

Shire Oak VC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131570
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	360294
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Christine Millett

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Prof Janie Percy-Smith
Headteacher	Ms Jane Astrid Devane
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 11 lessons given by eight teachers and made other short visits to lessons, held meetings with groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body, and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at work in pupils' books, school policies and plans, data tracking pupils' progress, records on safeguarding, health and safety, and attendance, questionnaires returned by the staff, pupils and 55 returned by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The extent to which the school has been successful in raising attainment in writing since the previous inspection.
- The effectiveness of strategies to reduce the number of persistent absentees and improve attendance.
- How well the new leadership teams have been embedded and their impact upon teaching and learning.

Information about the school

This is a slightly smaller-than-average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average, as is the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups. A minority of pupils are of White British heritage. However, the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with national average overall, but is below average for those with a statement of special educational needs. The school has achieved a number of awards including the Stephen Lawrence Education Standard, International Schools award, Activemark and Healthy Schools status. There have been significant changes in staffing, including a new headteacher and deputy headteacher, since the last inspection.

In addition to a children's centre, private providers offer pre-school childcare and before- and after-school care on the school site. These are not managed by the school's governing body and did not form part of the 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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Shire Oak provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. One of its strengths can be found in the commitment of senior leaders and the extremely effective governing body who are working together to bring about improvements in order to raise attainment. Pupils receive good quality care, guidance and support which contribute much to their good personal development. Good relationships exist with parents and carers who are very supportive of the school. Of those who completed the questionnaire all are happy overall with the education that their children receive. One parent wrote, 'Shire Oak is a great school where things are improving all the time'. Strong partnerships in learning and well-being have contributed to the good progress being made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is an inclusive school which works successfully to promote equality of opportunity, especially for its most vulnerable pupils. Safeguarding arrangements are robust and as a result, the very large majority of pupils say they feel safe. This view was shared by all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire. Pupils contribute much to school life and are particularly knowledgeable on factors which contribute to a healthy lifestyle. An imaginative curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of interesting and stimulating experiences.

Attainment in English and mathematics is average and the school's own tracking system identifies effectively any gaps in learning. This is having a positive impact on the levels of progress being made, particularly in writing. Children settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress. Overall, progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Well-targeted intervention strategies enable pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make better progress than their peers. Attendance is currently average and improving strongly due to effective systems the school has in place, and the number of persistent absentees has been reduced. Teaching and learning are generally satisfactory but good and outstanding elements were seen in some lessons. Teachers plan lessons well and relationships in classes are supportive. However, occasionally the pace of lessons is too slow and there is insufficient challenge for the more able. Assessment to support learning has improved since the previous inspection and examples of good practice were seen across the school.

Senior leaders and the governing body are committed to raising attainment. Under the direction of the new headteacher a comprehensive audit has taken place to identify areas for development and self-evaluation is accurate. Although the school is changing rapidly and distributive leadership, through middle managers, is beginning to develop, the effect of such well-founded changes has yet to have a full impact upon raising attainment and accelerating achievement. Consequently, current capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory.

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Up to 40% of schools whose overall performance is judged to be 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 the quality of teaching and learning to consistently good or better by:
 - sharing the good practice that already exists in the school
 - raising teachers' expectations and increasing the level of challenge in all lessons
 - improving the pace and timing of lessons so more is accomplished
 - planning work that takes into account the needs of the more able pupils
 - creating more opportunities for independent learning
 - using feedback and marking to remind pupils of the importance of good presentation.
- Develop the skills of middle managers in monitoring and evaluating the school's work in order to have a greater impact upon the areas they lead.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils are keen to learn, enjoy school and achieve satisfactorily. They collaborate well when given opportunities to work in groups or in pairs. In the main, children start school with skills and knowledge that are below the levels expected of them particularly in communication, language and literacy. They get off to a good start in the Reception class. Unvalidated data for 2010 shows attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 to be broadly average. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels is broadly in line with national average. The progress of all pupils is monitored carefully. Work seen in pupils' books confirmed the school's own analysis that while progress is satisfactory overall there are parts of the school where progress is better. Classroom observations confirmed that when pupils are fully engaged in lessons and challenged to learn, they make good progress. Learning slows in lessons where pupils are less actively involved.

Relationships throughout the school are good contributing to a pleasant learning environment for all. Behaviour is satisfactory. Pupils of all ages have a clear understanding of the importance of healthy eating and regular exercise. They respond well to the responsibilities they are given and make positive contributions to the school and local community. This is seen in successful fund-raising events and involvement in 'Headingley in Bloom'. Pupils gain a satisfactory grasp of basic skills, including information and communication technology (ICT). The school also provides them with many additional skills and experiences from the world of work, such as being involved in the interviewing process for the new headteacher, enterprise projects, for example, the Fairtrade tuck shop and attendance at careers fairs. Through preparation for Investors in Pupils, pupils have begun to learn about balancing budgets and the importance of setting priorities. All these experiences, alongside average attendance, good punctuality and positive attitudes ensure good preparation for the future. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a marked sense of right and wrong and enjoy the different cultural experiences that the school provides. The school's values encourage pupils to think beyond themselves.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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?

Teachers work hard to engage pupils' interest through the use of the interactive whiteboard and other visual aids. The majority of lessons seen were satisfactory with some examples of good and outstanding practice. Senior leaders are working to ensure consistency across the school. Overall, teachers have good subject knowledge and, in the best lessons, planning takes into account all levels of ability. Occasionally, the needs of the more able pupils are not fully met. For example, when teachers' expectations are not high enough or work is not matched adequately to pupils' needs. Sometimes opportunities for independent learning are missed. Assessment for learning is now well established across the school. Peer and self-evaluation are in place and pupils are able to articulate the next steps in their learning. Marking is consistently thorough in mathematics as well as in English, although it tends to overlook the erratic presentation by some pupils. Other adults in the classrooms give valuable support.

