriculum that was stimulating and motivating and adapted to cater for different learning styles. It was designed specifically to meet the many and diverse learning needs of the pupils, particularly in developing their very limited communication and thinking skills. Short-burst activities such as the 'number plate game' were introduced at intervals during the day, where paired pupils have to devise short phrases using specific letters and interesting vocabulary. This has helped greatly in developing their writing and collaborative working skills, although still more needs to be done to improve writing.

The school's tracking shows that limited progress was made in the first term, but since then pupils have achieved well. This is because teaching is good. Planning is thorough and teachers take care to ensure that tasks are matched to different levels of ability in the class. Nonetheless, higher-attaining pupils are sometimes held back in lessons because they are not given tasks that challenge them sufficiently.

The school cares for its pupils very well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive very good support both in class and in individual or small group tutoring. As a result they make good progress. Pupils say they feel safe and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy, fully justifying the Healthy School status. Older pupils particularly make a good contribution to the life of the school taking on responsibilities at lunchtime and in looking after younger children.

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Governors are supportive and passionate about their school. They visit regularly and have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Nevertheless, they do not yet effectively contribute to the strategic development and self-evaluation. The school has established itself well. During the first year, pupils have made good progress, particularly in writing; behaviour is good and under control and the whole staff team is dedicated to further improvement. As a result, the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that information from assessments is used more precisely to ensure that tasks for more able pupils are matched closely to their needs.
- Raise standards in writing by ensuring that new strategies are fully embedded and carefully monitored for their impact.
- Develop the skills of governors to enable them to have a greater role in evaluating and contributing to the work of the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in the degree to which their attendance has improved in the last two terms. They know the difference between right and wrong and their social skills are good. However, they have limited understanding of the diversity of cultures in the United Kingdom today. The school is very well aware of this and the multicultural week planned for the week following the inspection is designed to help address this issue.

Strategies to improve pupils' writing are proving to be effective, and although there is still more to do, particularly in making provision for extended writing, pupils are making good progress. They work well together in pairs and small groups and make good progress when, as happens in most classes, tasks match the needs of all pupils. This was particularly evident in a Year 2 literacy lesson when pupils were sequencing a story. Less able pupils worked fruitfully with a teaching assistant to sequence pictures correctly, adding an appropriate sentence underneath. More able pupils successfully sequenced the story independently using a range of interesting connectives and exciting language. Pupils make the best progress when tasks are carefully matched to their needs, but this is not always the case for higher-attaining pupils. In one lesson, for example, higher-attaining pupils were observed carrying out the same task as those working at a lower level instead of being provided with more challenging work from the outset. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from individual and small group support and their progress, too, has improved over the last year. Pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) confidently and this, together with their rapidly improving academic attainment and personal qualities, prepares them appropriately for their future lives.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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

How effective is the provision?

Pupils are enthusiastic and actively participate in their lessons because teachers make them interesting. This is because the curriculum is relevant and is effectively designed to meet the needs of pupils well. There is a good balance of different subjects, and ICT is used well to support all aspects. The focus on improving pupils' writing is effective and on-going. A new strategy for extended writing is currently being introduced. In addition, there is scope for pupils to demonstrate the extent of their learning in a range of exciting ways other than through writing such as music, dance or drama. Working for awards such as that of International School adds further scope to the already varied curriculum. A wide range of interesting enrichment activities and visits further extends pupils' experiences.

Teachers explain clearly what pupils are going to learn and pupils are actively involved in setting the success criteria for effective learning, thus ensuring they fully understand the task set. Teachers' questioning skills are particularly strong and used well to assess the level of pupils' learning as well as to prompt them to deeper thinking. Marking of pupils' work is usually good. Comments are constructive and pupils say they find them helpful. Pupils' progress is carefully assessed and this information is used well to set targets for improvement. Pupils know their targets and these are effective in challenging them and giving them something to aim for. They have lots of opportunities to discuss and compare their thinking with partners. They are beginning to measure how effectively they have learned by checking through their success criteria at the end of each lesson.

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The school aims to develop the confidence, independence and enthusiasm of the pupils and this is reflected well in the day-to-day life of the school and is considerably aided by the short-burst challenges that pupils are offered. The school takes particular care to identify pupils' individual needs at an early stage. Staff work closely with parents and carers and a wide a range of outside agencies to provide the right support for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those whose behaviour has given rise to concerns. The breakfast club provides a good start to the day for the many children who attend. Transition arrangements into and out of the school are effective.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and leadership team are very well focused on improving attainment and accelerating pupils' progress, while also ensuring that the school is a happy and secure place for pupils. Middle leaders are involved well in monitoring the quality of their areas of responsibility by examining planning and pupils' work, although not all are totally confident in carrying out lesson observations. They effectively identify where pupils are in their learning and take appropriate action to address possible weaknesses before they become concerns. Initiatives taken are working very well but have not yet had a full impact on pupils' attainment.

