

Sheen Mount Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102897
Local Authority	Richmond Upon Thames
Inspection number	286520
Inspection date	18 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Christopher Gray

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 on roll	
School	406
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs V Williams
Headteacher	Mrs E England
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2002
School address	West Temple Sheen London SW14 7RT
Telephone number	020 8876 8394
Fax number	020 8878 6568

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is larger than most, is over-subscribed and serves a generally advantaged area. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is small and very few are at the early stage of learning English. Pupils with learning difficulties represent a smaller proportion of the school than usually found, though the percentage with a statement of special educational need is average. The school holds the following awards: Gold Artsmark, Active Mark and Healthy School.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school which justly deserves the many accolades written by parents in their response to the questionnaire. Typical of the comments which many wrote are: 'You couldn't wish for a nicer primary school,' and 'We are delighted with Sheen Mount School.'

Pupils reach high standards by Year 6 and their achievement is outstanding throughout the school. This is because the teaching and curriculum are excellent. Teachers plan interesting lessons which draw together the whole range of pupils' skills. Pupils' written work shows the extent of their enjoyment and hard work. Of the Battle of Salamis, one pupil wrote, 'Looking back, I remember thinking that we were going to die, remember seeing the scarlet water spraying against our mighty trireme.' This work is the result of a combination of very good historical and literacy skills.

Children in the Foundation Stage have an outstanding start to their schooling. Teachers' planning is based on a thorough knowledge of each child's development and enables them to make excellent progress. The indoor and outdoor accommodation are lively and well resourced, but are not next to each other, so that children cannot go in and out at will. The school plans to rectify this when funds are available.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding and their behaviour is excellent. The pupils make a big contribution to school improvement and all those spoken to are convinced that they are doing a vital job. 'They decided to get new toilets' said one, an improvement which the pupils are glad of. 'They had the idea of having the ICT (information and communication technology) suite in the hub,' said another. Pupils are considerate in their actions and understand why it is important not to hurt others' feelings.

The school give its pupils outstanding care, guidance and support. Pupils feel safe in school and all those spoken to were adamant that bullying is very rare: 'We stick up for each other' said one pupil. Teachers and teaching assistants use information from assessment very well to ensure that any pupils who have difficulties are given the help they need.

Outstanding leadership and management are key to the school's success, along with the dedication and hard work of all the staff. Excellent use is made of links with other schools, outside bodies and parents. For example, Spanish is taught in Year 4 through physical education, as a result of a strong link with a local secondary school. The Parent-Teachers' Association is highly active and extremely effective in fund-raising. Governors are closely involved in strategic development and hold the school to account effectively, thus making an outstanding contribution to school improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Seek to relocate the accommodation for the Foundation Stage to enable children to pass easily between the inside and outside, in order to increase the opportunities for independence in their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Children begin in Reception with skills that are higher than found nationally at that age, especially in personal development. Literacy and numeracy skills

are not as strong and vary from year to year. The progress that children make is excellent, as shown by a comparison of their writing samples from September and June. During the inspection, many children were compiling legible lists of toys they might buy with the money they had just raised at the summer fair. By the time they enter Year 1, standards are above the borough average, which itself is higher than found in most schools.

Standards by Year 2 are well above average and high by Year 6. Pupils make excellent progress throughout the school and measures of the value added by the school are significantly above average. Standards are well above expectations in ICT and work in art and music is also of good quality. Boys and pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve better than their national counterparts.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Their high degree of enjoyment is obvious in every class. Pupils speak with pleasure of their favourite moments at school, such as the Year 3 'sleepover', when they watched foxes and bats. High levels of competence in literacy, numeracy and ICT are an excellent foundation for pupils' future learning.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is outstanding. Their behaviour is excellent and attendance is above average. Pupils appreciate the importance of trying to keep healthy: 'If you want to live your life to the full and be happy, you don't want to be ill,' said a member of the school council. The council contributes strongly to school life, a fact attested to by many non-members. Pupils also learn to play their part in the wider community through their support of a school in Cameroon or musical performances at the Royal Star and Garter Home, which help strengthen their cultural development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching is outstanding. Many parents wrote to express the same view: 'The school is excellent, the teaching inspired,' one noted. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is successful because of the thorough use of assessment information to help the children progress quickly. Resources are of good quality and stimulate the children to find out for themselves. A common strength throughout the school is the amount of challenge given to all pupils, at their own level. All staff have high expectations, as seen during a Year 6 literacy lesson. Pupils were discussing how school lunches might be made healthier and were asked to draw up an 'action plan' to present to governors. Very mature debate was taking place at every table. Slower learners receive good support from teachers and their assistants. The quality of teachers' marking is good and gives pupils plenty of guidance on how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding because it provides pupils with a wide range of experiences in the classroom, on visits and from visitors. As one parent put it, 'The school gives the children a broad, happy and thoughtful education'. Year 2 pupils spoke with enthusiasm of their visit to the National Gallery to see van Gogh's 'Sunflowers', which led to good quality art work, now

