



**Office for Standards  
in Education**

**Inspection report**  
**Shaftesbury Primary School**

**Newham Education Authority**

Dates of inspection: 21-22 June 2004

This inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996 and was deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act

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## Basic information about the school

Name of school:	Shaftesbury Primary School
Type of school:	Primary
Status:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Headteacher:	Ms S Lachowycz
Address of school:	Shaftesbury Road Forest Gate London E7 8PF
Telephone:	0208 4720761
Name and address of appropriate authority:	The governing body, address as above
Chair of governors:	Councillor E Sparrowhawk
Local education authority area:	Newham
Unique reference number:	102744
Name of reporting inspector:	Mr H Parr HMI
Dates of inspection:	21-22 June 2004

## Introduction

1. Shaftesbury Primary School is situated in Forest Gate, in east London. It is much bigger than most primary schools, having 584 boys and girls, 59 of them in the nursery. The pupils are drawn from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. Just over half of them are entitled to free school meals, a very high figure. The proportions who have special educational needs, and who have a Statement of Special Educational Need, are below average. However, only one pupil in ten speaks English as a mother tongue, and many arrive at different times of the year with little or no English. The school population is constantly changing: one third of the pupils joined or left the school during the current academic year. A substantial minority are refugees. The attainment of the pupils when they enter the school is low, though this is often related to their limited command of English.
2. The school was inspected in June 2002. The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the school and it was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.
3. The governors drew up an action plan to address the key issues from the inspection of June 2002. The school was visited by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) on four occasions to monitor the progress being made.
4. In June 2004 two HMI inspected the school, assessing the standard of education provided and the progress the school has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and key issues in the inspection report of June 2002.

## Main findings

5. In accordance with section 14 of the School Inspections Act 1996, I am of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures, since it is now providing an acceptable standard of education for its pupils. The main findings of the inspection are:
  - overall standards are well below average, but the gap between the school's results and national figures at the end of Key Stage 2 is closing. From a low baseline on entry, achievement throughout the school is at least satisfactory, and often good. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 remain well below average, but progress has accelerated at the end of Key Stage 2; standards in Year 6 have risen. Anticipated results in the national tests show a marked improvement in English and mathematics, with the result in mathematics expected to be in line with previous national figures;
  - attitudes and behaviour are good. The pupils are well motivated, and work well independently, or in pairs and groups. They relate very well to each other and to their teachers, contributing to the school's strong family atmosphere;
  - attendance and punctuality have improved markedly because the school has taken increasingly effective and focused action to reduce absence and lateness. The rate of attendance is in line with the national figure, and fewer pupils are late for school. Unauthorised absence has reduced;

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- overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. The school is a cohesive, inclusive and tolerant community;
  - learning is better than at the time of the last inspection because the quality of teaching has steadily improved. The teachers are well prepared and growing in confidence; lessons are more often interesting, lively and practical. However, too little of the teaching is good enough to take full advantage of the pupils' willingness to learn;
  - the curriculum is broad, balanced and generally well matched to the pupils' needs. The school's assessment information is accurate, and increasingly well used by the teachers to set targets which help the pupils to improve their work;
  - satisfactory, and developing, provision is made for the pupils who have special educational needs and for those whose mother tongue is not English. These pupils are well cared for and supported;
  - the school is welcoming to pupils, parents and visitors. It is clean and well cared for; attractive displays of work in halls and classrooms increase the pupils' sense of pride in their achievements and in the school;
  - communication with parents has improved significantly. They have been helped to understand the programme of work and to support their children in learning and attending regularly;
  - the headteacher provides strong and effective leadership. She is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and an increasingly effective senior management team. The capacity of the school to improve further has been secured by the well-considered development of teachers and subject leaders;
  - detailed self-evaluation has given senior managers an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school's development plan sets out a clear view of the improvements needed. The monitoring of teaching and of standards is good, but the data the school has is insufficiently used to assess and compare the progress of different groups of pupils;
  - the contribution of individual governors remains uneven, but the overall effectiveness of the governing body has improved;
  - the local education authority (LEA) has provided good support for the school throughout its time in special measures.

## Key issues

6. In order to improve the pupils' quality of education further, the governors, headteacher, senior managers and staff need to:

- continue to work to raise attainment;
- continue to improve the quality of teaching, in order to capitalise fully on the pupils' willingness to learn;

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- develop the school's monitoring systems to ensure that the progress of different groups of pupils can be checked and compared.

## Inspection findings

### Standards achieved by the pupils

7. Overall, the standards the pupils attain are well below those expected for their age. However, their attainment when they enter the school is low, and many of them speak little or no English. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is well below average, but by the end of Key Stage 2 the gap is closing. In mathematics, for example, results in the 2004 national tests are expected to be in line with national figures.

