

Sharp Lane Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107984
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	377681
Inspection dates	10–11 May 2012
Lead inspector	Carmen Markham

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	465
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Colley
Headteacher	Mandi Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

Carmen Markham
Doreen Davenport
Barbara Martin

Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 15 teachers teaching 20 lessons, which amounted to approximately 10 hours of observation in classes. Three joint lesson observations were undertaken with senior staff. In addition, the inspection team observed several support lessons where experienced practitioners worked with pupils requiring specialist support. Meetings were held with three groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and school staff, including senior and middle leaders. Discussions were held with a small number of parents and carers. Inspectors heard several pupils from each key stage read and talked to them about their reading. Inspectors observed the school's work, and scrutinised a number of documents, including the school development plan, safeguarding and equality policies and recent minutes of the governing body meetings. The inspectors analysed 108 parent and carer questionnaires and others completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average primary school. Approximately a third of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals; this is well above average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average and so is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average but the percentage of pupils supported by additional school action is above average. The school meets the current floor standards, which are the minimum standards expected by the government. The school has gained investors in Pupils, the Inclusion Charter Mark and the Stephen Lawrence Award.

The school has been led by the deputy headteacher as acting headteacher since spring 2011. The substantive headteacher resigned in February 2012 and the deputy headteacher was appointed to that post the day before the start of the 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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. The school is not outstanding because there are still some inconsistencies in teaching, and attainment in English is not as high as attainment in mathematics. Also, the behaviour of pupils outside lessons as they move around the school is not always managed effectively and does not always create a well ordered environment.
- Given pupils' starting points their achievement is good and is particularly strong in the Early Years Foundation Stage and for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Attainment by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 is broadly average and in mathematics it is a little above average.
- The quality of teaching is good with some that is outstanding. Professional development for teachers has done much to improve teaching throughout the school but new strategies are not fully embedded and some inconsistency remains, particularly in meeting the broad range of pupils' individual needs, the quality of marking and strategies to ensure effective reading and writing in Key Stage 2.
- The behaviour of pupils is satisfactory. Although they behave well in lessons, they do not always take full responsibility for their behaviour around school. Most pupils show good attitudes to learning. Attendance is average. It has improved significantly in the last year as the school's Pupil Development Centre has worked very effectively with parents and carers to emphasise the value of regular attendance.
- The leadership and management of the school are good. They have ensured that the school has been able to maintain previous successes and to improve during the absence of the substantive headteacher. This has been achieved through effective use of performance management and the development of strong teamwork. The leadership team accurately assesses the needs of the school and plans well for improvement although the impact of improvements is not always rigorously evaluated.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching so as to raise pupils' achievement, especially in English, by:
 - extending younger pupils' good understanding and application of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) into Years 4, 5 and 6
 - rapidly extending the school's new approach to improving writing through speech and drama
 - reviewing the quality of marking throughout the school to ensure that it is consistent and provides pupils with the information they need to improve their work
 - consistently planning activities that provide the right level of challenge and are supported by the most suitable resources for all pupils in all classes.
- Improve behaviour around the school so that pupils develop a greater sense of self-discipline and respect for the well-being of others by:
 - improving the organisation of pupils' movement around the school and regularly monitoring the impact of new procedures
 - using the school's personal development programme more effectively.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Most children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are generally below age-related expectations. They leave at the end of Year 6 with average attainment in English and slightly above average attainment in mathematics. This represents good achievement overall given pupils' starting points. School data and inspection evidence show that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, the more-able pupils and those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress. The achievement of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is improving securely and the gap between them and other pupils is closing rapidly, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 where improved teaching is having most impact. In Key Stage 2 achievement is improving securely although less rapidly than lower down the school because it is taking time for improved teaching to impact fully and overcome a legacy of previously slower progress.

Most children make rapid progress and achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in communications, language and literacy. For example, meticulous planning in a Reception class learning about letters and the sounds enabled every child to be challenged at their own level and to be excited by their learning. The positive start children get off to is built on effectively as pupils move up through the school. Good strategies for teaching reading and writing in Key Stage 1 ensure good achievement and above average attainment in both areas. However, pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have not previously had the advantage of such effective teaching and, although now improving securely and rapidly, attainment in reading and writing by the end of Key Stage 2 is average. Mathematics has been consistently stronger as it has been a focus for improvement over several years. This was evident, for example, in a mathematics lesson where the teaching was excellent, pupils were

fully engrossed in exploring the rotation of shapes through excellent questioning combined with physical activity.

