



Sherbourne Fields School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103760
LEA Coventry
Inspection number 276990
Inspection dates 20 October 2005 to 20 October 2005
Reporting inspector Janet Thompson HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Special	School address	Rowington Close
School category	Community special		Coundon
Age range of pupils	3 to 19		Coventry, West Midlands CV6 1PR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02476 591501
Number on roll	102	Fax number	02476 590517
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr David Rounsley
Date of previous inspection	14 February 2000	Headteacher	Mr David Southead

Age group 3 to 19	Inspection dates 20 October 2005 - 20 October 2005	Inspection number 276990
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Sherbourne Fields School provides education for pupils with physical disabilities. An increasing number of pupils have more complex needs and some pupils have severe or profound multiple learning difficulties. Pupils have a diverse range of backgrounds. About 80% of pupils are from White British families. The others come from a range of minority ethnic groups and over half of these pupils do not have English as their first language. The school admits pupils from parts of Warwickshire and Solihull as well as the whole of Coventry. Proposed reorganisation plans for special education in Coventry include the creation of new special schools providing for a wider range of needs. This has caused some uncertainty for parents and staff at the school.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school evaluates its overall effectiveness as good. The evidence from this inspection supports this view and identifies significant strengths in personal development and well-being. All parents are very pleased with the education which the school provides. Phase leaders have a good understanding of the range of needs of pupils in their departments. They work hard to ensure pupils have the necessary support and access to a relevant curriculum to make good progress. There are some examples where pupils could make even better progress with improved access to communication aids and information and communication technology (ICT). Assessment procedures when used well ensure that all pupils are effectively challenged but this is not consistent across all classes and subjects. Pupils make good progress overall but the school does not check the progress of different groups within the school.

The Foundation Stage provides a very good start for children. Using careful assessment and information from parents and other professionals, teaching is well targeted and helps children achieve. Progress made is good and often outstanding.

The relationships throughout the school are excellent and provide a careful balance between care and challenge. A few new staff have not had safeguarding training. The curriculum is good and gives pupils many exciting experiences. The pupils grow into confident young people who are as self-sufficient as possible. They are extremely positive about the help they get from staff and believe they go to a good school.

Improved self-evaluation has helped the senior team to allocate resources effectively and the school provides good value for money. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory but, as a result of better analysis of progress and the new senior team structure, capacity to improve has increased and is now good.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The sixth form successfully builds upon the progress made by students in the rest of the school. There is a good emphasis on preparing students for their future lives. Curriculum opportunities are extended by links with other providers and the school works hard to ensure students can access a range of accredited courses. All students leave with accredited qualifications and gain placements for future education, training or care.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all staff are trained in child protection procedures as soon as they start at the school.
- Continue to improve assessment procedures so that they consistently inform planning and set challenging targets in all lessons.
- Further refine the use of data to give better information about achievement of different groups of pupils.
- Ensure communication systems and ICT are used consistently across the curriculum and throughout the school day to enable pupils to make even better progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The vast majority of pupils make good progress in all departments at the school. Those who enter the school in the Foundation Stage have a very good start to their education and this is effectively built upon throughout the school. In the sixth form, students continue to learn well and all of them leave school with some recognised qualifications. For some pupils, progress is outstanding and the provision at the school helps them to excel. For an increasing number of pupils, the school has identified the need to access aspects of mainstream provision in order to increase academic or social opportunity. Staff work tirelessly to ensure pupils are well prepared and can gain access to suitable provision in order to maximise their progress.

Tracking of individual progress is well developed and phase leaders monitor pupils in their departments effectively. Progress made in English and mathematics is generally good and it is frequently very good in science. Targets are usually challenging but further analysis of the pace of pupils' progress over time and in different subjects would assist in ensuring all pupils reach their potential. Progress data using the nationally recognised levels of learning ('P scales') and National Curriculum levels has only been in place across the school for the last few years. Analysis is in its very early stages and the school does not monitor achievement in a way which ensures all groups of pupils are treated equally. However, inspectors found no discernable difference in achievement between different groups of pupils at the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their work and life at the school. They enjoy coming to school and relationships throughout the school are excellent. Both parents and pupils report that the school is like a family, by being supportive and challenging. Pupils feel secure at school and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They learn to understand their own needs and those of others extremely well and are supportive and encouraging of each other. When deciding on rules for the sixth form, students highlighted the need to ensure that all students are given sufficient time to communicate effectively. Pupils become confident advocates for themselves and for the school. Overall attendance is good.

Behaviour is generally very good and pupils are polite and courteous. They have a good understanding of right and wrong and a strong sense of their rights as individuals. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very effective. Recently introduced times for reflection help pupils celebrate achievements as well as share concerns. Cultural development is effectively supported throughout the curriculum.

Pupils take increasing responsibility as they move through the school. The Student Council makes a very good contribution to the life of the school and there are well established links with the wider community. Additional opportunities, for example involvement in sporting events and residential visits, further support pupils' social

development. Pupils are well prepared for their future lives and the involvement of older pupils in an enterprise project is a very good example of this.

