

# The Sherwood School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102646
<b>Local Authority</b>	Merton
<b>Inspection number</b>	286450
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Thrusell

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	435
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs S Gordon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr K Tyzack
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 October 2002
<b>School address</b>	Abbotts Road Mitcham CR4 1JS
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8764 5100
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8765 0265

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The Sherwood School is a popular, larger than average primary school. Just over half of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest groups being Black British Caribbean or African. An above average and increasing proportion has English as an additional language. A lower than average proportion is known to be eligible for free school meals. Fewer than expected pupils have learning difficulties.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The Sherwood School is a good school. Under the committed leadership of the headteacher, the staff work well together as a team, providing a very good level of care for its pupils. Parents recognise that 'all staff are interested in the welfare and well-being of the children'. Where necessary, the school draws on its good links with other agencies to ensure pupils' well-being and safety. Parents are also encouraged to play a full part in supporting their children's learning. A good level of personal development also contributes to this learning. Pupils say they like their teachers and that the school is a friendly, happy place. They enjoy school, especially the many sports activities that help to keep them physically fit. Their behaviour is very good and they are particularly attentive in lessons, showing very positive attitudes to learning. Consequently, pupils achieve well.

Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress. By the end of Year 2, they have achieved average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Recent action on reading is further raising standards. This good progress continues throughout Key Stage 2 and, by the end of Year 6, standards in English and science are above average but pupils have not been as successful in mathematics. Standards in mathematics have, however, started to improve and are now average, due to successful action taken by the school. The school recognises that more is still to be done to further these improvements. Throughout Key Stage 2, reading is particularly strong, but writing is relatively weak. Action is being taken to raise writing standards, although it is yet to have a significant impact.

Pupils' good progress is the result of good teaching and a well-planned curriculum. Effective classroom management and very positive relationships ensure that pupils learn well. Their individual progress is carefully monitored. Where pupils do not make the expected progress, a good range of strategies is in place to support them and help them make up any lost ground. However, assessment information is not always used well enough to plan appropriate work for all ability groups within sets and classes, to fully challenge them and enable all consistently to do as well as possible.

The senior management team regularly monitors the work of the school and this has helped to maintain a good overall level of teaching and learning and to raise standards, for example in mathematics. However, leaders do not always check with sufficient rigor that the improvements they seek from teachers are achieved. For example, regarding standards and achievement, this means that the school does not always know whether it has done well enough or whether it could have done better. Despite this, improvements since the last inspection, along with recent improvements in achievement and standards, show that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Parents are pleased with the start that their children are given when they start school and the relationship between home and school. Staff provide a safe and caring environment where children feel secure. They happily move between a well balanced range of independent activities and more formally taught sessions that cover all six areas of learning. A great deal of care is taken to regularly assess children so that the all adults possess a very good knowledge of individual needs. Attainment on entry at the age of three varies. It is broadly at the expected

