

# Shevington Vale Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106429
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wigan
<b>Inspection number</b>	355948
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sarah Drake

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	116
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Tom Frost
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Gabrielle Gray
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 January 2008
<b>School address</b>	Runshaw Avenue Appley Bridge, Wigan Lancashire WN6 9JP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01257 253559
<b>Fax number</b>	01257 253559
<b>Email address</b>	enquiries@admin.shevingtonvale.wigan.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed nine lessons taught by seven different teachers. The inspectors held meetings with two members of the governing body, members of staff and two groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation relating to pupils' attainment and progress, and to school management including safeguarding. The inspectors also took into account the questionnaire responses of 63 pupils, 22 staff, and 43 parents and carers.

- The rate of progress made by different groups of pupils throughout the school, with a particular emphasis on writing.
- The quality of teaching and use of assessment to determine whether they are sufficiently strong to enable pupils of all ages and abilities to make good progress.
- The success of the newly-established leadership at all levels in driving forward school improvement.

## Information about the school

Shevington Vale is smaller than the average size primary school. It is situated in the centre of a residential estate with a stable population. The vast majority of pupils are White British and no current pupil speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible to receive a free school meal is well below average. A below average proportion have special educational needs and/or disabilities but the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is average. The school's Healthy School award was renewed in 2010. In February 2011 it was re-accredited to hold Wigan's Quality Standard for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school also holds the Eco School bronze award and the Activemark for physical education.

Since the previous inspection the school has experienced a long period of unsettled leadership culminating, in September 2010, with the redundancy of the post of headteacher. Since then the school has begun to work in informal collaboration with another local school, with which it shares an executive headteacher. She works for half the week in each school. The deputy headteacher now also holds the role of head of learning and shares the leadership with the executive headteacher.

A private provider offers childcare on site for children aged from two years to four years. A before- and after-school club also operates on site. These settings did not form part of this inspection but reports of their quality can be found on the Ofsted website.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a satisfactory school which pupils describe as, 'fun, friendly, caring and like a big family'. After a prolonged, unsettled period, there is now a very clear sense of direction as well as renewed vigour and confidence among staff. This is due to dynamic, good quality leadership from the executive headteacher and deputy headteacher which skilfully balances rigorous monitoring and accurate evaluation of the school's provision with encouragement and well-directed professional development. Staff are wholehearted in their praise of the new senior leadership team. Members of the governing body are delighted that their determined actions to resolve previous difficulties are bearing fruit. Improvements over the past 18 months in, for example, the curriculum, the tracking of pupils' progress, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and pupils' behaviour confirm the school's good capacity to improve further.

The majority of children join the Reception class with the skills expected for their age. They achieve well so that a large majority each year join Year 1 with skills above those expected for their age. Elsewhere in the school, progress has been uneven since the last inspection but there are clear signs of improvement. Pupils are now making satisfactory progress. Attainment levels at the end of Year 6 are usually above average. The school is well aware that there is room for pupils to make better progress than this. Teachers now have good quality information about the levels pupils are working at and are using this increasingly well when planning activities. However, there remain inconsistencies in how well lessons are adapted to offer suitable challenge for those of different ability and in how well marking provides guidance to pupils about how to improve their work.

The school provides a happy, relaxed learning environment in which pupils feel nurtured, listened to and behave well. The innovative curriculum brings learning to life for pupils who, consequently, are full of enthusiasm each day. Attendance levels are high. Pupils' good quality artwork, ranging from watercolours of the Lake District to bright collages of Tudor tournament tents, enhances the accommodation. Pupils have used their expertise in ICT to provide guidance manuals for other schools in the local authority and to teach their parents and carers how to use the virtual learning network. Good quality relationships are a hallmark of the school.

Up to 40% of the 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?

- Increase the rate of pupils' progress from Year 1 to Year 6, by:
  - ensuring that the teaching consistently provides pupils, particularly the more able, with the right level of challenge

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- increasing the opportunities for pupils to make decisions and learn independently
- providing marking that consistently makes clear to pupils the strengths of their work and what they need to concentrate on next to improve it.

