

Sharpness Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	115526
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	395742
Inspection dates	15–16 May 2012
Lead inspector	Jane Neech HMI

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Tigre Coleman
Headteacher	Mrs Jill Brookes
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 September 2008
School address	New Town Berkeley GL13 9NU
Telephone number	01453 811220
Fax number	01453 810531
Email address	head@sharpness.gloucs.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	15–16 May 2012
Inspection number	395742



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child’s school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children’s services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to ‘Subscribe’.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
 Textphone: 0161 618 8524
 E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
 W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012



Introduction

Inspection team

Jane Neech

Her Majesty's Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed eight lessons taught by five teachers and one teaching assistant, amounting to approximately six hours of teaching. This included three joint observations with the headteacher. The inspector held meetings with teachers, two groups of pupils, and parents and carers. A meeting took place with the Chair and members of the governing body. A meeting was held with a representative from the local authority. The inspector scrutinised a range of school documentation and looked at 49 questionnaires received from parents and carers, 15 from staff and 54 from pupils. The inspector took account of the responses to the online Parent View survey in planning the inspection. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including safeguarding policies and procedures, information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school's self-evaluation, development planning and minutes of the governing body's meetings.

Information about the school

Sharpness Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The school serves Sharpness and the surrounding area. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average. Most pupils come from White British heritages. Pupils are taught in four classes. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in one class. Key Stage 1 pupils are taught together. There are two mixed age classes in Key Stage 2. Key Stage 2 pupils are taught in three ability groups for English and mathematics every morning. There is a breakfast club run by the school on site that is included in this inspection. In 2011 the results of National Curriculum tests taken by pupils in Year 6 met the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The school has gained the Healthy Schools Award.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory and improving school. Standards achieved by pupils are generally in line with national expectations. The school is not yet good because the progress of pupils in English and mathematics in lessons and over time, while improving, is not consistently good in all key stages across the school. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress from their starting points. School data and pupils' work in lessons and in books show that standards by the end of Key Stage 2 are generally average. Current assessment information shows that pupils in Key Stage 2 make stronger progress in reading and mathematics than in writing, while pupils in Key Stage 1 make stronger progress in writing and reading than in mathematics.
- The satisfactory teaching, which contains a number of strengths, ensures pupils enjoy their learning. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage provides opportunity for children to plan their own learning, particularly when using the outside area. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is often linked to pupils' different abilities.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. As a result, pupils readily work together in lessons. A key strength is the family atmosphere so that older pupils willingly take responsibility for younger pupils, such as Year 6 being buddies for new children in the Reception class.
- The good leadership of the senior leadership team and governors means that the school takes a strong approach to monitoring school performance, which is beginning to improve all teaching and pupils' progress. As a result, the satisfactory progress of pupils is beginning to accelerate. Effective leadership is focusing on staff professional development and, as a result, is improving teaching. New systems for tracking pupils' performance are robust and transparent. Consequently, school leaders, including governors, are increasing the challenge and support afforded to staff in moving towards good outcomes for pupils.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better, resulting in all pupils make at least good progress in mathematics and English, particularly writing, by:
 - routinely setting learning objectives at the start of lessons which are based on National Curriculum levels and tailored to cater for pupils' different abilities
 - using assessment information to set sharper individual pupil targets in lessons, linked to National Curriculum levels
 - providing a greater level of challenge for all pupils, but particularly for more-able pupils, so they are able to apply their skills without practising what they already know, particularly in mathematics
 - raising expectations of the quality of handwriting, basic spelling, punctuation and content in all subjects, particularly for older pupils.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Since the last inspection pupils' performance, including that of different groups, has fluctuated. During the last year school data show that the progress of pupils is improving and more recently has accelerated for some pupils. This means that gaps in performance in English and mathematics, as compared with all pupils nationally, are beginning to narrow. However, progress is not yet consistently good, particularly in writing and mathematics for all groups and individuals, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress relative to their starting points, which are generally low in early writing skills and generally in line with typical expectations for other areas of learning. These skill levels vary each year. Children learn to get along together. In working as a team to build a shelter outside for the troll from the story of *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*, children confidently communicated with each other. By the time children reach the end of the Reception Year they achieve in line with national expectations.

