

# Shinfield St Mary's Church of England Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109976
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wokingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	375421
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alison Storey HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	121
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Interim executive board
<b>Chair</b>	Mark A'Bear
<b>Headteacher</b>	Clare Wagstaff
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23–24 November 2009
<b>School address</b>	Chestnut Crescent Shinfield Reading RG2 9EJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 988 3663
<b>Fax number</b>	0118 988 6138
<b>Email address</b>	head@shinfield-st.marys.wokingham.sch.uk

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<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	23–24 November 2011
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspector observed the school's work, including six lessons taught by each of the six class teachers, and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and members of the interim executive board, and representatives from the local authority. She looked at a range of documentation including the school's analysis of pupils' attainment and the progress they make; data on attendance; evidence of leaders' monitoring and evaluation and plans for improvement; and, reports by the local authority. The inspector also talked informally to parents and carers to gather their views.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. She looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The extent to which pupils' attainment and progress in writing and mathematics are improving.
- Whether teaching provides pupils with sufficient challenge to meet their needs and involves them in understanding how they can improve.
- How well the curriculum motivates pupils and provides them with opportunities to develop their thinking skills and develop as independent learners.
- Whether there is sufficient capacity at all levels to secure further improvement.

## Information about the school

Shinfield St Mary's Junior is a smaller-than-average-sized school. After a period of falling rolls, numbers have risen this term and as a result the number of classes has increased from four to five. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with that found nationally. Most commonly these pupils have specific or moderate learning difficulties. In recent months, while below average, the proportion of pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language has increased. These pupils speak a range of home languages. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, although just below average, is also steadily rising.

When Shinfield St Mary's was inspected in November 2009, it was judged to require special measures. Subsequently, the school has had four monitoring inspections. Each time it was judged to be making satisfactory progress overall. There have been significant staffing changes since the last full inspection, not least in leadership and management. A permanent headteacher and senior teacher took up post in September 2011. The children's centre, on the same site, and the breakfast and after-school clubs held in the school are separately led and managed and were not included in this 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

Senior leaders, staff and the interim executive board have achieved a lot over the last year. As a result, Shinfield St Mary's is now providing a satisfactory standard of education and has demonstrated it has the capacity to move forward. Therefore, in accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

This is a result of a successful combination of factors.

- The relentless focus of first the interim executive headteacher and, more recently, the permanent headteacher on improving teaching and learning and raising attainment.
- The rigour with which the interim executive board has monitored the school's progress in addressing its weaknesses over the last year, and its determination to appoint the best senior leaders and teachers.
- Staff who have been prepared to acknowledge the school's weaknesses and to accept advice, support and challenge to make the necessary improvements to their practice.
- Considerable improvements in the quality of teaching and assessment. Planning for lessons takes account of different abilities within each class and what pupils have already learnt. Teachers share with pupils what they are learning, how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- The introduction of systems to track pupils' progress, which have raised expectations of the progress pupils should make over time and the standards they should reach.
- The curriculum has been adjusted to meet the specific needs of the pupils currently on roll, in order to address past underachievement and develop pupils' skills as learners.

As a result, pupils' achievement is now satisfactory, and importantly pupils have developed positive attitudes to learning and the confidence and resilience to tackle challenges since the last inspection. Good behaviour in lessons and around school is the norm.

The progress pupils make in writing and mathematics improved considerably between January and July last year, and there is convincing evidence that it is continuing to improve securely and quickly this term. Most pupils are progressing at a satisfactory pace and around half made better than expected progress over the

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course of the last academic year. The systems established to track how well pupils are doing ensure that any pupils, whose progress has been slower, are identified sooner rather than later, so that senior leaders and teachers can discuss what needs to be done to get them back on track. However, it is not always clear what the expectations are for different groups, or which evidence is the best indication of pupils' attainment.

The school has demonstrated that it has the capacity to improve in a number of ways.