8. When they enter the nursery, many pupils have low standards of attainment and a limited command of English. They make satisfactory and sometimes good progress because of the emphasis placed on developing their vocabulary and improving their spoken English. Most pupils in the reception classes learn at a satisfactory rate, though the progress of some younger pupils is restricted by their lack of independence. In personal and social, mathematical, creative and physical development, most of the pupils are on course to achieve the expected standards by the end of the Foundation Stage. Their attainment in communication, language and literacy remains low.

9. Results in national tests at Key Stage 1 have improved at a slightly faster rate than in schools across the country. The school's regularly changing population makes direct comparison between year groups difficult. Provisional results for 2004, and standards seen in lessons, indicate a well-below-average profile, similar to the previous year. The exception to this is a notable improvement in mathematics, where the result is close to the previous national figure and above that of similar schools in 2003.

10. The anticipated results in the national tests at Key Stage 2 in 2004 are well above those of the previous two years in English and mathematics, and similar to them in science. Attainment in English and science remains well below the level expected nationally, but standards in mathematics in Year 6 are in line with national expectations. The data indicates that those pupils who remain at the school between the ages of seven and eleven make much faster progress between these two assessment points than those in other schools. However, so many pupils come and go during the year that the school cannot guarantee that progress will translate into improved results; in 2003, for example, one third of the pupils in Year 6 joined the school during that academic year.

11. In English by the end of Year 2, some pupils reach or exceed the standards of reading and writing expected for their age. They read accurately and fluently, and use different strategies to guess the meaning of an unfamiliar word, such as sounding out the letters. Their handwriting is consistent and their spelling of simple words is accurate. A few can put their sentences together to make up a short story. By the end of Year 6, many pupils read fluently and widely. In one lesson, they retrieved information from different sources and drew conclusions from it, justifying their views and giving supporting evidence. Some write interestingly and engagingly, choosing their words with care. The writing of higher-attaining pupils was technically accurate, though some found it difficult to structure their work into paragraphs. At both key stages, very many pupils have low levels of literacy, and some recent arrivals speak little or no English. Throughout the school, regular opportunities to speak and

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to listen are improving the pupils' oral competence, helping them to extend their thinking and improve their subsequent writing.

12. In mathematics, overall standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are just below those expected for the pupils' age. All have a good recognition of number and some use their developing mental and oral skills to solve problems involving two stages of calculation. When completing addition problems, many are beginning to consider alternative ways of doing the calculation and then select the most effective. Lower-attaining pupils find it difficult to calculate mentally, often, for example, using their fingers when doubling small numbers. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' confidence has improved markedly. Standards are sound, and often good. Most describe and some evaluate the different strategies they use to make their calculations. They have a sound knowledge of multiplication tables and apply this well to practical problems. They use a range of techniques when adding and subtracting numbers. Many are confident with fractions, decimals and percentages; for example, in calculating the percentage reduction in the price of an item. Progress in mathematics across the school is good.

13. In science, standards are improving, but more slowly. They remain well below those expected nationally at both key stages. The pupils' scientific knowledge is reasonably secure, but their ability to predict, investigate and draw conclusions is weak. The recent focus on scientific investigations is beginning to help the pupils to experiment more systematically and to use a wider range of methods to record their work; for example, by using diagrams, charts and graphical representation.

14. In lessons, the pupils almost always made at least satisfactory progress. In half of the lessons, progress was good or very good, as a result of lively and challenging teaching. The pupils who have special educational needs, and those whose mother tongue is not English, were well supported and made sound progress.

### **The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

15. The pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to their work are good. They are keen to learn, and settle quickly, quietly and often enthusiastically to the tasks they are given. They work well independently, and also in pairs and groups. They listen attentively to the opinions of others and value their ideas. They are not afraid to voice opinions that are different from those of their friends. The relationships between the pupils and the adults in the school are characterised by mutual respect. The strong family atmosphere was apparent in classrooms, assemblies and on the playground. No pupils have been excluded in recent years.

16. Attendance and punctuality have improved markedly. At the time of the last inspection, attendance was unsatisfactory and the rate of unauthorised absence was four times the national figure. In the last full term, attendance has risen to 95 per cent, and unauthorised absence has fallen to 0.5 per cent. Both of these rates are in line with national figures. The school's learning mentor has worked effectively with the education social worker to contribute to these improvements. Careful analysis of the data has helped the school to direct its efforts at the areas of greatest concern. A similar, sharper approach has also led to noticeable improvements in punctuality; fewer pupils are late for school, and parents are more aware of the need to get them there on time.

17. Overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Moral and social development are strongly promoted. The school actively celebrates the

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diversity and richness of the many home languages, encouraging the pupils to value their own and appreciate the difference of others. Agreed rules help them to distinguish right from wrong, and to appreciate the needs of others. The pupils are encouraged to put forward their own ideas, for example through the school council. Their pride and their confidence are increased by attractive displays of their work throughout the school, contributing to their sense of belonging. They work very regularly in pairs and in groups, learning to co-operate with and support each other. There are, however, few clubs where they can meet socially and mix informally.

18. The promotion of cultural awareness is very good. The school exploits to the full its rich mix of nationalities and backgrounds, helping the pupils to share their cultures, beliefs and experiences; for example, in a history lesson, the plight of evacuees in the Second World War was compared with that of present-day refugees. The pupils in Year 5 recently experienced a major project which included the opportunity to perform with a local opera company. All kinds of music are regularly experienced and enjoyed, for example in daily assemblies. The celebration of cultural diversity is not restricted to events and projects, but is consciously woven into the fabric of the everyday curriculum.

19. The provision for the pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The scheme of work for religious education traces particular beliefs or morals through different religions, helping the pupils to understand and appreciate beliefs other than their own. School assemblies promote moral themes strongly, but do not always provide for, or capitalise on, opportunities for quiet reflection and thought. In lessons, there are too few occasions when the pupils can pause and delve beyond the everyday and the practical.

### **The quality of education**

20. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the time of the last inspection, when it was unsatisfactory: it was very good in two lessons, good in nine, satisfactory in nine and unsatisfactory in two. Learning is also better because the teaching is better. Almost all of the teaching is competent and well planned. Much of it is interesting, lively and practical. Some of it, however, fails to exploit fully the pupils' willingness to learn.

21. The strengths of the teaching far outweigh the weaknesses. Considerable development work and careful monitoring have ensured that all teachers try to put into practice what they have learned, and most of the time they are successful. Planning is now strong where previously it was weak, for example in the foundation subjects. The teachers expect more of the pupils in terms of work, behaviour and presentation. They are careful to ensure that there is sufficient pace and variety to engage and maintain the pupils' interest. They do not allow activities to go on for too long, and they break up sessions on the carpet when the pupils are beginning to flag, for example, by encouraging them to explore ideas with each other before sharing them with the whole group. Lessons are more active and practical, involving opportunities for the pupils to research and to work in groups. Support assistants are well briefed, and have thought in advance about their contribution to each lesson. The concluding plenary sessions are often well used to sum up what the pupils have learned.

22. The good and very good lessons had additional dimensions which exploited fully the pupils' eagerness to learn. They involved practical activities, and often additional resources

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in the shape of photographs or sources of evidence which gave the pupils the chance to explore for themselves. They often culminated in an activity which put the pupils 'on the spot', making them accountable for what they had learned by having to demonstrate it to the class; for example, the pupils in a Year 6 lesson had to express opinions about characters they had researched and be prepared to give reasons for them backed up by evidence. In some lessons, the teachers were adept at breaking down the learning into small steps and ensuring that each step was clearly summarised so that all could follow. A sense of urgency was created by having to work to tight deadlines. The pupils were enthused by the topics because of the way they were presented and managed. When the teaching had these characteristics, the gains in learning were rapid.

23. Even when the pupils were bored or confused they were rarely disruptive. Because of this, the teachers in the unsatisfactory lessons and in two of the lessons that were satisfactory overall failed to notice that concentration had wandered or that a vacant stare signalled a failure to understand. The wide range of ability in each class required constant vigilance on the part of both teachers and learning assistants, and in some lessons the responses of the majority masked the fact that some pupils were lost. On one occasion, a group of pupils unsupervised by the teacher chatted amiably for twenty minutes without ever engaging with the task in hand. On another, the teacher did not manage the changes of activity, the movement or the independent work well enough. The pupils behaved themselves but some were noisy and aimless and wasted their time.

24. The school has accurate assessment data which is increasingly well used by the teachers to set targets for individuals and groups. Careful attention to the current working levels of Year 6 pupils, for example, and action targeted at individual areas for development contributed significantly to the improved results this year. In class, many teachers use targets well to focus the work and to make the pupils aware of what to do to improve. Much of the marking is thorough, encouraging and helpful.

25. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and well matched to the pupils' needs because it is increasingly active and practical. Planning for all subjects is sound and fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. This solid base has made the teachers more confident to try out extended topics or to make productive links between subjects. Provision for information and communication technology is much improved, and further developments are planned. Computers were well used in several lessons to support learning.

