



Inspection report

Sharow CE Primary School

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 121588
LEA North Yorkshire

Inspection number 275632
Inspection dates 14 and 15 June 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs A M Talboys HMI

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.

Type of School	Primary	School address	Berrygate Lane
School category	Voluntary Controlled <i>Diocese of Ripon</i>		Sharow
Age range of pupils	4 to 11 years		Ripon
			North Yorkshire
			HG4 5BJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01765 604362
Number on roll	38	Fax number	01765 600449
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Revd Canon Penny Driver
Date of previous inspection	February 2004	Headteacher	Mr James Foxwell

Age group	Published	Reference no.
4 to 11 years	20 July 2005	275632

Introduction

When Sharow CE Primary School was inspected in February 2004, it was judged to require special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools (HMI) subsequently visited the school on two occasions to monitor its progress, and reinspected the school in June 2005.

Description of the school

Sharow CE Primary School serves the small village of Sharow and two other neighbouring villages. The area is socially mixed. Ten and a half per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is broadly in line with the national average. Standards of attainment on entry are above average overall. The school is much smaller than average; the number on roll has fallen over the past few years although the predicted intake for September indicates that it will rise again. Twenty four per cent of the pupils have special educational needs which is above the national average. Five per cent of the pupils are from a minority ethnic background and this is broadly in line with the average figure.

The school has undergone significant changes of staff over the past years. At present there are three full-time teachers including the headteacher.

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Overall effectiveness of the school

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.

Sharow CE Primary School has improved significantly over the past 16 months. During the first term when it was subject to special measures, an acting headteacher worked closely with the local education authority (LEA) to establish useful and sensible systems in the school. She stabilised a turbulent situation and accurately identified key areas for improvement. A substantive headteacher was appointed from January 2005 and he has provided clear-sighted and effective leadership of the school. Standards in literacy and numeracy are above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and are broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2. The quality of provision has improved significantly: at Key Stage 2 the teaching and learning are never less than satisfactory and are sometimes good; and at Key Stage 1 they are good with some very good features. Assessment systems have been implemented effectively and they are beginning to be used well to improve the pupils' rate of progress. Subject co-ordination is good in English and mathematics and has improved in science. Co-ordination of the foundation subjects is underdeveloped. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good. The pupils' behaviour is mostly satisfactory and often good. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced and is enriched with whole-school projects, such as the production of a school newspaper and a week of activities relating to health and welfare. It is further enhanced by extracurricular activities, educational trips and visitors to the school.

Improvement since the last inspection

The inspection of February 2004 required the school to address key areas of weakness concerned with: the leadership and management of the school; the standards, achievement and teaching of pupils and their assessment in a range of curriculum areas, particularly in Years 5 and 6; the range of the curriculum in Key Stage 2; and the outdoor provision for reception pupils. Good progress has been made in relation to leadership and management, the quality of teaching and assessment and the outdoor provision; satisfactory progress has been made in extending the curriculum. The school has worked systematically to implement developments outlined in its action plan and overall good progress has been made since the inspection.

Capacity to improve

The school is in a good position to sustain the progress it has made since the inspection of February 2004. The headteacher leads the school well and the staff work as a team; there is a clear sense of purpose in the school and morale is high. The headteacher has focused on raising standards and improving provision. There are good systems to evaluate the school's educational provision, and each pupil's progress is tracked through regular assessments. A clear development plan has been produced, outlining the priorities for the

school's continued improvement over the next three years, and staff are working assiduously through its action points. A fall in the number of pupils will necessitate a reduction in staffing next year and the potential negative impact of this has been ameliorated by thoughtful planning and preparation. The LEA has reduced its level of support appropriately as the school has become more self-sufficient and it intends to continue to monitor the school's progress.

What the school should do to improve further

The key priorities for the school's development plan are to:

- continue to raise standards, particularly for the more-able pupils;
- continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning for all pupils, especially for those in Key Stage 2;
- continue to extend the range of the curriculum across the school, particularly in information and communication technology (ICT) and the foundation subjects.

Achievement and standards

When the pupils enter the reception class their performance is generally above that expected of their age. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards remain above average. Weaknesses in previous provision have led to some underachievement at Key Stage 2 although some improvement has been made. Teacher assessments for the end-of-Key Stage 2 tests in 2005 suggest that 77 per cent of pupils should reach the target Level 4 and above in English and 88 per cent in mathematics. If the test results match these figures they will be an improvement on the previous results but there remains some underachievement, particularly among the most able pupils. Based on previous national scores, these results would be average in English and above average in mathematics, although the predicted proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 would be below average.

During the inspection the pupils made at least satisfactory progress in nearly all their lessons in both key stages. In over half the lessons the pupils made good and occasionally very good progress. However, the most able pupils generally made only satisfactory progress and often did not achieve the standards commensurate with their ability.

