

Shireland Hall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103967
Local Authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	376997
Inspection dates	17–18 October 2011
Reporting inspector	David Driscoll

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	382
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gordon MacKenzie
Headteacher	Travis Latham
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who observed 24 lessons taught by 14 teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at records of pupils' attainment and progress, the school's development plan, records of checks on teaching and documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils. They also analysed responses to questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and 110 parents and carers.

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

- Are pupils making enough progress in Reception and Years 1 and 2?
- Are the school's leaders analysing the progress of different groups with sufficient accuracy to gain a clear picture of their achievements?
- Are the school's leaders taking sufficient account of pupils' outcomes when evaluating the effectiveness of the school's provision?
- How effective are actions to improve attendance?

Information about the school

The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities supported by the school is low. The proportion additionally supported by external professionals, or with a statement of special educational needs, is average. A high proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The large majority of pupils come from an Asian background, mostly Pakistani. The rest of the school population is made up of small numbers from a wide range of different minority ethnic groups. The school is soon to federate with another local primary school. This means that at present the school has two headteachers. One is the interim executive headteacher, who carries overall responsibility for both schools, while an acting headteacher has responsibility for Shireland Hall on a day-to-day basis.

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

This is a good school. Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills that are very low for their age. By the time they leave the school they have achieved well. They make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage and until the end of Year 1. Progress is consistently good across Years 2 to 6 and pupils leave the school with average attainment, appropriately prepared for the next stage of their education and later life. The improvement in pupils' progress in the older year groups is a result of teaching that is better targeted to their needs. Information from assessments is used well in Years 2 to 6 to make sure that individuals find the work suitably challenging and that activities promote the skills that the teacher wants the class to learn. Pupils in Years 2 to 6 are given plenty of opportunities to choose how they will tackle problems, while those in other years are sometimes over-directed and are not as active in their learning.

The school is a harmonious and welcoming community. Pupils behave well both in and out of lessons. They learn about and respect each other's backgrounds and have an excellent understanding of other cultures. Pupils engage well with adults. They are polite, respectful and keen to show off their work. Pupils rightly have a good degree of confidence in the staff to keep them safe at school and to take their concerns seriously. They also know how to keep themselves safe, particularly when using the internet.

The school leaders, including the governing body, have demonstrated good capacity for improvement. Good leadership from the two headteachers has ensured that the school has improved well since it was last inspected. Self-evaluation identifies the right priorities for improvement. Monitoring activities, such as lesson observations, are not always targeted at the areas where pupils' progress is the slowest. Nevertheless, the actions taken to improve provision have invariably been successful. Most strengths have been maintained since the last inspection and some aspects of the school's work, such as safeguarding, are now outstanding. Key among these are the way that the school has used its extensive links with local community groups and outside agencies to promote parents and carers' engagement with their children's learning. The school provides an extensive range of workshops where parents and carers can work alongside their children to better understand how they learn. These are supplemented by an excellent range of classes that encourage parents and carers to engage with the school. Over 60 per cent of parents and carers regularly attend workshops and attendance at 'parents' days' is over 95 per cent.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 by:
 - ensuring activities are better focused on promoting the skills that are being taught
 - making better use of information from assessments to match work and play more closely to the needs of individual children
 - consistently providing children with opportunities to take an active part in their learning.

- Improve the effectiveness of self-evaluation by focusing monitoring activities more closely on those areas where pupils' progress is slowest.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy coming to school, where they achieve well. In most lessons, pupils are keen to get down to work and produce their best efforts. Work in mathematics, for example, is well laid out so pupils can easily check for any errors that may have resulted in an incorrect answer. From Year 2 onwards, pupils are keen to discuss their work with others. They work particularly well in small groups, adapting their ideas in the light of other pupils' comments. Pupils concentrate well and particularly enjoy solving problems. Learning is less well focused in the Nursery, Reception classes and Year 1, so progress is satisfactory rather than good. There are no differences in the progress made by different groups within the school. Pupils who are additionally supported by external professionals and those who have a statement of special educational needs make good progress because they receive a great deal of one-to-one support based on detailed plans that are well matched to their particular needs. This is further enhanced by an effective programme of reading recovery, which helps them to catch up with their peers.

Attendance has been low in the past, but is improving rapidly. It is now average and much improved on the previous year, and the school's effective promotion of good attendance has led to a significant fall in the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent. Pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do to lead a healthy lifestyle, but do not put this into practice when choosing snacks at breaktimes. Pupils respond enthusiastically to opportunities to become involved in the school and wider community. The 'e-developers' group, for example, maintain a school website that supports pupils' learning beyond school by allowing them access to resources and contacts with their teachers. They have been particularly effective in setting up a system for parents and carers to be able to chat online to their children when on residential visits. The local community has benefited from activities such as litter picking.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers in most classes have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and learning is moved on at a good pace. A typical lesson includes a brief recap of what pupils have previously learnt before pupils are moved into groups to work on tasks according to their ability. This works very well in Years 2 to 6, but is not so effective in earlier years where the tasks are not matched consistently to what the teacher wants the pupils to learn, or to their abilities. For example, in lessons where writing was the focus, some groups worked on numbers and others did jigsaws so the impetus of the introduction was lost. Some found tasks too easy, while others struggled. It also takes a long time for the class to become settled again in such circumstances, as the pupils are confused by the change of topic. The use of discussion is a great strength in the teaching in Years 2 to 6. Pupils are given time to think in silence about what they want to say, so their thoughts are clear before they start talking to their partners. Marking is effective in explaining to pupils exactly what they need to do to improve their work.