In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 standards in reading by the end of both key stages are average. Year 6 pupils talk enthusiastically about the stories they are reading, for example horror stories, and how the author uses language to create a feeling of suspense. Pupils in Key Stage 1 apply their knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) when self-correcting words, for example the difference between 'smoc' and 'smoke'. This helps pupils to write and spell words correctly. Consequently, in Key Stage 1, the work on phonics is having a positive impact on

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

improving the standards reached by pupils in writing. However, in Key Stage 2 the quality of pupils' writing is more variable. Work seen in books over time shows that a number of pupils make basic errors, for example missing capital letters and simple spelling errors. The quality of handwriting is inconsistent and the presentation of written work, in English and in other subjects, is sometimes poor. School tracking shows that progress in writing for pupils in Key Stage 2 is slower than that in other subjects.

In Key Stage 2 pupils work together when solving problems. In a good numeracy lesson, Years 3, 4 and 5 pupils helped each other to work out the perimeter of a new house. Pupils enjoyed the task because they had plans of a new local housing estate which gave a real-life focus to the lesson. In another Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson pupils practised how to measure in grams through a practical cooking session. School assessments and work in pupils' books show that pupils in Year 6 are on track to achieve average standards in mathematics. However, the school acknowledges that the progress for pupils in mathematics and the way they apply their numeracy, while improving, are still limited for some groups and not yet consistently good across the school.

Quality of teaching

Positive relationships between adults and pupils mean that pupils feel confident to contribute their ideas to lessons. For example, in Key Stage 1, in a good history lesson focusing on the Olympics over time, the pupils discussed why athletes should not take drugs to win races. The pupils were enthralled by the teacher, being the newsreader reporting on the Olympic news. This, together with well-planned tasks at different levels, meant that pupils were keen to contribute and produced written work of a good quality. However, work seen in books over time, particularly in Key Stage 2, for example, in science, shows that tasks and individual pupil targets are not sharply matched to the different abilities of the pupils and expectations not always high enough to extend learning. In some lessons teachers miss opportunities to raise expectations in writing, correct spelling errors and challenge pupils to improve their work.

Teaching assistants play an important part in supporting pupils' learning, particularly for pupils who are disabled and those with special educational needs. Individual support is sensitively given so that pupils can generally participate in whole-class learning. Parents and carers of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs praise the work of the school in supporting their children's learning. Parents and carers report that staff are very approachable and appreciate the advice and help given to them on how to support their children's learning at home. The teaching of reading is secure, as seen by how pupils enjoy reading at home and at school.

Where teachers' planning in English, mathematics and other subjects is matched to the needs of each year group in the mixed-aged classes, pupils make progress in the lesson. However, the school recognises that the routine setting of learning objectives linked to National Curriculum levels for different abilities is not yet consistent across

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

the school. This means in some mathematics lessons, more-able pupils practise what they already know, leaving less opportunity for teaching to extend pupils' work. In a science lesson for Years 5 and 6, pupils worked in mixed-ability groups and were given the same task, meaning that some pupils found the lesson easy, limiting how learning could be extended. The revised marking policy means there is a whole-school approach to marking. However, the school acknowledges that at times marking fails to correct basic errors in writing.