Personal development

The pupils' behaviour in classes and around the school was usually good; it was very good in Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, as a result of better provision, higher expectations and more consistent approaches by teachers to classroom management, the pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour have improved significantly. Most pupils were eager to learn and keen to contribute; on occasions a few pupils became fidgety or engaged in idle chatter

as a result of a slowing of the pace or insufficiently high expectations of their work by the teacher. Rewards and praise were used effectively and the pupils responded well to them. Teachers acknowledged good behaviour and this acted as a useful reminder to those who were not working properly; sanctions were rarely needed. The increased use of paired and collaborative group work has improved the pupils' motivation and they settled to independent work quickly and sensibly. In the playground there was some boisterous behaviour, but this was managed effectively by staff. There are sensible plans for more segregation of activities outside, when refurbishment is completed and the size of the outside play area is increased.

Attendance is good and the rate of unauthorised attendance is low.

The pupils are encouraged to contribute to discussions and they use diaries and personal assessment booklets effectively to record progress and homework. The use of blocks of time to concentrate the whole school on a particular topic has increased the pupils' opportunities to work collaboratively. A recent health week saw a range of outside speakers and visitors involve the whole school in activities related to health, safety and welfare. Events of this kind contribute significantly to the provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, and social development. The ethos of the school is good and a number of pupils undertook responsibilities in a mature fashion; for example, older pupils acted as tutors to younger pupils during paired reading sessions. A suitable range of extracurricular activities is provided, including a thriving after-school club. Educational visits and residential experiences further enhance the provision. Assemblies and religious education lessons make a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual development; for instance a very good religious education lesson involved a visit to the church to experience the atmosphere of worship. The chair of governors, a diocesan canon, is a regular contributor to religious education lessons and assemblies. The school acknowledges that its provision to promote the pupils' understanding of the diversity of faiths and cultures within society is insufficiently developed.

Quality of provision

In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching was consistently good; it was very good in two lessons. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching was never less than satisfactory; it was good in two lessons. This picture is a significant overall improvement on the previous inspection in 2004. Unsatisfactory teaching has been eradicated but there remains some room for improvement, particularly in Key Stage 2.

All the lessons were well planned and the activities provided appropriate challenge according to the pupils' various ages and abilities. Learning objectives were clear and usually shared with the pupils. Classroom routines were well established and relationships were supportive and pleasant. In the most effective lessons good use was made of paired discussions and collaborative group work. Independent study was promoted in both key stages and the pupils responded well to this challenge. The teaching assistants are a significant strength of the school; they have received good training, they know the pupils well and are carefully prepared for lessons. Resources, notably the interactive whiteboards, were used effectively to stimulate the pupils' interest. The use of questioning and allowing

pupils time to think and to explain answers in depth are growing although in some lessons these opportunities were rare. In many lessons there was insufficient challenge for the most able pupils and the expectation of their performance was too low. In some lessons the concluding plenary session failed to reinforce the learning appropriately as it was rushed.

Marking and assessment were consistently good. The marking policy is followed closely; teachers provide useful comments and targets for improvement on written work and the use of self-evaluation by the pupils is being promoted. A revised policy underpins a good system for assessing the pupils' attainment and tracking their progress in the core subjects. The results of tests have been analysed and the information is used to set appropriate targets for groups of pupils and to identify those who require extra help to boost their achievement.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and satisfies national requirements. The co-ordination and development of English and mathematics are good, and subject leadership in science and ICT is developing. There are sensible plans to develop the foundation subjects. The school has made good use of themed days and weeks. The most recent themed week successfully launched an initiative on healthy living; it was organised and co-ordinated by a teaching assistant. Resources are satisfactory and are being reviewed systematically. New ICT resources have been purchased and when the building programme is completed the new classroom should be well resourced.

Procedures for reviewing pupils with special needs have been revised and now include good opportunities for the pupils to contribute. Parents are better informed and many attend reviews.

Leadership and management

In the two terms the headteacher has been in post, he has led a remarkable improvement in the quality of educational provision. He has a clear vision for the school and is highly respected by the school community. Under his leadership, the staff work together effectively and the quality of leadership and management throughout the school has improved significantly. The headteacher quickly identified the key priorities for improvement and a long-term strategic plan for the school's continued development has been produced. The plan is well thought out and aims to maintain the upward trend in basic standards of teaching, learning and attainment. The phasing of actions and the delegation of responsibility have ensured that all necessary areas are addressed and that sufficient time and resources are available for the plan to be implemented thoroughly.

Governance is good. The governors are well led and have improved significantly their understanding of the quality of the education provided by the school. They are working hard to support improvements, as well as holding the school to account for its actions.

The LEA has played an important part in securing and improving provision at the school. It has monitored the school's progress effectively and provided help to improve teaching, learning, behaviour and management.

Appendix – Information about the inspection

Sharow CE Primary School was inspected under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 by Registered Inspector and a team of inspectors in February 2004. 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 October 2004 and in January 2005 to assess the progress it was making to implement its action plan and address the key issues in the inspection report of February 2004.

In June 2005, an HMI and an Additional Inspector 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.

Eleven lessons or parts of lessons and an assembly were inspected. The pupils' conduct was observed around the school and on the playground at break and lunchtimes, and samples of their work were inspected. Discussions were held with the headteacher, both teachers, the chair of governors, representatives from the diocese and from the LEA, and informally with other staff. A wide range of the school's documentation was scrutinised. Account was 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 February 2004 and the action plan prepared by the governing body to address those key issues.

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