

# Sherston CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	126356
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	360062
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Georgina Beasley

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	193
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Hulme
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nicholas Bowditch
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 December 2007
<b>School address</b>	Knockdown Road Sherston, Malmesbury Malmesbury SN16 0NJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01666840237
<b>Fax number</b>	07092 841067
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 19 lessons. Seven teachers were seen. Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' work in a range of subjects, safeguarding procedures, assessment information, improvement plans and monitoring reports. Inspectors analysed 89 questionnaires from parents and carers, 103 from pupils and 16 from staff.

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

- Do teaching methods enable boys to develop the skills they need for reading and writing at expected levels in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2?
- Is the quality of teaching improving and more even across the school, especially the use of assessment to target the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities?
- How accurate is the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning in bringing about improvements to learning and ensuring even progress across the school?

## Information about the school

Sherston CE Primary is a smaller-than-average-sized school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The remaining pupils are from a number of minority ethnic backgrounds. A below-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Children start in the Reception class in the September or January after they become four, depending on whether their birthday is before or after April.

The school has Eco schools and Healthy School status, an Activemark and an International Schools Award for its work with schools in Kenya, France, India and more recently, The Gambia.

**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

Sherston CE Primary is a good school. Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress overall and by the end of Year 6, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is high. Children make outstanding progress in the Reception class because teaching is excellent. Most children start Year 1 above levels expected for their age. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the support they need to make good progress and most reach average levels, with some making above-average levels. The school takes steps to ensure all pupils have equal opportunity to take part in the full range of activities and events offered.

The quality of teaching is good but is uneven across the school. As a result, learning and progress are good but inconsistent from year to year. In some lessons, pupils do not have enough time to practise skills or to finish planned tasks. The curriculum provides broad and rich learning experiences that promote pupils' academic and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils are taught how to keep healthy and stay safe, and to learn about the world around them through a range of interesting topics and activities. Pupils enjoy the topics, through which they have good opportunities to practise their literacy and computer skills. Opportunities to use and apply mathematics skills are good in some classes but only satisfactory in others. Behaviour is good. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and local community, and links with schools abroad are helping them understand how to become good global citizens.

Leadership and management are good and the school has good capacity to improve. The school has an accurate view of its performance and knows what needs to be done to ensure continued improvement. Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching and the curriculum have improved and, as a result, so have pupils' achievement and attainment. As a result of strong and effective leadership in literacy, teaching has improved in Years 1 and 2, and boys achieve as well in writing as they do in reading and mathematics. Teachers use assessment information well to plan tasks that generally meet a range of abilities in lessons. They do not always assess learning during lessons so that they can make adjustments to learning when pupils subsequently find tasks too easy or too hard.

The school's leadership makes careful and regular checks on pupil progress, although they often do this individually rather than as a team to check that improvements are working as effectively as they should. The governing body is fairly new but has quickly initiated systems for including all staff, parents and carers, and pupils in evaluating the work of the school and agreeing and effecting improvement priorities. Safeguarding procedures are good. Constant checks are made to ensure agreed procedures are followed consistently and that systems are effective in ensuring the well-being of pupils and adults. The school gives good value for money.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Focus senior leadership team discussions on assessment outcomes and pupils' progress, and on checking whether subsequent improvements are working as well as they should.
- Increase the proportion of good teaching to 75% by July 2012 so that there is consistently good progress in all year groups by:
  - ensuring teachers use time more efficiently in lessons so that pupils have enough time to practise skills and complete tasks
  - ensuring teachers assess learning during lessons so that adjustments are made when pupils find the work too hard or too easy.
- Ensure pupils are able to use and apply mathematics skills consistently in a range of subjects.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

<b>2</b>
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Attainment at the end of Year 6 is high in English and mathematics. Attainment on entry to Reception is within expected levels. Pupils' attainment at the end of Reception is above average and has been sustained this year in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. Boys achieve as well in writing as they do in reading and mathematics, although the gap is beginning to widen again in Year 3.