Positive encouragement by school staff and the multi-disciplinary team helps pupils to be healthy. They know about healthy diets and the importance of exercise.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is generally enthusiastic and motivating. Pupils achieve well and are usually actively engaged in their lessons. Relationships are very good in all lessons and pupils are treated with respect. Lessons are carefully planned, although some staff are more skilled than others in ensuring sufficient challenge for all pupils. In the best practice, staff are able to use their very good knowledge of individual needs to provide effective support for pupils while also enabling a good level of independent learning. As a result of good planning, the activities and imaginative use of resources help pupils to keep a clear focus on the learning objective. Recent development work in the school to improve teacher questioning and raise expectations for responses from pupils has had a good impact in lessons. There were some excellent examples in a science lesson where the teacher's well targeted questioning enabled all pupils to contribute and develop their thinking further. In some lessons, more consistent use of communication systems would help pupils make even better progress.

For some teachers there needs to be more clarity about the relationship between pupils' individual targets and other curriculum targets. Pupils are involved in reviewing their own targets at the start of each term but do not always take sufficient responsibility for tracking their own progress in between these times.

Homework is used to increase learning opportunities for pupils and many speak favourably of how it helps them to learn for themselves. However, there is no overall plan and pupils can find themselves with very unequal amounts of homework at different times during the week and term.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum relevant to the different ages of pupils at the school. Throughout the school, there is good emphasis on meeting individual needs and providing breadth of experience. In the Foundation Stage, pupils are given activities to help them meet the learning goals. Pupils follow the National Curriculum with some adaptations to meet their individual needs. As pupils get older there is more use of ability grouping to ensure pupils achieve their potential and experience progression. Links with a local federation of secondary schools has helped improve the options available for secondary and sixth form pupils and students. The school works hard to help individuals access courses that meet their particular interests. The school has been responsive to the changing needs of pupils and there are good examples of

accredited courses being changed from those with a more academic focus to vocational courses.

Curriculum mapping has improved since the last inspection. Further improvements in use of ICT across the curriculum and in planning for personal, social and health education and citizenship are still needed to help pupils make even better progress.

Good additional opportunities are provided through the use of clubs during lunch time and after school. The curriculum as a whole provides good experiences for pupils' cultural development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff and pupils at the school work well together to provide a supportive atmosphere that builds pupils' self-esteem. Parents are positive about the effective use of risk assessments that help keep pupils safe while still enabling them to tackle challenging activities. There are very good arrangements to help pupils return to school as quickly as possible following surgery. For pupils who experience sustained absence owing to medical needs the school provides home visits and good liaison with hospital staff.

There are excellent procedures in place to help the whole school community deal with bereavement, including supporting pupils who wish to attend friends' funerals. Pupils lives are celebrated in assemblies and pupils are given opportunities for reflection.

Pupils have good involvement in decision making about their own lives, supported by staff at the school and the Connexions service. The lack of systematic tracking of personal development means that for some pupils it is difficult for them to review their own progress in these areas.

Some good safeguarding procedures are in place and first aid and medical procedures are well organised. The child protection policy is good - existing staff and the named person have had training relevant to the particular needs of the pupils but a few new staff to the school have not had training in this aspect soon enough.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management at the school are good. There has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection. The new management structure provides a forum for well focused challenge and evaluation. This has increased the capacity for improvement. The self-evaluation is a good reflection of the school overall, although inspectors' judgement of care, guidance and support is slightly less favourable than the school's judgement. The school consults parents, pupils and staff before it makes any major changes, and is responsive to suggestions.

Members of the senior team have a very good understanding about the quality of teaching. The analysis of strengths and areas for development across the school has

been good and development work has had an impact on improving teaching overall. There is still a need for this work to continue with new or less experienced staff.

The governors fulfil their duties well. The school development plan is a well focused document linked to finance and resources. There are a few examples where success criteria could be better expressed as outcomes for pupils. Monitoring of pupils' progress is firmly based on looking at individuals and, whilst this is effective, the senior team have not challenged their own view of what is good or better progress.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Student Council Sherbourne Fields School Rowington Close Coventry CV6 1PS

2 November 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. I would especially like to thank those pupils who met us to answer some of our questions. You are right to be very proud of your school. It was good to see you all working hard and we are very pleased that you make good progress.

Your school is a happy place to learn. You obviously enjoy coming to school and have many friends. The staff at the school are kind and friendly and you respect them. Many give you very good help and push you to try hard for yourselves. We think that some teachers could find out more about what you can do and help you to try even harder. Perhaps you can help them by challenging yourselves to make even better progress.

You behave very well in lessons and encourage each other to work hard. You do lots of good work but we think some of you could do even better if you had some more opportunities to use computers and similar equipment throughout your lessons.

The school gives you lots of opportunities to do challenging activities that not all schools make available to pupils. Although some of you want more choice about the subjects you learn, we think the school works hard to try to provide a wide range and has developed some good links with other schools to continue to increase the opportunities available to you.

Some new staff at your school need more training to make sure that they know how to keep you very safe.

Keep up the good work and thank you for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Janet Thompson (HMI)