

# Sherbrook Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124514
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	359684
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 July 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alan Dobbins

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>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	93
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Robert Heighway
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Ashley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	Brunswick Road Cannock WS11 5SA
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed, in part or in full, ten lessons and all of the school's eight class teachers. They held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff, groups of pupils and the school's local authority link advisor. Inspectors looked at policies and reviewed documents and the data the school has on pupils' progress. They scrutinised 47 questionnaires from parents and carers and spoke with 15 parents.

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

- How accurate are pupils' attainment scores and how do these compare with national expectations?
- Have teachers sufficient skills and the knowledge of specialist procedures to match the wide range of pupils' learning needs?
- Is the changing curriculum effective in promoting better progress?

## Information about the school

This is an average-sized generic special school. All pupils have statements of special educational needs or are undergoing assessment. Increasingly, pupils are entering the school with more complex difficulties that include autism, attention deficit disorder and challenging behaviour. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much greater than is typical. Most pupils are of a White British heritage. There are more than twice as many boys than girls.

**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?**

**1**

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

**1**

## Main findings

Sherbrook is an outstanding school where pupils prosper as learners and as growing young people as they move to becoming as independent as possible. Within the constraints of their special educational needs, they are prepared exceptionally well for the next stage of their education and life thereafter. Parents and carers are uniformly supportive of the school, one commenting that, 'The school has the pupils at the heart of everything it does, and everything it does it does exceptionally well.'

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy an outstanding start. They are quickly assessed as the first step to planning activities specific to their learning and additional needs. Teaching is outstanding, with the result that children make outstanding progress in each of the areas of learning against their starting points. By the time they enter Year 1, even those with the most complex needs are committed learners as they have grasped the rules and expectations for learning. Over Years 1 to 6, outstanding teaching is driving the pupils' outstanding progress on their journey toward independence and in gaining the skills of communication and basic numeracy. They receive very effective support from many specialists, including speech and physiotherapists and the consultant paediatrician, and this helps all pupils make similar progress against their targets and to gain open access to all the school offers.

Staff take great pride in the way they look after their pupils. The outstanding relationships they have with them help pupils feel comfortable and increasingly self-confident as their personalities emerge. Pupils trust staff and see them as their friends who are always there for them when they are bothered or distressed. Parents and carers very much appreciate the high level of care staff routinely offer their children, one saying, 'I worried about giving my child to someone else. I don't worry any more because my child loves being at school.' Attendance is good and very much better than is the case for pupils in similar schools. Pupils have fun when at school but know they have to work hard at their learning and this, and their outstanding behaviour, make important contributions to their outstanding progress. As they move through the school, they gain a secure awareness of right and wrong and a clear understanding of the importance of being safe at all times. Many show maturity when they have choices to make, including preferring healthy food at lunch times.

The headteacher guides a very strong team of senior leaders. Together with all staff, they are fully united in supporting her vision for continually improving the school. They are making an impact. The increasing proportion of outstanding lessons seen over each of the last three years is testament to their success in monitoring and evaluating teaching and supporting teachers. Through their effective self-evaluation procedures, the senior leaders and the good governing body know the school is better than at the time of the last inspection because: pupils are making better progress as a result of better teaching; the

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curriculum provides a broader range of learning experiences and is more cohesive; the support and advice offered to pupils and their families is better; and the links with parents and carers, and with other schools and agencies, are having a greater impact on pupils development. These show the capacity of the school for sustaining improvement to be outstanding. The senior leaders have used the school's data to compare pupil progress against relevant national guidelines and are aware that they can sharpen their use of this assessment information. They know that to fully judge the quality of their school they need to further develop their use of assessment information when comparing the progress of their pupils with that of equivalent pupils in similar schools.

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

- Sharpen the procedures for judging the progress pupils make against equivalent pupils in similar schools nationally.

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

**1**

The effect of their special educational needs limits the levels at which pupils are able to attain. The vast majority enter the school with levels well below those expected for their age. The pace of pupils' progress has increased. Pupils in each year group make better progress in moving toward independence and in learning to communicate than was the case at the last inspection. This includes the minority of girls and those with the most severe and complex learning difficulties, including those with autism.

Most lessons are enjoyable events characterised by pupils' outstanding behaviour and by the serious efforts they make to do their best for their adults, even when they are tired or feeling the effects of medication. For example, in a lesson in physical education for younger pupils, they were dressed appropriately and began with a warm-up together to music. They enjoyed themselves as they practised balancing, climbing and jumping around a circuit. They took instruction well, waited for their turn and, at all times, behaved outstandingly well. The lesson was characterised by the teachers' high expectations for learning, the expert work of the assistants, the high activity level and the serious efforts pupils made to do their best. At the end of the lesson, they cooled down together before practising the skills of dressing as they changed back into their school clothes. The good choice of 'counting' songs and of songs stipulating directions, for example, 'up', 'down', 'forwards', 'backwards' gave added value because pupils were rehearsing words they were learning in the classroom. Through the classes in physical education and in those in personal, social and health education they gain a good awareness of the importance of staying healthy. School dinners always include healthy food and a good choice of fruit. They enjoy taking responsibility around the school when, for example, they deliver the dinner list, get the hall ready for assembly and when they act as playground buddies for the younger pupils. The school council meets regularly and members help in choosing which of the charitable causes they should support. Last year these were Comic Relief, the Air Ambulance and Children in Need.