Learning and progress in lessons are good. Year 2 pupils enjoyed playing games and completing challenges to find words and to learn the different ways to write the 'or, aw, ure' sound and building effectively on their previous learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities received good support from teaching assistants to consolidate their understanding and the more able were challenged to look for more letter combinations. Year 6 pupils used a play on words and different devices including alliteration, similes and metaphors to promote and advertise their Tiger chocolate bar. 'Tiger tastes terrific and is tigeriffic' is particularly memorable. Most pupils know how well they are doing in school and are clear about what they have to do to improve. They refer to individual targets in reading, writing and mathematics in lessons and play an active role in assessing their own and others' work.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe in school and when playing out with their friends. They understand what nutrition means and so make healthy food choices as a result. Take-up of hot meals is above average. 'Wake and Shake' gives a positive start to the school day. Pupils' questionnaire responses indicated some concerns about behaviour. When explored, it was found that this is due to the occasional misbehaviour of a few pupils. Bullying is rare. Pupils are confident that any bullying that does occur is tackled successfully and immediately and say, 'Bullying will only happen once. It won't happen again.' Pupils are prepared well for the future and the world of work. They forge positive relationships with adults and each other and have very good literacy, numeracy and computer skills. Attendance is above average.

Pupils make a good contribution to the school through doing small jobs, checking for litter or helping younger pupils to sort out minor squabbles. Pupils are particularly proud of the new environment area which they helped to create and the allotment, which provides fresh fruit and vegetables for the school kitchen. They have planted trees in the local area

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and enjoy performing to community groups. Pupils have a good knowledge about different faiths and cultures through links with schools abroad and specific events and activities. Their first-hand experience of different cultures within the wider British society is more limited.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
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
<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>	2
<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?**

Teaching is good, although there remains some inconsistency across the school. In good and excellent lessons, teachers use questions effectively to check pupils' thinking and understanding and so give further challenge or support as required. Pupils complete tasks at different levels which challenge more able pupils and enable less able pupils to receive the support they need to make good progress. Some teachers do not assess pupils' learning effectively during lessons and so enable them to make adjustments quickly when pupils' learning slows or when they can already do the planned task. Some teachers still talk for too long at the beginning of lessons and so give pupils too little time to practise skills and/or finish tasks. In all classes, teachers use interactive whiteboards to present learning in interesting ways and so keep pupils engaged and help them to concentrate on the learning. Teaching assistants give pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities good support and guidance to help them make good progress in lessons.

Pupils enjoy the varied range of after-school activities, especially sporting events and clubs. Gifted and talented pupils can learn to play a musical instrument and/or play chess

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at a national level. Pupils have good opportunity to use their reading, writing and computer skills in topic work and other subjects. Pupils also have the chance to apply their mathematics skills in a range of subjects and in real-life situations in Years 2, 4 and 6.

Good care, guidance and support promote good behaviour and achievement. Pupils say, 'Teachers always check things out before telling you off.' The kitchen always makes sure choices are available for pupils who have allergies. Positive links with local preschools and secondary schools help pupils settle quickly into Reception and give pupils the confidence to move to a new school at the end of Year 6.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<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 staff team is focused on ensuring continued improvements to pupils' learning and achievement. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection as a result of focused professional development. Improved use of assessment information has helped teachers to plan effectively to meet the full ability range of learners in lessons. Most teachers and support staff value the professional development that has helped them improve their teaching. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and assessment coordinator meet regularly to discuss the school's work and agree improvement strategies. They recognise that discussions do not always focus sufficiently on assessment outcomes and pupils' progress and check the difference that improvements make to expected outcomes with sufficient frequency.

The governing body is proactive in leading policy making, in holding the school to account and in ensuring resources support agreed improvement decisions. At least one member attends all meetings with the School Improvement Partner and so the governing body has a detailed knowledge and understanding of what the school does well and where it needs to improve. Staff, parents and carers, and pupils have been involved this year in agreeing priorities in the school improvement plan and so everyone has a role to play in the next stage of the school's improvement drive. Clear and comprehensive systems are in place for reviewing and monitoring all safeguarding procedures, including child protection and health and safety. Very effective promotion of eSafety ensures pupils and parents and carers know how to stay safe when using the internet in school and at home. Pupils and parents and carers are not yet included in the evaluation of this aspect of the school's work.