- First, through the improvements seen in recent months.
- Second, more robust systems are in place to monitor the school's work, particularly the quality of teaching. The school's self-evaluation ensures that senior leaders and the interim executive board have an accurate picture of how well the school is doing and what needs to improve. For example, they know that while teaching has improved significantly since the last monitoring inspection, there is more to do to make sure that it is strong enough to ensure that learning and progress are consistently good for all pupils.
- Third, new appointments have built capacity at middle management level and plans are in place to develop their roles. However, because middle leaders either lack experience or are new to their responsibilities, their role in monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision and standards, and planning for improvement, is still at an early stage of development. It is for this reason, and also because the headteacher has only been in post a short while and the interim executive board is in the process of transition back to a governing body that capacity to improve is judged satisfactory rather than good at this point.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Lift the overall quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better.
- Develop the tracking and target setting system to ensure that all groups of pupils make good progress by:
  - establishing clear expectations of the progress pupils will make each year and over time in relation to their starting points
  - ensuring that the system is based on accurate assessments of what pupils can do
  - monitoring the progress of different groups of pupils and using the information to adjust teaching where needed.
- Develop the role of middle leaders in monitoring and evaluation, and leading improvement.

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Better teaching has cultivated pupils' enjoyment of school and their willingness to 'have a go' and persevere at tasks where previously pupils would readily have given up without adult support or intervention. In lessons, they build on what they already know and understand, or learn new things. For example, Year 3 pupils applied their skills in adding near multiples of 10 to subtracting them. Year 5 pupils confidently using subordinate clauses described them as something they 'did not have a clue about' just a week before. Pupils of all ages and abilities have a real sense of success and can talk about how their learning has improved. Individual targets help them to understand what they are aiming for, although sometimes the younger pupils and lower attainers do not find them easy to refer to.

Pupils enter the school with skills typical for their age. By the end of Year 6, with some extra support to make up for variable teaching in the past, attainment was broadly average for the first time for a number of years in 2011. Across the school, pupils make at least satisfactory progress. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities who have benefited from the same improvements to teaching and expectations of independent learning. Attainment in writing and mathematics is improving and the number working at levels typical for their age is increasing each term. The school is aware of the need to keep a careful check on the progress of those pupils who should be reaching the higher levels.

Pupils are encouraged to have a voice in school. Pupils of all ages have opportunities to take on responsibilities in their classrooms. For example, the school council represents pupils' views with senior staff and helps to plan events and make decisions about which charities to support. Recently, the representatives made an important contribution to the interviews for the new headteacher. The new eco team, which has evolved out of the work of the school council, takes a lead on green issues and sustainability, such as reducing energy use in school.

Attendance is satisfactory. The new headteacher has taken a firm stance on the importance of regular attendance, although it is taking time to change a few families' attitudes about the importance of arriving on time each morning and not taking holidays in term time.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>3</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

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

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching is at least satisfactory and often good. Good teaching is characterised by lessons that are carefully planned to meet pupils' different needs. Teachers share with pupils what they are learning, give clear explanations and make good use of questioning and feedback to help pupils understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work. They use strategies to ensure that all pupils are actively involved throughout the lesson and develop their skills to learn independently. However, this is not yet consistent enough across the school. In some lessons, learning does not move at a brisk enough pace because explanations or questions are not of a high enough quality. Teachers assess pupils' work accurately. However, they do not always take sufficient account of what pupils can do independently to be sure it is a precise picture what they know or understand.