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

**3**

Pupils, parents and carers agree that the very large majority of pupils enjoy school. They settle well at the start of lessons and most take pride in the presentation of their work. They generally listen well to their teachers, have good recall of their prior learning and know what their targets are, although they are not always clear about how to reach them. From a very positive response to the inspection questionnaire, pupils were least positive about their understanding of how well they are doing at school. Pupils are willing learners but, without direct adult input, they are inclined to chatter with their friends rather than sustain their concentration on the work in hand. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make similar, satisfactory progress in English and mathematics. The progress of Year 6 pupils this year has been strongest in writing, which is a particular focus of school improvement planning. Overall levels of achievement are satisfactory.

Pupils are unfailingly polite to adults and very supportive of each other, particularly of those who are more vulnerable. Their involvement in developing 'class plans', newly introduced this year, is proving very effective in improving behaviour and helping those who find self-discipline more difficult, to control their moods. Pupils feel safe in school, confident that adults will listen to their concerns, and have a good understanding of how to keep safe, for example, when using the internet. They are keen participants in physical activities and interested in eating healthily, as demonstrated by Key Stage 2 pupils' recent successful enterprise activity to create and market healthy lunch-boxes. Pupils carry out well their responsibilities, such as school councillors, and develop good quality skills of cooperation. With their well-developed basic skills, very regular attendance and positive attitudes to learning, they are well equipped to contribute effectively to their future well-being.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?

Improvements to the curriculum, for which all staff have been responsible, underpin pupils' enjoyment of school. The thoughtful choice of topics with careful reference to the development of pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy, ICT and personal development creates exciting opportunities for learning. For example, the Asiamania topic for Years 3 and 4 incorporated work about other cultures, music, countries and climates, as well as the tasting of exotic fruits to inspire written work and high-quality observational drawings. In Key Stage 1, an ICT program about making the right choices accompanied pupils' report writing about a supposed robbery in the classroom, while in Year 5 pupils' persuasive writing hinged on their ambition to secure the real-life opportunity to make a presentation on local radio.

In lessons, teachers generally demonstrate good subject knowledge and make suitable use of subject-specific language. Good classroom management and use of ICT help to sustain pupils' concentration, and teaching assistants provide effective, discrete support for those who find learning more difficult. Some lessons move at a very well-judged pace, providing good challenge and independence for the quickest learners while offering support and extra clarity for other pupils. In other lessons, teachers do too much of the talking, allowing few opportunities for pupils to share their ideas with each other or to decide for themselves what skills they need to use. Teachers do not always make clear enough their expectations of different groups. Sometimes tasks are too simple and, even if

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extension work is prepared, teachers do not ensure that pupils move on to this as swiftly as they could. Pupils' books clearly show that teachers' marking has increased in its usefulness over the current year. However, it does not yet always identify with sufficient precision the teachers' reasons for praising the pupils' work, or with enough clarity the next steps they should take.

Good quality care, guidance and support mean that all pupils, including the most vulnerable, flourish at this school. Close working with outside agencies, parents and carers, as well as careful record-keeping, regular reviews and well-targeted extra support, enables pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to enjoy school and make similar progress to their peers. Good transition arrangements ease pupils' move on to high school and from one year group to the next. Good quality relationships mean that break times are usually happy, although pupils do not always have enough resources to support their play, especially during the long lunch break.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The complementary skills of the executive headteacher and deputy headteacher are moving the school forward at a good and sustainable rate. The school improvement plan provides the bedrock for discussion at weekly staff meetings and for the clear programme of assessment, moderation, evaluation and review. Class teachers say that in spring 2010, following a rigorous analysis of pupils' progress, they were shocked to discover how much this had slowed. Now they speak of the transformation brought about by the clarity of available information and the regular progress meetings with senior leaders which lead to swift actions to support those in danger of underachieving. While there remain inconsistencies, the quality of teaching has improved due to good access to professional development and internal support. The staff remained very loyal to the pupils during a difficult period; they now feel empowered to hone their own skills in order to provide them with an increasingly good quality of education. The role of subject leaders has been refined and developed so that they are taking increasing responsibility for the provision and progress made in their areas.

