

# Shurdington Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	115649
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379113
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	John Eadie

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>	95
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev Canon Richard Mitchell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Richard Woolston
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Badgeworth Lane Shurdington Cheltenham GL51 4UQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01242 862420
<b>Fax number</b>	01242 862420
<b>Email address</b>	head@shurdington.gloucs.sch.uk

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## Introduction

Inspection team

John Eadie

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited seventeen lessons, four of these paired observations with the headteacher, and observed five teachers. He spent nearly 70% of the available time observing teaching and learning. He met informally with parents and carers and had meetings with pupils, staff and the chair of one of the committees of the governing body. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's website in planning the inspection. He observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation, policies and procedures, particularly those relevant to keeping pupils safe. The inspector scrutinised the school's information on the progress that pupils are making. Questionnaires returned by parents and carers of 71 pupils were analysed.

## Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, who are supported at school action plus or who have statements of special educational needs, is above average, with the proportion with statements being particularly high. A very large majority of the pupils are White British, although about five per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language. The school meets the current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress set by the government.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because pupils' achievement in writing, whilst still good, is not as good as that in reading. Similarly, pupils in Years 1 and 2, while still making good progress, are not making such rapid progress as those in Years 3 to 6. The consistently good quality of teaching is a strength of the school as is pupils' good and thoughtful behaviour.
- Pupils' achievement is good and is particularly strong in reading. Achievement in mathematics has improved significantly since the last inspection, when it was an area identified for improvement. In both of these subjects, more than two thirds of pupils who took the national assessments last year achieved the higher Level 5, although less than a third gained this level in writing.
- The key reason for pupils' achieving well is the good quality of teaching. All lessons observed were good, several with outstanding features. Pupils say that they enjoy their lessons and they appreciate particularly the targets that are set for them and the way that these help them to improve.
- Pupils behave well and safely and they are enthusiastic learners. As a parent, justifiably, commented, 'The school has a caring ethos and children are encouraged to think about each other and value differences.' Pupils say that all types of bullying are rare, minor and dealt with very well when they occur.
- Leadership and management are effective. There is a very clear determination to continue on the road to improvement, shared by all staff and the governing body. The leadership of teaching has been a key driver of progress and a good range of focused staff training has been undertaken, identified through systematic checks on staff performance and an audit of their personal needs.

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

- Improve pupils' achievement in writing, so that it is closer to that in reading, by:
  - putting in place a structured programme to develop the pupils' spoken English, particularly for younger pupils
  - providing pupils with more opportunities to write from first-hand experiences and at greater length.

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- Accelerate pupils' progress in Years 1 and 2 by ensuring that these younger pupils, particularly the most able, are always given work that matches their needs and abilities closely.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils' learning is typified by enthusiasm and enjoyment. Pupils sustain good levels of concentration. This was seen in lessons for older pupils in both English and mathematics, where all maintained focus throughout their tasks, which continued for a good half hour. Pupils say that they appreciate particularly the targets that are set for the next steps their in learning. An excellent example of this was seen in a mathematics lesson in Year 2, when the pupils started the lesson doing work specifically matched to their individual targets. Their enthusiasm when they achieved the target was a joy to see.

Attainment when children join the Reception class varies, as is common with small groups, although it is generally below the levels expected for their age, particularly in communication, language, and literacy and the ability to work with numbers. Children make good progress in the Reception class and their attainment on entry to Year 1 is average. Good progress continues through the rest of the school, with this progress accelerating towards the older year-groups of the school, so that pupils' attainment is significantly above average by the time they leave from Year 6, a position that has been maintained for at least the last five years. All of the parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire agree that their children are making good progress. Pupils' attainment in reading is a little above average in reading by the end of Year 2 and is well above average by the end of Year 6. Progress is particularly rapid in reading throughout the school as, from their earliest days, pupils benefit from a structured programme to develop the skills of word building.

Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs make the same progress as their classmates, relative to their abilities. They achieve well and this is especially the case for the high proportion with statements of their special needs. For instance, in a mathematics lesson, some of these pupils were observed working with a small group, supervised by a teaching assistant and enjoying considerable success in their learning as a result. The few pupils who speak English as an additional language are also supported well and quickly develop the skills in spoken and written English to enable them to make the same progress as their classmates. Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals make the same progress also as others in their class and sometimes better. That is because, as a parent, accurately, put it, 'All children count and all abilities are encouraged to do their best.'

### Quality of teaching

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Pupils say that teachers make their lessons interesting and all parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire agree that their children are being taught well. Teachers plan effectively for the range of ages and abilities in their classes. In some lessons, it is particularly notable. For example, in one mathematics lesson observed in Years 5 and 6, pupils were provided with work which was matched very precisely to their abilities. However, there are some occasions when the most-able pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not have sufficient challenge and are not, therefore, making the accelerated progress of which they are capable. Pupils make particularly rapid progress in reading throughout the school as, from their earliest days, they benefit from a structured programme to develop the skills of word building and teachers make the development of reading skills a key priority.