26. The school makes sound provision for the pupils who have special educational needs. Clear and specific individual education plans help the teachers and the learning assistants to focus their work on specific targets, and to monitor progress against them. The results of the monitoring are used well to evaluate the impact of the provision. The school also provides satisfactory support for the pupils whose mother tongue is not English. Revised procedures ensure that new arrivals are assessed more quickly. However, up to now, assessment has not been sufficiently sharp to differentiate adequately between educational and linguistic needs. The school is aware of this problem, and has sensible plans to improve the system of assessment and response by ensuring that provision for special educational needs and arrangements for linguistic support are properly integrated. These plans include further analysis of the progress made by pupils from different ethnic groups.

27. The school is welcoming to pupils, parents and visitors. The classrooms, halls and staircases are clean and well cared for. Examples of the work and activities are attractively

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displayed throughout the school, and the pupils are proud of them. Many different languages are represented and celebrated. The quality of the environment supports the school's drive for inclusiveness and exemplifies its expectations. Some parents were critical of communication with them at the time of the last inspection, and the school has tackled this area with vigour. Recent initiatives include the introduction of English classes for parents, with the provision of a crèche facility, the development of a parents' room and the translation of curricular information into community languages. Increased parental involvement is reflected in high levels of attendance at open afternoons, help in planning and preparing events and greater efforts to ensure that pupils are not away, and get to school on time.

### **Leadership and management**

28. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership. She is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and an increasingly capable senior management team. Her clear view of the direction the school should take is securely based on an accurate analysis of strengths and weaknesses. The school development plan establishes clear priorities and steps towards achieving them. All teachers have received well-considered training to help them to improve their practice in the classroom and their skills as managers; curriculum leaders, for example, have been trained to monitor planning and the quality of work in their subjects, and to raise their expectations by considering the needs of gifted and talented pupils. Measures such as these have secured the capacity of the school to continue to improve in the future.

29. Self-evaluation has become increasingly well focused during the school's time in special measures. Through careful monitoring, senior managers have ensured that policies are carried out, leading to a consistent approach to teaching and learning across the staff. In recent months, the evaluation of the effect of these policies on learning, standards, behaviour and attendance has become more incisive. Recently, for example, the school improved its monitoring of attendance and punctuality by focusing on those individuals and classes which were a cause for concern. Concerted action, which included daily telephone calls to families whose children were absent without permission or who had arrived late, brought about significant improvements. Written evaluations of the lessons observed by senior managers give teachers clear advice, which has contributed to improvements made. However, the school makes too little use of the data it has to check and to compare the progress of groups of pupils; for example, it has not sufficiently analysed the standards achieved by different ethnic groups, or compared the progress made by the school's stable population with that of the pupils who arrive at different times during the academic year.

30. The contribution of individual governors remains uneven, but the overall effectiveness of the governing body has improved. Some governors have had a limited involvement, but others have increased their knowledge of the school through regular visiting. Well-structured committees have been formed, and a cycle of meetings has been established. Greater knowledge of the school's work has increased the confidence of some governors to challenge and to ask searching questions.

31. The LEA has supported the school well throughout its time in special measures. The school development officer knows the school very well, and has directed support effectively to where it has been needed. This support has helped to improve the quality of management, teaching and governance.

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## Implementation of the action plan

32. The inspection report of 2002 required the school to address six key issues. These related to: strengthening leadership and management; raising standards in English; raising standards in some foundation subjects; improving the provision for the pupils who have special educational needs; improving liaison with parents and improving attendance. Overall, good progress has been made and most tasks have been completed.

33. Better leadership and management have increased the school's capacity to improve. Standards in English have risen because the teaching throughout the school is better. Anticipated results at Key Stage 2 this year confirm this improvement. Standards in design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education have also risen because improved schemes of work have led to better provision and more imaginative approaches. The provision for the pupils who have special educational needs is now satisfactory, and national requirements are met. Further improvements are planned to enable linguistic and educational difficulties to be better separated and tackled. Liaison with parents is constructive and supports pupils' learning, attendance and punctuality. Attendance has improved considerably.

## **Appendix – Information about the inspection**

The school was inspected under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 by a Registered Inspector and a team of inspectors in June 2002. The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the school and, in accordance with that Act, the school was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.

The school was visited by HMI in January, May and September 2003, and in February 2004 and to assess the progress it was making to implement its action plan and address the key issues in the inspection report of June 2002.

In June 2004, two HMI returned to inspect the school for two days. The inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996, which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

Twenty two parts of lessons, four assemblies and two registration sessions were inspected. The pupils were observed at break and lunch times and samples of their work were inspected. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior staff and a representative from the LEA. Informal discussions were held with other staff and pupils. A wide range of the school's documentation was scrutinised. Account was also taken of the evidence from previous monitoring inspections.

The inspection assessed the quality of education provided and the progress the school has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and key issues in the inspection report of June 2002 and the action plan prepared by the governing body to address those key issues.