Pupils gain outstanding awareness of the needs of the local community through their many visits to the local shops and parks in support of their learning. The upcoming residential visit to an outdoor activity centre within the region is designed, in part, to raise awareness of the wider world. Cultural differences are regularly celebrated through the special days of different religions and of countries. The outstanding gains pupils make in

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their self-confidence and self-esteem support their increasing awareness of spiritual issues, such as the importance of trust, friendship, respect and feelings.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	*
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</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>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</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

\* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching has improved in each of the last three years. The range of learning and additional needs in any class is very wide. Even so, teachers and their assistants have the skills and expertise to fully match the needs of pupils. Teaching assistants, generous in number, are routinely deployed well and provide considerable support for learning. Classrooms are small in size, but teachers minimise this potential disadvantage by using a different strategy to promote learning to the one preferred if space was available. Teachers are expert at planning lessons made up of tasks that are just right for their pupils, not too hard and not too easy. They are able to do this because curriculum plans for each subject provide for small steps in learning and the improved assessment procedures provide clear knowledge of what pupils know and can do. The changing curriculum is integrating learning between the subjects more effectively and this benefits progress by making learning a more cohesive experience. The very effective Forest School and more lunchtime clubs have added breadth to the curriculum.

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The impact of the outstanding support and advice that pupils' gain over their time at school is considerable. The well-established links with multi-agency staff are used very effectively in providing specific support and advice to pupils. The school encourages parents and carers to be partners in dealing with their children. The cooperative work of parents and carers, school staff and multi-agency teams allows pupils, whatever their particular needs, to attend to their learning for longer periods of time with greater vigour. This benefits their progress, both in learning and in growing toward independence. The additional provision outlined in pupils' statements of special educational needs is met in full. The procedures to improve attendance are working well as is shown by better average attendance in each of the last three years. Transition arrangements to the next stage of education provide for a seamless switch.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Since the last inspection, rigorous self-evaluation has provided clear guidance in helping the headteacher steer the school with vision and authority. Staff see the school as an improving school and morale is very high. They are unified behind the headteacher and trust and respect her as a leader and a manager. The better teaching and the greater rate of progress show the strength and effectiveness of the senior leadership team. Their exacting procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching, and for supporting teachers, have resulted in more teachers delivering a greater proportion of outstanding lessons than hitherto.

The governing body has taken a good part in planning for development and follow rigorous procedures to ensure pupils are safe at school. The skills and expertise of teachers and their assistants in using different approaches to communication, for example signs and pictures, is a strength and helps all pupils gain equal access to all the school offers. Pupils have a very strong knowledge of their local community through many well-established links and their regular visits to local places. Very good use is made of the nearby hospital to use the hydrotherapy pool and gain the expert help of the physiotherapists. Pupils visit other schools to use specialist facilities, including those for physical education.

The school's partnership with parents and carers is exceptional and has a very positive impact on their children's learning and their health and welfare. The home/school diaries are valued as a means of daily communication with the class teacher, as are the text messages and the web site. The homework package is seen as vital by many parents and carers as the vehicle which allows them to continue helping their children during the

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holiday. The school's programme of training opportunities for parents and carers is extensive and is well used to gain information and skills, for example through courses on autism, on signing instructions and the management of behaviour. At Sherbrook the concept of inclusion fully encompasses pupils and staff, those from different agencies, and parents and carers. As one said: 'For me, the school is more than a school. As well as being an outstanding school, it is family, an advice centre and a counselling service.'

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</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>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are welcomed into the Early Years Foundation Stage by caring and supportive staff who, collectively, have the experience and skills to meet their wide range of learning and additional needs. Over their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make outstanding progress against relevant national guidelines for similar children in each of the areas of learning. Leadership and teaching are outstanding. As a result, the Early Years Foundation Stage is a purposeful and very well organised place in which children thrive as learners and as growing young people. Each child is known as an individual and, through their individual education programmes, learn what is right for them. Record keeping is detailed and is used very well in identifying new targets for learning. Within the context of their special educational needs the children are prepared outstandingly well for their work at Year 1.



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*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

With one exception, the good number of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire were uniform in their praise for all aspects of the school. They report that they are happy with the school because their children enjoy attending and they know they are safe and secure there. They like the progress their children are making and the information they gain about their children and school developments, especially through the home/school book and the easy way in which they are able to contact staff. They judge the school to be well led and managed and like the way their children's behaviour is being improved. Those who talked with an inspector are especially pleased with the home/school package that helps them in supporting their children during the holidays.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sherbrook 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 47 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 93 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	87	5	11	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	39	83	6	13	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	32	68	15	32	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	79	10	21	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	85	6	13	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	72	13	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	72	11	23	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)	32	70	12	26	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	83	7	15	0	0	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	76	11	24	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	77	10	21	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	42	89	5	11	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	40	85	7	15	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](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.**



13 July 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Sherbrook Primary School, Cannock, WS11 5SA**

It was a pleasure for me and my colleague to meet and spend time with you when we visited your school. Thank you for making us welcome. We found your school to be an outstanding school. We especially liked that you told us you feel safe and are happy at school. These are some of the other strengths of the school.

The outstanding progress you make in your learning and in developing as independent young people.

The outstanding way you behave and the way you work hard in your lessons.

That you are learning what is right for you so that when you leave you are prepared very well for your next school.

The way in which your leaders help your parents and carers gain the skills and knowledge they can use when you are at home to help you in your learning and in growing up

The outstanding way your headteacher and the staff are working to make the school an even better place for you.

There is one thing that should be done better. Your leaders and governors need to improve the way they check on how well you are doing in your learning against other pupils in similar schools. This is a good way of showing just how hard you work and how good you are at your learning.

You can all help, too, by always behaving as well as you did and working as hard in all your lessons as you did when my colleague and I visited your classrooms.

Yours sincerely

Alan Dobbins

Lead inspector

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