on display in the classroom. Music plays a big part in school life. During the inspection, two groups of Year 6 pupils were rehearsing for the end-of-term production. A group of eleven brass and woodwind players and a similar-sized group of singers produced high quality performances as a result of expert tuition. Special weeks or days are regular features, appreciated by many parents. A planned 'language day' later this term will draw on the German, Spanish, Italian and French that the pupils have been learning in different year groups. A wide range of well attended extra-curricular activities contributes very well to pupils' healthy lifestyles. The Foundation Stage curriculum is very good and meets children's needs very well, though their access to outside learning is limited.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support given to pupils are outstanding. One parent commented, 'The ability of this school to provide a safe, secure, warm, stimulating place to simply be a child cannot be overestimated'. Child protection procedures are thorough. Assessment is detailed and extremely effective. Systems are constantly under review to make them at once easier to use yet more robust, a process which the deputy headteacher is leading very well. The data collected are analysed regularly by senior staff and governors, to make sure that pupils receive the help they need. The success of this is demonstrated by the excellent progress that all groups of pupils make.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding and have enabled the school to move on very well since the last inspection. The headteacher is an excellent leader and a large number of parents wrote in praise of her work and commitment to the pupils. There is a clear sense of direction and purpose among senior leaders and this is well communicated to all staff. Strategic planning is informed by a thorough understanding of where the school needs to go next, as shown by the continuing work to reinforce cross-curricular links, which involves all staff. Self-evaluation is rigorous and extremely effective and governors' challenge is well used, as in the decision to employ a science specialist to raise standards in science, which has proved to be very effective. This shows the outstanding capacity to improve further. The school is well aware of the short-comings in its accommodation, brought about because it now has double the number of pupils than when it was built. The Foundation Stage classrooms are the most in need of up-dating and the school is actively seeking funding. One parent summed up what many wrote to say: 'Excellent and very well run school - very successful academic and pastoral achievements.'

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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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	1
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?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

26 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sheen Mount Primary School, London, SW14 7RT

I very much enjoyed my recent visit to your school. You were all very friendly and polite - one of the things I remember most was being greeted by name by some of the very youngest children. Thank you for making me feel so welcome.

You all work very hard at Sheen Mount and this is the reason for its success. Many of you had spent a very wet Saturday at the summer fair, Year 6 were rehearsing hard for the end-of-term production and, at the end of the day, a large number of bedding plants was delivered for the gardening club to plant. This is typical of the very wide education which the school gives you and which you told me you enjoy. One of your parents wrote to say, 'My son simply looks forward more and more to each year of friendship and learning', and I can see why. Your school is outstanding.

You behave extremely well and are growing into very thoughtful people as you get older. You understand why different opinions are important - as one of you said, 'otherwise, you wouldn't have independence.' You keep safe and healthy and most of you learn to swim by the time you leave. Your teachers do an excellent job and make your lessons very interesting. They look after you well and make sure you are making progress in your work. One person told me, 'There are lots of opportunities to do things you've never done before.'

The headteacher and all her staff do an excellent job in running the school, and your parents agree with me. We all think that parts of the buildings need some modernisation, and I have asked the school to begin with those for the Foundation Stage.

I hope you continue to enjoy your time at Sheen Mount and that those of you who are about to leave will be as happy in your new schools.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Gray
Lead inspector