The school works closely with parents and carers. The parents' forum and parent support adviser are both initiatives to enable parents and carers to engage with the school and their children's learning. Workshops, for example 'Keeping Up with the Children', extend these links further. Whilst the focus has been on establishing the new school some very good partnerships have been established. Senior teachers have been involved in promoting a specific writing project in other schools and giving support to early years settings in the area.

Governors are very supportive and have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. However, although they visit the school frequently they do not yet make a strong contribution to its self-evaluation and development. They ensure that all safeguarding procedures are robust and leaders endeavour to ensure that pupils, whatever their ethnic or cultural background, are valued and free from discrimination. The school has evaluated its contribution to community cohesion well. It has done well in establishing itself in the local community. Although other links are planned, the school is at an early stage of implementing these.

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

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
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

Children enter the Nursery with attainment that is very low in relation to that expected for their ages. The focus on developing personal and social skills so that children are ready to begin their learning is a priority. The provision is geared towards this very well, giving children good opportunities to share and take turns and teaching them to listen carefully. Although children enter Year 1 at below-average levels, they have made good progress in all areas of learning.

The Foundation Unit contains both the Nursery and Reception classes. Children make good progress because the provision is exciting and appeals to their interests. Planning procedures are consistent and follow the same format, as do observations and the way in which 'Learning Journeys', children's assessment records, are kept. This means that there is good continuity, which makes records easier for both staff and parents and carers to access. The Learning Journeys are very good records of children's achievements, with observations in all areas of the curriculum and enhanced by photographic evidence. Although next steps are identified, these do not always identify the strategies to be used to move children on in their learning.

Children in the Nursery have been using Forest School activities to follow on from the story of Owl Babies and enjoyed making nests and going on a mini-beast hunt to find the babies' food. Reception children were eagerly making bread rolls after reading Little Red Hen, and sequencing the story using pictures and early mark-making strategies. Small World and role-play areas enable children to develop their limited imaginative and language skills. Children's welfare and safety is of optimum importance and the care and guidance provided for children is outstanding. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive excellent support and are integrated highly successfully into the learning environment.

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The reason for the good progress being made is the good leadership and management. The leader has analysed and evaluated practice in the Foundation Unit and used the results to identify key areas for improvement. This shows a very good knowledge of the needs of the young children and identifies how things can be made even better. Her skill in developing the roles of teaching assistants and colleagues means that there is a consistent approach to behaviour management and to effectively promoting children's learning.

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

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are confident that their children enjoy school and are safe and well cared for. They also express confidence in the leadership and management of the school. The great majority are happy overall with the experiences their children are receiving. There are very few reservations. A small minority have concerns over whether the school deals with unacceptable behaviour appropriately. There are a very few pupils in school with behavioural difficulties and there have been occasions when there have been instances of inappropriate behaviour. These have steadily declined over the last year, although there are still a few isolated incidents. Inspectors are confident that the school has dealt with these well, involving the assistance and advice of outside agencies where appropriate.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Shakespeare 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 104 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 462 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	64	62	33	32	3	3	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	56	54	39	38	4	4	3	3
My school informs me about my child's progress	48	46	45	43	5	5	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	54	52	40	38	2	2	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	57	55	38	37	2	2	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	45	45	43	5	5	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	41	53	51	2	2	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)	37	36	53	51	5	5	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	41	51	49	1	1	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	26	55	53	13	13	4	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	34	33	55	53	7	7	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	47	45	43	41	3	3	3	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	59	57	35	34	2	2	4	4

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 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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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 pupils' 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.



3 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shakespeare Primary School, Plymouth PL5 3JU

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your beautiful new school. You were really polite and friendly and helped us to learn a lot about what you do and what you enjoy. Your school gives you a good education. Below are some of the highlights.

What we found about your school

- It is a friendly and happy place in which to work and play.
- You enjoy coming to school and behave well.
- You make good progress and achieve the standards you should in English and mathematics.
- You show a good understanding of how to stay safe.
- Adults look after you well and make sure you are safe, in and around school and on visits.
- You benefit from a really wide range of after-school clubs as well as many interesting visits and visitors.
- Your headteacher and teachers are working hard to help you do better.

What we have asked your school to do now

- Help you to improve your standards of writing, especially your use of language. You can help by trying to find really interesting vocabulary to use when you answer questions.
- Try to make sure that those of you who find work easier are really challenged in the tasks you are set.
- Give the governors more opportunities to contribute to assessing how well the school is doing.

We are sure that you will do all you can to help all adults who work with you to make your school even better. You can do this by trying as hard as you can in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Christine Huard

Lead inspector

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