Although a very small minority of pupils have difficulty in engaging in lessons most have positive attitudes to learning and find the new creative approach to the curriculum very exciting. These pupils behave well in lessons, are well motivated, want to do well and work effectively both independently and collaboratively. Pupils have a developing understanding of how to evaluate their own work and how to improve it, but this is inconsistent as the implementation of policies for marking and target-setting is somewhat variable. Parents and carers are positive about the progress their children make in school and acknowledge the improvements in their rate of progress. Inspectors agree with these views.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is good and improving securely. Inspectors observed examples of outstanding teaching in English, mathematics and in the Early Years Foundations Stage. The good achievement of all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, is testament to the effective teaching seen in lessons and the excellent support provided by the school's Pupil Development Unit and learning mentors. Teachers use the curriculum well to motivate pupils and provide a relevant and interesting learning environment to support learning. Most lessons engage pupils well in their learning. Typically lessons are well planned and resourced. Teaching assistants are used effectively to provide good quality support. Pupils are becoming increasingly involved in evaluating their own work and identifying how it can be improved. Teachers are becoming increasingly skilful in their use of questioning to check on pupils' progress and learning and extend pupils' thinking. Most teachers know the needs of their pupils. However, where teaching is satisfactory it does not fully meet all pupils' needs because the level of challenge is sometimes not appropriate to pupils' abilities. The pace of teaching is also sometimes rather pedestrian. Expert teaching of letters and sounds in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Year 3 enables pupils to make rapid progress in developing their reading skills. However, in the past older pupils have not experienced such effective teaching and, for some, this legacy acts as a brake on accelerating their progress in reading and spelling at a faster pace. Parents and carers are encouraged to become involved in their child's learning and in-school courses to support them in this are well attended. Almost all parents and carers say that their child is taught well in school, and inspectors agree.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour and safety of pupils are satisfactory. Pupils generally behave well in lessons as they are well managed and motivated to learn. However, their behaviour and attitudes around the school are not consistently as good. For example, in assembly, some pupils demonstrate a lack of respect during prayers, and when they are not closely supervised pupils' behaviour sometimes lacks control and consideration for others. Parents, carers and pupils report that some bullying takes place but they say that the number of incidents is decreasing rapidly and that bullying is now rare. Most, but not all, believe the school deals well with bullying. Pupils know how they should report bullying and they are very confident that they are safe in school. Almost all parents and carers believe that their children are safe. Pupils are very well informed about how the school keeps them safe and how they can promote safety. The school makes effective provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils through the curriculum and assemblies, but some pupils have yet to fully demonstrate a sense of personal responsibility and commitment to the school

community. Attendance and punctuality has significantly improved from below average to average in the last year. This is a success story for the school and, in particular, the work of the Pupil Development Unit that has work relentlessly to support parents and carers to remove barriers that prevent regular attendance.

Leadership and management

The school is just emerging from a long period of change in leadership. The governing body and the acting leadership team have been very effective in managing the school and moving it forward during this period of uncertainty. The positive support they have received from parents and carers is a tribute to their effectiveness as seen in the improvements that have been brought about to attendance, the Early Years Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching and the securely improving achievement of all groups of pupils. Overall, leaders and managers have made good progress in tackling the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report. This indicates that the school has good capacity for sustained improvement.

The headteacher's strong vision for a school that embraces the creative arts and first-hand learning experiences is shared with, and supported by, staff and the governing body. This enhances the learning of all pupils and has brought a rich and vibrant atmosphere into the life and work of school, particularly the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils although there is more to be done to ensure that all pupils behave responsibly. The curriculum is good because it has acted as a real motivator for staff and pupils and provided many opportunities for the development and application of key, basic skills. The professional development of staff is well-managed. The school has used many professional organisations and the local school cluster to help to develop its practice. Teachers successfully model good practice and the improved tracking of pupil progress is increasingly enabling most teaching to match tasks closely to the needs and abilities of most learners despite some remaining inconsistencies. Much has been achieved in school. The correct priorities for improvement have been identified and have been tackled successfully but the monitoring and evaluation of whole-school performance is not yet systematic enough and does not ensure that areas requiring improvement are identified quickly.

The governing body provides strong support. It knows the school well and is very successful in tackling weaknesses in provision and leadership, including performance management. The governing body uses a full range of strategies to ensure that it maintains accurate knowledge of the school and has been very effective in improving safeguarding to ensure that statutory requirements are fully met. Discrimination is challenged through the school's personal development programme. The school promotes equality of opportunity successfully and action to close the gaps in the performance of groups of pupils such as those known to be eligible for free school meals is increasingly successful. The school's promotion of equality is, therefore, good.

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).

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.



14 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sharp Lane Primary School, Leeds, LS10 4QE

I would like to thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we came to inspect your school. A special 'thank you' goes to the pupils who gave up some of their time to read to us and talk about some of their activities.

You attend a good school. School leaders and governors have done a lot to improve your school and teaching is good. Almost all of you are achieving well and making good progress in English and mathematics. However, some pupils higher up the school are finding reading and writing difficult. We are especially impressed by the progress of children in the Nursery and Reception classes. Your attendance has improved a lot in the last year and is now average. However, although you behave well in lessons, your behaviour around school is sometimes thoughtless and inconsiderate of other people's feelings and, sometimes, their safety. Most of you feel safe in school and understand how to stay safe but a very small number of you are worried about bullying. Most of you know how to improve your work and say you enjoy school.

To help you all make even more progress we have asked the school to:

- help you make better progress in English especially in Years 4, 5 and 6
- make sure that your behaviour around school shows more consideration for the feelings and safety of other people.

You can help to improve your school by behaving with consideration to others around the school, in assembly and at break times.

I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Carmen Markham
Lead inspector

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