A creative curriculum is in place which ensures pupils learn new skills in meaningful contexts. An enquiry based approach engages pupils and encourages them to ask questions about their learning. This can be seen in the provision for outdoor learning which gives pupils the opportunities to problem solve. The curriculum also provides an extremely broad range of enrichment experiences through visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities. French and Spanish are taught in Key Stage 2.

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Shire Oak is a welcoming, caring and harmonious school. Adults know pupils well and respond positively to their needs. Pupils feel well-supported by the school and know to whom they can turn if they have a problem. The individual needs of pupils facing challenging circumstances and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well met through close liaison between teachers and support staff. The successful links with outside agencies further reinforce this good quality of care.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
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?

Members of the leadership team are united in their determination to bring about improvement. Systems for analysing and recording pupils' attainment are in place and provide a sharp focus on the achievements of different groups of pupils. Senior leaders monitor teaching and learning regularly and are keen to further develop the sharing of good practice. Middle managers are not yet fully involved in the monitoring and evaluating of teaching in their subject areas. The governing body is dedicated and understands the challenges facing the school. Its members work very effectively to support the school, keeping the work of the school under review and acting upon its findings. For example, they made an exceptional contribution to the direction of the school throughout several changes in leadership thus avoiding a decline in pupils' attainment.

The school development plan focuses on the most important areas for improvement and is clear about how targets are to be achieved. There are effective links with a range of external agencies and organisations, including local secondary schools, which support the learning and well-being of the pupils. The school demonstrates a deep commitment to equal opportunities for all. This is seen in the effective links that have been established with external agencies to make certain potentially vulnerable pupils have access to the curriculum both in and out of school. The rigorous monitoring of pupils ensures that any unevenness in academic performance is identified quickly and strategies put in place to bring about improvement. The school enjoys a positive relationship with parents and carers who are kept well-informed through a variety of means including an attractive website. Community cohesion is promoted well. The school ensures that pupils understand their local community and the cultural diversity of the United Kingdom through events such as 'Multicultural Arts Week' and partnership with a rural school. The well-established links with a school in Sri Lanka help develop an understanding of the wider world. Safeguarding procedures, policies and practice are good and systems for assessing risks are well developed. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

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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	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and children thrive in a stimulating and thoroughly enjoyable environment. Warm relationships within the setting ensure that children settle quickly. Adults encourage children to become independent, make choices and develop social skills that ensure good behaviour.

Children starting Reception class have come from many different settings and had a range of pre-school experience. They start school with skills and knowledge that are below age-related expectations, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Good teaching and a well-organised curriculum ensure that children's skills are closer to the expectations for their age by the end of Reception. Ongoing assessment means that individual children's progress is tracked regularly and targeted support given. Achievements are recorded and shared with parents and carers. Staff have worked hard to provide a bright and attractive learning environment which enables children to have fun while making choices about their learning, such as making tunnels out of cardboard boxes or taking their pet to the vet. Occasionally, children repeatedly revisit an activity without the benefit of adult intervention. Staff are vigilant with regard to safeguarding and children's welfare has a high priority. The Reception class is fully incorporated into the life of the school which ensures a smooth transfer from Reception to Year 1. Strong links are developed with parents and carers who are encouraged to play an active role in the class.

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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

Approximately one quarter of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. However, of those who did all said their children enjoyed school, were kept safe and were happy overall. They were also unanimous in their positive responses to the questions concerning healthy lifestyles, future economic well-being, concerns being taken into account and the school being well-led and managed. The very large majority were in agreement with the other areas. A very small minority felt that the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. The inspectors found behaviour to be satisfactory and there were systems in place for dealing with incidents. The school is currently consulting with stakeholders on the implementation of a new behaviour policy.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Shire Oak VC 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 55 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 196 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	65	19	35	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	32	58	23	42	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	30	55	22	40	2	4	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	56	19	35	5	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	53	22	40	4	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	58	22	40	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	47	27	49	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	29	53	24	44	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	49	25	45	3	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	40	24	44	9	16	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	55	22	40	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	34	62	19	35	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	67	18	33	0	0	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 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	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and 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.

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">■ 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.



16 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shire Oak VC Primary School, Leeds, LS6 2DT

Thank you for all your help when we inspected your school. You were very friendly and helpful. We believe that Shire Oak gives you a satisfactory standard of education. We also found:

- you get off to a good start in the Reception class and make satisfactory progress during your time in the school. Some of you make better progress
- Your attainment at the end of Year 6 is average
- you enjoy coming to school, are keen to learn though attendance is only average
- behaviour in the playground and around school is satisfactory
- adults look after you well and make sure you are safe
- teaching is satisfactory and teachers try to make lessons interesting
- you show a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and know how to stay safe
- you take your responsibilities seriously and contribute well to the life of the school and the local community
- your school is helping you to prepare well for the next stages in your education.

We think that with your help your school can improve even more and we have asked your headteacher and your teachers to do the following things:

- set you more challenging work during lessons and give you more opportunities to work independently
- increase the pace of lessons so you get more work done
- remind you about the importance of neat handwriting and good presentation in your work
- ensure all leaders work together to bring about improvements in the school.

We believe that this will help you all to make more progress and we are sure you will all work hard to make this happen.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Christine Millett

Lead inspector

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