The school makes good use of a wide range of visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum. Numerous opportunities to take part in residential trips help pupils to develop their social skills and learn about different cultures. All teachers are clear about how they can promote reading, writing and mathematics across other subjects because plans make it very clear where such opportunities exist. Parents, carers and pupils are all very pleased with the quality of pastoral care offered by the school. The support offered to pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable is exemplary, especially in the way that the school is tenacious in following up any concerns and working with an exceptional range of outside agencies to provide skills

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

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that are not available in school. There are good systems for ensuring that pupils joining the school partway through their education settle as quickly as possible and are not unduly disadvantaged by a change of school. The transition from Reception to Year 1 is not as effective, as teachers are not as well informed about pupils’ abilities on starting Year 1. Actions to improve attendance have been concerted and successful. The two-pronged approach of challenging parents and carers who do not send their children to school regularly and encouraging parents and carers to play a greater part in their children’s learning have successfully raised awareness of the importance of regular attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Staff morale is high in the school and all staff share the headteachers’ good drive for further improvement. The progress of different groups is tracked exceptionally well, and reasons for any apparent discrepancies rigorously pursued. The same is true for most year groups, so the school’s leaders have an accurate view of how well pupils are doing. However, this information is not always used to target lesson observations, so that the reasons for any differences in provision that result in slower progress can be identified and tackled. Nevertheless, the school’s leaders have a comprehensive range of ways for checking on the quality of provision and set challenging targets for the school’s performance that are consistently met or exceeded. Good provision is made to ensure equality. Discrimination is tackled well and pupils are taught to respect others. Gaps in the performance of different groups are negligible, although some still exist between different year groups.

The governing body plays a good part in leading the school. Its members are well informed and provide a good degree of challenge to the headteachers. Parents and carers hold very positive views about the school. They are highly appreciative of the outstanding opportunities they have to work alongside their children. The school is innovative in its use of technology to communicate with parents and carers, such as using blogs and texts. Other information, such as reports and the newsletter, are of good quality. It is not only the extensive links with agencies and community groups that result in the school’s outstanding partnership work. The school’s leaders have supported a local school, but have also used the opportunity to develop the skills of their own managers at all levels. The school is a leader in the field of safeguarding, using its expertise to help other schools. Parents and carers are consulted about such matters and the feedback is used to constantly update and improve systems for

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keeping children safe. The result is outstanding practice at all levels. The school makes good provision for community cohesion. There is an excellent focus on the school and local community, with a good international link with a school in Brazil. Pupils have extensive opportunities to learn about different cultures. Opportunities for them to engage with pupils from areas different from their own are currently being planned.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although their attainment remains low on starting Year 1. Children make good progress when they are working in small groups that are led by member of staff. They are well focused on their learning and adults question them well to make them think. Progress is satisfactory in the other groups, where children’s progress is not checked as frequently and they do not benefit from the same degree of interaction with adults. They do lots of listening to adults and follow their instructions, but do not always get the opportunity to develop their language through spoken responses. They are often passive in lessons aimed at learning the sounds that letters make. Children find the range of activities enjoyable and motivating. The activities are well matched to children’s ages, but not always to their ability. There is excellent access to computers, but other resources are not always available at the children’s level, both in and out of the classroom.

Staff have a good understanding of children’s personal development and are committed to improvement. Some aspects of leadership and management have improved significantly since the school was last inspected. The use of data to track children’s progress is providing a much clearer picture of their achievements.

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Monitoring of the Reception classes by the leader has led to some effective improvements in the teaching of literacy, but time for monitoring the Nursery has been limited.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are very happy with all that the school provides. They hold views that are similar to the judgements made by the inspectors. Very few comments were received by the inspection team, and these fell into no particular pattern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Shireland Hall 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 110 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 382 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	77	70	31	28	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	77	70	33	30	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	60	55	39	35	10	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	65	59	37	34	7	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	71	65	31	28	7	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	65	59	37	34	7	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	57	52	50	45	3	3	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)	61	55	43	39	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	61	55	40	36	8	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	60	55	45	41	4	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	57	52	43	39	8	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	62	56	42	38	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	70	64	32	29	3	3	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 8 April 2011 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.



19 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shireland Hall Primary School, Smethwick, B66 4QU

Thank you for all the help you gave us when we visited your school. We found you to be well behaved and very polite. You are coming to school more frequently now, so keep it up and try to come to school whenever you can. We were very impressed by how much you know about different cultures. You told us how much you enjoy coming to school, and we can see why. You go to a good school where you learn well.

You make good progress in Years 2 to 6 because your teachers give you work that you find enjoyable, and just hard enough so that you can be successful if you try your best. Progress in the other classes is not always as good. We have asked the teachers in the Nursery, Reception and Year 1 to make sure that the activities they choose always promote good learning in the knowledge and skills that they are trying to teach. We have also asked them to give children the same opportunities to make decisions and work actively together as they do in other classes. You told us that you feel safe at school. You are right. Your teachers take good care of you and you always have someone to turn to if you have a problem. You all get on well with one another.

Your school has improved since it was last inspected. Some things are now outstanding. Your parents and carers are now much more involved with the school through the workshops and classes they attend. This means that they can help you learn more quickly. Your teachers also work with lots of other groups and specialists to make sure they can provide you with any extra help that you may need. The headteachers know how well you are doing, but we have asked them to find out exactly why there are differences in the progress you make in different classes.

With all best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Driscoll
Lead inspector

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