Staffing upheaval and financial uncertainty have claimed the full attention of the governing body over a number of years. Members fulfil their duties satisfactorily, have a suitable range of skills to help drive forward improvement and are beginning to hold the school to account for pupils' progress. They ensure that safeguarding arrangements, including the recruitment of staff and procedures to promote health and safety, are of good quality. Similarly, staff's good knowledge of individual pupil needs, appropriate provision and the

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school's highly inclusive atmosphere successfully promote equality of opportunity. The school operates as a strongly cohesive community with good links through video-conferencing with, for example, a multi-ethnic school in America, but it offers pupils fewer opportunities to develop an understanding of those who have different experiences of life in the United Kingdom. Good partnerships with parents, carers and a wide range of local groups enhance the provision for pupils, making a strong contribution to their enjoyment of learning.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle very happily in Reception due to the good arrangements to help them, and their parents and carers, to familiarise themselves with the school before they join. The vibrant, well-organised classroom entices them to experiment and explore so that they quickly become independent learners who concentrate well on self-chosen, as well as adult-led, activities. Children thoroughly enjoy their learning, as exemplified by one who first thing in the morning chose to complete a jigsaw while quietly chanting to himself a repetitive rhyme about the runaway gingerbread man, learnt the day before. All areas of learning are promoted outdoors as well as inside although, due to its shape and entirely hard surface, the area is not ideal. Good relationships abound and the children demonstrate mature negotiation skills as they collaborate over a game or take turns to use the interactive whiteboard. The strong focus on developing writing skills, an area of relative weakness when children join the school, means that the room is full of children's emergent writing, including recounts of their recent antics for Red Nose day. The adults are adept at extending children's learning through open questioning. They also involve children in discussion about the written observations that they make of their developing skills, further promoting their understanding that writing has a purpose. Children enjoy admiring the past work kept in their learning journals, and staff share these with parents



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and carers at progress meetings to agree targets that school and home can work on together. Strong teamwork among the staff, extremely detailed planning and knowledgeable, dedicated leadership ensure that all children thrive in Reception and make good progress.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

Most parents and carers express very positive views of the school. They particularly praise the support that staff give to the more vulnerable and the improvements they have seen over recent months. A small number are unhappy about mixed-age classes and their experience of difficulties of communication with teachers and school leaders. Others feel that their children are not making enough progress or helped sufficiently to lead healthy lifestyles. Inspectors shared the views with the school's leaders. Pupils make satisfactory progress and show a good understanding of how to live healthily. The school shows good signs of improvement. It offers parents and carers regular formal opportunities to discuss their children's progress: parents and carers were seen talking freely with staff during the inspection.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Shevington Vale 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 43 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 117 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	53	18	42	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	24	56	17	40	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	15	35	24	56	3	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	40	20	47	5	12	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	19	44	21	49	2	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	40	20	47	4	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	47	17	40	5	12	1	2
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)	12	28	22	51	2	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	35	21	49	2	5	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	26	30	70	0	0	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	30	21	49	3	7	2	5
The school is led and managed effectively	14	33	25	58	1	2	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	49	19	44	1	2	1	2

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



31 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Shevington Vale Primary School, Wigan, WN6 9JP**

Thank you for the warm welcome that you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our time with you, particularly because you were so polite, well behaved and eager to speak with us. Talking with you helped us to understand what it is like to be a pupil at Shevington Vale.

At the moment the school is providing you with a satisfactory education but it is showing signs of good improvement. This is because the senior teachers have a clear idea of how to improve things and make it easy for the other staff to put the ideas into practice. Children in Reception make good progress in their learning but the progress made by the rest of you is satisfactory. To help you make good progress in every year group, we have asked your teachers to make sure that they provide the right level of challenge for you all in lessons and encourage you to take more charge of your own learning. This means that you will have to do a bit more thinking for yourselves and also some of you will need to try not to chatter so much in lessons when you are meant to be concentrating on your work! We have also asked teachers to make their marking even more helpful to you.

We were very impressed by the quality of your artwork and also by your information and communication technology skills. We were also pleased to discover how keen you are on energetic activities, like the after-school dance class, and how sensible you are about keeping yourselves safe. Your enterprise activity about healthy lunchboxes sounded really interesting. In fact you are lucky that the adults provide you with so many exciting activities such as all the work pupils in Years 3 and 4 did for their Asiamania topic. You are also lucky that they look after you so well so that you feel happy in school. Your attendance is among the highest in the country – congratulations! I hope that you continue to enjoy learning as much as you do now.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Drake

Lead inspector

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