level for their age, but is below that expected in some aspects of language and mathematical development. The Foundation Stage manager has maintained the good provision since the last inspection and acted quickly to introduce new measures to improve the weaker aspects of children's development. However, her monitoring of the Foundation Stage is limited and the information on individual children has not been analysed thoroughly enough to provide a detailed evaluation of the progress of different groups. Pupils enjoy the variety of activities and lively approach used by all adults to encourage their learning. Teachers, and nursery nurses, provide good support for those pupils with learning difficulties and those learning English as an additional language. They do not, however, always provide sufficiently challenging activities or questions to enable the more able to make consistently good progress. Despite this, by the end of Reception most children have made good progress towards meeting the learning goals expected at this age.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise achievement and standards in writing and mathematics at Key Stage 2.
- Use assessment information more accurately to consistently plan work that is suitably challenging.
- Sharpen the school's systems for monitoring in order to strengthen school improvement.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well throughout the school and, by the end of Year 6, standards overall are above average. In 2007, pupils met the suitably challenging targets set for them. There are no ongoing differences in the achievement and standards of different groups of pupils. Further improvements have been made to reading at Key Stage 1, particularly amongst more able pupils. This has resulted from timely intervention to help pupils catch up with their reading, a strong focus on guided reading and a better match of reading materials to individual reading levels. The school recognised that similar improvements were needed in mathematics at Key Stage 2. A focus on weaker areas, such as subtraction and problem solving, along with a greater emphasis on mental mathematics, has helped to raise standards, particularly of more able pupils. An emphasis on speaking and listening, in order to develop ideas and vocabulary, along with further encouragement to write in different subject areas, is part of the school's strategy for improving writing.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy school, feel they are helped to do well and show real interest in their work. Parents are appreciative of this, one spoke of the 'joy to see my child eager to get to school full of confidence'. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school because they understand the school code and show care and respect towards each other. They have a real desire to learn so they work with enthusiasm and try to do their best. Good relationships at every level are a feature of the school. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils are well aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and staying safe. Their social, moral and cultural development is good and spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils understand that what they do affects others. They take pride in the responsibilities they carry out. They especially enjoy helping other pupils and giving ideas to help improve their school through the school council. Pupils' good personal development and the progress they make in basic skills equip them well for the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Most lessons are well organised. Teachers have high expectations and manage their classrooms and pupils well so that good use is made of the time available. They make good use of a wide range of resources and activities to engage pupils effectively and extend their learning. Pupils enjoy the lively introductions and good pace that characterise many lessons. However, in a few lessons, pupils' learning is slowed because they are not given sufficient opportunities to share fully their own thoughts and ideas. Teaching assistants are deployed well and provide good support to those who are learning English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties. Teachers know individual pupils well and the levels at which they are working, so that they place them into appropriate ability groups within classes. However, they do not use this information well enough to accurately and consistently plan suitably challenging activities for these different groups.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is well matched to the needs of pupils. Their personal development is carefully planned and includes the additional contributions of visitors to the school. Pupils in Years 3 to 5 are able to learn French and provision in music and art is very good. Each year pupils gain great pleasure from musical performances and the choir have sung at local events and the Royal Albert Hall. Links are starting to be made between subjects, such as the use of geographical data on rainfall and temperatures in a Year 6 mathematics lesson. This makes learning interesting and purposeful. A good range of additional support for pupils to improve achievement and standards in literacy and numeracy is well planned. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is good and pupils acquire good computer skills to support their learning. An extensive range of extra curricular clubs, as well as many visits from school, including two residential visits, greatly enrich the curriculum and provide both enjoyable and educationally valuable experiences for pupils.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Staff assign a high priority to the care and well being of all pupils. Child protection and all aspects of health and safety are well managed. Pupils feel safe and are confident to seek help when they need it. Their personal development is well monitored and, where problems are identified, good support is put in place to help individuals and groups. Pupils, especially in Years 3 - 6, have individual targets, identified by teachers, to help them focus on improving areas of their personal and academic development. Pupils value this individual approach, but there is inconsistency in its use in a small number of classes. Guidance for pupils with learning difficulties and English as a second language is well organised and based upon accurate identification of their needs, so they make the same progress as other pupils.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good, ensuring that all pupils achieve well both academically and in their personal development. Leaders have brought about good improvements, particularly in pupils' achievements and the standards they reach. In mathematics, for example, a focus on calculation, and investigative work has significantly increased the proportion of pupils achieving the higher level in the latest Year 6 tests. Leaders keep a regular check on lessons and teachers are given development points to help them improve their practice. Teachers are happy to follow the advice they are given, but checks on the impact these changes have on pupils' learning are not sufficiently systematic. The school provides good support for its new, less experienced teachers, placing them alongside experienced members of staff in different year groups. Governors carry out their responsibilities well. They are supportive of the school and are involved in its self-evaluation and improvement planning. Although they frequently ask pertinent questions of the school, their monitoring role of school improvement is not always sharply focused.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	2

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

2 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of The Sherwood School, Mitcham, CR4 1JS

I am writing to let you know what we found when we visited your school. Thank you for taking part in the inspection. We spoke with many of you during our visit and you were always interesting to talk to, polite and helpful. You spoke enthusiastically about enjoying school and all of the things you take part in. The Sherwood School is a good school.

We liked these things the most:

- Children in Reception get a good start to their time in school.
- You work hard and enjoy your lessons.
- The school helps you when you find learning difficult or are new to learning English
- The school makes sure that you are safe and well looked after.
- You are able to go on lots of trips and have many after school clubs to choose from. It is wonderful to see all of the opportunities you have for music and different sports.

We have asked the school to work on the following things now. It knows that children in Years 3 to 6 should do even better in their writing and mathematics and must continue to help them in these subjects. You can help with this by thinking and talking about your work more in lessons, and by sharing ideas with your teacher and each other. Your teachers organise your lessons well, but must check that the work they give you to do is just right for each of you, neither too easy nor too difficult. This will challenge you all to do your very best. The school works hard to make your time there both enjoyable and successful, but it must check more carefully that it always does as well as it possibly can.

We did enjoy visiting your school and watching you learn.

Yours sincerely

Peter Thrussell Lead Inspector