Positive partnership with parents and carers enable them to give good support to their children's learning. Community cohesion is promoted well. Partnerships with schools abroad and a developing partnership with a school in London were selected to contrast

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the school's own religious, socio-economic and cultural make-up. The school's accurate tracking system highlights any underperformance. This, together with the school's good care and guidance for all pupils, ensures that the school's provision to secure equal opportunities and tackle discrimination is good.

*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>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start school with the skills, knowledge and understanding expected for their age. They make rapid progress as soon as they start in the Reception class and the large majority reach higher-than-expected levels in all areas of learning by the time they start in Year 1. Learning and progress are excellent. Children are busy from the minute they arrive. They remain totally engrossed throughout the day and enjoy all activities because they have played a large part in planning these themselves. The learning environment is welcoming and the organisation of learning encourages the children to become independent quickly. They look after their personal needs well and play a full role in thinking about, planning and assessing their learning. Children enjoy putting on the wizard's hat to identify their own and others' learning that week and planning what to learn next. They know how far they are on the star target chart and know what they need to do next to move up to the next level.

Outstanding leadership and management have resulted in consistent improvements to the learning environment and to children's learning since the previous inspection. Children's progress is checked constantly and adjustments made to promote successful learning for each individual. Teaching is excellent. Adults have a detailed knowledge of each child's needs and so interact with them during their play to successfully introduce or develop a particular skill or to consolidate understanding. The teaching of early reading, writing and mathematics skills to different groups builds learning systematically and ensures the



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children's individual needs are met effectively. As a result, more able children reach high levels of achievement and children who require more help to learn reach at least expected levels. Independent activities provide excellent opportunities for children to practise key reading, writing and numeracy skills such as reading and recording the names of animals they find when on safari and counting the total when they have finished.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers

An above-average proportion of parents and carers returned a questionnaire. Most reflect parents' and carers' satisfaction with the school. The inspection endorses the positive responses that pupils enjoy school, feel safe and know how to keep healthy. A small minority of parents and carers feel that their children are not making enough progress and that their particular needs are not being met, and do not feel informed enough to help support learning at home. Inspection findings show that pupils' progress does vary from year to year but by the end of Year 6, attainment is high. Parents and carers have the opportunity to talk to a teacher about any concerns. Their biggest concern is about pupils' behaviour and how this is managed. A large majority of pupils who returned a questionnaire indicated that behaviour is good. The inspection found behaviour to be good and endorses pupils' views that the school handles any misbehaviour quickly and effectively.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sherston CE 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 89 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 193 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	49	43	48	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	61	69	28	31	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	21	24	49	55	13	15	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	26	50	56	12	13	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	34	38	43	48	5	6	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	27	47	53	17	19	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	52	41	46	2	2	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)	32	36	39	44	7	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	30	46	52	12	13	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	21	48	54	10	11	5	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	25	47	53	10	11	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	20	22	53	60	4	4	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	36	40	49	55	3	3	1	1

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](http://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"><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.**



29 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Sherston CE Primary School, Sherston, SN16 0NJ**

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. Thank you to those of you who returned a questionnaire and took the time to tell us so much about your school.

Sherston is a good school. Your headteacher and all of the adults who work in school help you to achieve well in your learning and in your personal development. You make good progress because the curriculum is interesting and teaching is good.

Your behaviour is good and nearly all of you said you felt safe. Bullying is rare and you told us that the school always sorts things out quickly if it happens. Many of you enjoy the varied range of activities that take place during and after school. You make a good contribution to the school by giving the school ideas about how to make it a good place to learn. The links you have with schools in Kenya, The Gambia, France and India help you learn about the wider world. Good opportunities exist for you to keep fit and healthy, reflected in the school's Healthy School status. We agree with those of you who said school dinners are healthy and delicious.

We have asked your headteacher, deputy headteacher and assessment leader to focus their discussions when they meet, on your achievement and progress, and to check together more regularly how well improvements are helping you to learn. We have also asked the school to increase the proportion of good teaching by July 2012 so that you all have enough time to practise skills and complete tasks in lessons and that teachers make changes more quickly when you find the work too hard or too easy. We also want you to have the same good opportunities to use your mathematics skills in a range of subjects as you do for reading, writing and information and communication technology (ICT).

You can help by thinking of interesting ways to use your mathematics in different ways and by telling your teacher if you find the work too hard or too easy.

Thank you again for your warm welcome. We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Georgina Beasley

Lead inspector

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