The school has worked hard to improve pupils' achievement in writing and this has been successful. However, the close links to the pupils' speaking skills are not always recognised and this hinders their progress. Teachers, often, build opportunities for pupils to practise those skills in lessons. For example, group work and discussions were observed being used successfully during the inspection, which also developed pupils' social skills well. However, some pupils have yet to develop a range of vocabulary or sophisticated sentence structure sufficiently quickly to raise attainment in writing because of a lack of a structured programme to develop these skills. In addition, too few opportunities are planned for pupils to practise extended writing, in order to reach the higher levels. Pupils' awareness of a range of cultures is developed well in lessons and the pupils are keen to learn about people in other countries.

Teachers use assessment successfully to track the progress of pupils, which means that any in danger of falling behind are identified quickly. Effective strategies are then put in place to help those pupils catch up. Also, teachers adapt their planning for lessons well on the basis of the success, or otherwise, of previous lessons. Assessment is also used skilfully to set targets for next steps in learning for pupils. The pupils appreciate these and the regular meetings that they have with teachers to discuss their progress.

A particular strength of teaching is its consistency. All lessons observed were good and most had outstanding features. Pupils, clearly, enjoy the tasks set for them and make good and, in some cases, rapid progress. This was also the case for pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs, who have particularly careful plans made for their learning and are supported well by skilled teaching assistants.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Behaviour observed during the inspection was good. It was particularly good in lessons, where pupils were thoughtful and considerate of the needs of others. It is slightly less good in the playground, where there are occasional instances of play that is a little less considerate. Pupils have particularly good attitudes to their work and occasions of pupils not being fully engaged were very rarely observed. Pupils said that the behaviour seen during the inspection is typical of the usual standard of

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behaviour and they and the parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire regard behaviour as good.

Pupils say they feel safe and have a good awareness of different types of bullying and are confident that instances are rare, minor, and dealt with well. As they said, 'It's usually just arguments getting a bit out of hand' and 'It's always sorted.' There have only been two recorded instances of racist bullying in the last three years, the last in 2010. Both of these were relatively minor and were investigated and followed up assiduously, as is the case with all behavioural incidents.

### **Leadership and management**

The school has a very clear sense of purpose and direction, which is shared very well by all staff and the governing body. Clarity of direction and governance were the two aspects judged to be relative weaknesses at the last inspection. Both of these have improved very significantly and are now strengths of leadership and management. There have been particular improvements in the school's governance and the governing body is now involved well. It offers very good levels of support and challenge for the school, based on first-hand knowledge, as governors are regular visitors and work closely with staff. All staff who responded to the inspection questionnaire were positive about all aspects of the school, but particularly their awareness of the direction of the school. The school is therefore well placed to sustain improvement.

Staff are particularly positive about opportunities for their professional development and the support they receive. Leaders have carried out an audit of individual needs and have acted well to meet these needs. As one teacher said on the inspection questionnaire, 'We are given opportunities to attend specific courses regularly, with the headteacher being very supportive with both professional and personal matters.' This is much of the reason for the remarkable consistency observed in the quality of teaching and improvements in pupils' achievement. The headteacher's leadership of the local partnership of schools provides significant benefits for the school, not least in the opportunities it gives for staff to meet with colleagues from other schools to share views and ideas.

Much work has been done to develop the curriculum, to ensure that it inspires and engages the pupils. Pupils appreciate this and say that they enjoy the variety and the way that subjects are linked together. For instance, they practise their writing skills in subjects such as history and computers were observed being used well to support work in a range of subjects. Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. It is particularly strong for the first three aspects and pupils are building a good knowledge of a range of cultures. However, their awareness of the diversity of British culture is less well developed.

Equality of opportunity is high on the school's agenda, as recognised by a comment from a parent, who said 'The school has a very caring ethos and children are encouraged to think about each other and value differences.' This was reinforced by

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another, who said 'Nobody is forgotten at Shurdington.' Procedures for keeping pupils safe are rigorous and reviewed regularly.

## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



3 May 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Shurdington Church of England Primary School, Cheltenham  
GL51 4UQ**

Thank you very much for welcoming me so warmly when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed talking to so many of you and watching you working and playing. You told me you enjoy school and I am not surprised, as it is a good school. I enjoyed especially reading about your 'takeover day' in November and seeing the photographs of you teaching lessons and taking on the jobs of staff. These are some of the things I found about your school.

- You are making good progress and reach standards significantly above average by the time you leave. The standards are especially high in reading.
- You are being taught well. That is the main reason for your progress is good. You told me that you find lessons interesting and that you find the targets that your teachers set help you to improve your work.
- I thought you were particularly well behaved in lessons, although, just occasionally, some of you were less thoughtful in your play outside. You told me that what I saw was typical of the usual standard of behaviour.
- The headteacher, staff, and governing body have good plans to continue to make improvements in your school and to help you do even better.

There are just two things I have suggested that could be improved.

- Your standards in writing are not as good as those in reading and I have suggested that teachers help you to develop a wider vocabulary in your speaking. I have also suggested that more of your writing should be based on your own experiences and that the older ones should write longer pieces more regularly.
- Although those of you in Years 1 and 2 are making good progress, it is not as fast as older pupils. This is because there are times when those of you who find work easy are not given sufficiently difficult work to really challenge you.

I know you will help by continuing to work hard. Perhaps you could try to learn two or three new words every week.

Yours sincerely

John Eadie

Lead inspector

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