The curriculum has been adapted this year to prioritise improvement in pupils' skills in writing and mathematics, including through intervention programmes, and to develop their skills as independent learners. Other subjects are largely taught through topics which engage pupils' interest, particularly as pupils are involved in planning their work through discussions to identify what they already know and what they want to learn. Links with other schools locally provide additional opportunities for pupils to join in sporting activities, or for those identified as gifted or talented to attend events such as poetry workshops which extend and challenge them. There is adequate range of out of school clubs. The school recognises the need for further improvements to the curriculum, including better opportunities to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Pupils settle well and get off to a good start when they join the school. Parents and carers of the new Year 3 pupils appreciate the care and consideration the new headteacher has shown them by arranging meetings for them, organising visits for the children and asking older pupils to act as their buddies. Meetings with staff from the partner infant school give the school a clear picture of pupils' previous learning from the beginning. The school can also demonstrate the positive impact of its care and support for individual pupils and their families at challenging times. Recent progress has been made in reviewing support for pupils who are learning English as an additional language, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities through the appointment of an experienced senior teacher. However, it is too early

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for this to have had any tangible impact.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

A clear sense of purpose underpins the school's work. Staff and older pupils speak positively about how much has changed under the direction of the interim executive headteacher, and more recently the new permanent headteacher. Staff appreciate the clear expectations and greater consistency, while pupils recognise improvements in behaviour and the quality of their lessons. New staff comment on the good team work. Because of the small number of staff and lack of experience in the immediate past, much of the action for improvement has been led by the headteacher. More recently, a senior teacher has been recruited and existing and new staff have taken on roles as middle leaders, but the school acknowledges that there is more to do to fully develop their roles.

The interim executive board has worked effectively to provide both support and challenge to the school to make sure not only that it improves, but is in a strong position for the future. The handover back to a governing body is well under way, with shadow governors in place and trained. Interim executive board members have a clear picture of how well the school is doing and what still needs to be done. In the past they have taken responsibility for day-to-day management issues to reduce pressure on the headteacher, but increasingly their work is returning to a strategic role. It is because some of the policies required by law have only been drawn up very recently and their impact on pupils has not been monitored, and because the work of the shadow governing body is still in its early days, that governance is judged satisfactory rather than good at this time.

The school's commitment to equalities and tackling discrimination can be seen in many aspects of its work, for example it has begun to analyse the outcomes for different groups of pupils, and staff have received recent training in strategies for teaching pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Although much is informal and an implicit part of its Christian ethos rather than planned, there is a cohesive atmosphere in school and pupils are accepting of each other whatever their backgrounds. However, plans to broaden pupils' appreciation of national and global communities are still at an early stage.

Safeguarding meets all statutory requirements. There are clear procedures for



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ensuring the safety of pupils, backed up by regular training for staff and the site is secure. Pupils and parents are positive about their safety in school.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Views of parents and carers

There were no parental questionnaires because this was a monitoring inspection. However, the inspector took the opportunity to talk informally with parents and carers and invited written comments. Although the number of responses was low they did represent the views of parents and carers with children across all the year groups. On the whole parents and carers were positive about the school. They feel that their children are happy, are pleased with the progress their child is making and have confidence in the new headteacher and staff.

## 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 08 April 2011 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.**



25 November 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Shinfield St Mary's Junior School, Reading RG2 EJ**

I have now visited your school five times to see how it has been progressing whilst in special measures. Each time I have made a point of meeting you, speaking to you in lessons and in the playground because it is important that inspectors find out your opinions.

The really good news is that I was able to decide this time that the school no longer needs special measures. I have to make a number of judgements when I inspect a school. I judged everything at your school to be satisfactory, except your behaviour which I judged to be good. It is worthy of a special mention because when I first visited Shinfield St Mary's I found that you were not particularly enthusiastic about school, that you lacked confidence to have a go at things on your own and you did not say much when I spoke to you. What a change! This time you all greeted me by name around school, and talked enthusiastically about school life and what you were learning. In lessons I saw how hard you work. This has made an important contribution to the improvements in your learning, alongside the hard work of your headteacher and staff to make sure that teaching is much better.

Of course there are still some things that need to improve and before I left I talked with your headteacher and the governors about how to make your school even better. I asked them to make sure that teaching is consistently good or better, and to keep a careful check on how well you are all doing and set challenging targets for you all. Because some teachers who have particular responsibilities are quite new to these posts, the school needs to make sure it helps them develop their roles.

I wish you all the very best for the future

Yours sincerely

Alison Storey  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

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