The improving picture of pupils' progress and the strengths in the overall satisfactory teaching observed during the inspection, together with the school's evidence of teaching developing over time, confirm the view that while some inconsistencies remain, teaching is securely improving.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is good at all times and it is this good behaviour that is contributing to pupils' improving progress. Friendship between pupils is strong. Pupils, parents and carers say that bullying in any form is rare. Pupils have a good awareness of the different forms of bullying, including physical harassment and cyber-bullying. Pupils know what is expected of them, which stems from a clear code of behaviour in lessons and at other times during the day. Pupils report that lessons over time are rarely interrupted by incidents of poor behaviour. Where isolated incidents occur these are dealt with well by trained and experienced adults so that pupils' learning is not disrupted. Therefore, in lessons, pupils work harmoniously together, share resources and show good attitudes to learning. For example, in a paired reading session in the Key Stage 1 class, pupils worked in twos, taking turns to 'be the teacher'. Not only did this activity promote how well pupils worked together, but encouraged them to take an active part in helping each other with their learning. Pupils are courteous and polite.

Attendance and punctuality are both good. The school works effectively with parents and carers to maintain the good attendance of pupils.

Leadership and management

The good leadership and management, including the work of the governing body, are a key strength and leading to improvements in teaching and pupils' progress. Parents and carers overwhelmingly report that the school is well led and the inspection evidence endorses their view. School leaders have a secure understanding of the school's areas for development. New systems for the analysis of data by school leaders mean that measurable targets are identified in strategic planning. As a result, the governing body is now more actively involved in holding the school to account, which is further supporting the school's improving performance. This, together with a sharper focus on teachers' accountability for pupils' progress, linked to the performance management process, means that there is strong capacity for sustained improvement.

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

School leaders have created a positive culture of professional development which is valued by staff and having a positive impact on the quality of teaching. Through enlisting the expertise of outside professionals, the school has enhanced the professional development opportunities available to staff. There are strong indications through the good leadership that the quality of teaching is continuing to develop. Another strength is the way in which staff know individual pupils. The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination by taking a positive approach to valuing individuals.

The broad and balanced curriculum is good because it offers pupils a range of activities and is helping to close the gaps in pupils' achievement in literacy and mathematics. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage use information and communication technology well by using digital cameras to take pictures of their work to use as stimulus for writing. There are numerous clubs and holiday activities which are enjoyed by pupils and appreciated by parents and carers. Pupils regularly take part in sporting events with other schools locally. Their successes are celebrated, for example in assemblies, and this ensures pupils' self-esteem is high. Music and drama are well promoted through the curriculum. As part of the school's centenary, pupils composed their own school song which they sing with enthusiasm in assembly. Added to this, the curriculum promotes pupils' understanding of different cultures through work related to the cultures of different countries. Pupils' spiritual awareness is fostered through their responses in assemblies, to art and music as well as visits to local places of worship.

Policies and procedures for safeguarding are robust. Parents and carers appreciate how the school competently integrates issues related to safety into every aspect of its work.

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.



17 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sharpness Primary School, New Town, Berkeley GL13 9NU

Thank you for welcoming me to your school on my recent visit. I came to see how well you are learning. I enjoyed talking to you about what it is like to be a pupil in your school. Thank you for reading to me and talking to me about your work. This letter is to tell you what the inspection found.

Your school is a satisfactory school, and on the way to becoming a good school. You make satisfactory progress in English, including reading, and mathematics. The younger ones of you know how to work out new words using your knowledge of the sounds that letters make. Some of you do not make as much progress in writing and mathematics as in reading. Your teachers make lessons interesting, for example when you are learning about the Olympics, and some of the teaching is good. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. You behave well in school and adults ensure that you feel safe. Many of your parents and carers told me that your school is well led by senior leaders and governors, and they are right – it is. As a result, teaching and the progress you make are improving but not quite yet good.

The staff and school leaders want to make your school a good school. I have suggested that they focus on:

- at the start of lessons giving you learning objectives for your different abilities
- giving you individual targets for literacy and numeracy linked to the different levels you are working at
- giving you all more challenge in mathematics
- expecting you to always write and spell carefully so that you do not make simple mistakes in spelling and punctuation, especially the older ones.

For you, the most important things are to carry on enjoying coming to school and working hard at everything you do.

Yours sincerely

Jane Neech
Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**