



Shinfield Infant and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109886
Local Authority Wokingham District Council
Inspection number 288522
Inspection dates 10–11 January 2007
Reporting inspector Bernice Magson

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	School Green
School category	Community		Shinfield
Age range of pupils	3–7		Reading RG2 9EH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0118 988 3389
Number on roll (school)	167	Fax number	0118 988 3389
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Christopher Young
		Headteacher	Mrs Amanda Turner
Date of previous school inspection	26 February 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–7	10–11 January 2007	288522

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Shinfield Infant and Nursery School is situated on the outskirts of Wokingham District and admits pupils from within and outside its designated area. Children are admitted part-time in the nursery and start full-time education in the term in which they are five. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. A very small minority speak English as an additional language. Average numbers of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Shinfield Infant and Nursery School is a good school providing a good quality of education. As one of the oldest schools in Berkshire the headteacher, staff and governors are eager to preserve its rich heritage and, in celebrating its 300th anniversary in 2007, they are keen to maintain the school's ethos of 'Everyone shining in their own field'. The school is integral to its community and its historical resources are shared by many visitors, including local schools. Parents are very supportive of the school. As one parent commented, 'This school is exceptional and children want to go every day'.

Pupils achieve well and reach above average standards in reading, writing and numeracy by the age of seven. Good standards have been maintained over time from below average starting points on entry. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage. Teacher assessment shows that the performance of boys is better than girls by the age of seven. Strategies have been introduced to raise girl's achievement in reading, which proved effective in the 2006 results. In writing and numeracy most pupils have a good understanding of how to improve their work, but not enough knowledge of their progress in reading. The headteacher has recognised that pupils would benefit from clearer guidance.

Pastoral care and support of pupils are excellent. There is a very good emphasis on promoting healthy lifestyles and staying safe. The personal development of pupils is outstanding. They enjoy the warmth of the school's welcome and are happy and confident. Behaviour is outstanding and pupils show excellent attitudes to learning. Willingly they offer their ideas and appreciate that their suggestions are valued. Proudly they describe how they all cheered when their idea was acted on and a castle was erected in the school grounds. Procedures to support pupils with learning difficulties and those speaking English as an additional language are effective.

Teaching and learning are good overall and outstanding in some lessons. Very good use of information and communication technology makes learning interactive and exciting. Most lessons have good pace. The school provides a good curriculum with many activities to enrich learning experiences. However, across the curriculum pupils have too few opportunities to practise their skills in reading, writing and number. In the Foundation Stage recently appointed staff are still developing the curriculum for exploratory play, in and outdoors.

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. She has undertaken an intensive scrutiny of the school's performance and provides a clear direction for improvement. Already she has developed a strong partnership with parents, staff and governors. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the curriculum and resources in the Foundation Stage.

- Measure progress in reading more precisely so that pupils have a better understanding about how to improve.
- Strengthen the use of reading, writing and numeracy across all subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well overall. Many pupils start school with below average skills in their communication and language, mathematical and personal development. Progress in the Foundation Stage is sound and standards are just below expected levels by the end of the reception year. In Years 1 and 2 rates of progress are more rapid, especially for boys. The school has purchased resources to interest girls better in their learning, although it is too early to judge their effectiveness. Nevertheless, by the age of seven, most pupils are attaining standards above expected levels in reading, writing and number. Additional strategies have been introduced recently to improve the achievement of more able pupils in numeracy. These pupils are now taught in smaller groups where teaching and learning are targeted more directly towards their needs. Pupils have useful targets in number and writing, but not yet in reading. These targets help pupils understand how to improve their work. Across the school the rates of progress of a minority of pupils is restricted because of high levels of mobility and, for a small minority, progress is affected by poor attendance.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils are extremely happy, confident learners and have very good relationships with others. They enjoy lessons and have very positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils feel safe and secure. Bullying is rare. Incidents are dealt with promptly and fairly. Attendance is satisfactory overall, although the poor attendance of a minority affects their learning.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. In assemblies they show excellent citizenship responsibilities. Pupils are involved in sharing their school's 300th birthday party with the community. Pupils are very well informed and aware of their own and others' cultures. Positive contributions from the school council are leading to school improvement. Equipment has been purchased for lunchtime play activities.

Pupils understand how to keep healthy and safe. A highlight is the daily exercise routine in which the school participates enthusiastically. Pupils are rightly proud of their school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good overall with some excellent features. All teachers have very good relationships with pupils. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning; they concentrate very well and work confidently. Teachers plan well. Most lessons have a good variety of learning activities and have a good pace. In better lessons there is good questioning of pupils based on a thorough understanding of pupils' needs. Information and communication technology is used very well and is integral to lessons, offering learning experiences through a different medium. For example, younger pupils can be seen exploring their environment with metal detectors and older pupils are challenged to place three digit numbers in order on a screen. Teaching assistants give valuable support especially to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. In the nursery and reception the teachers work hard to make learning exciting, but with inadequate resources it is difficult to offer a full range of experiences. For example, there are insufficient books to ensure that pupils become enthralled with reading. Overall in the Foundation Stage there is a satisfactory balance between adult lead and independent learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has a good curriculum. The coverage of subjects is effective and balance is achieved. However, apart from information and communication technology, links across subjects are not strongly established. Activities out of school enrich the curriculum. Day visits are linked carefully to curriculum and other activities. Visitors into school such as guide dogs for the blind enhance pupils' empathy with those less fortunate. Understanding of economic well-being is effectively developed through the work of the school council where their decision making identifies priorities for curriculum actions. Computer facilities and whiteboards enhance pupils' learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and those speaking English as an additional language have carefully constructed support programmes. Personal, social and physical education sessions ensure that pupils understand how to stay healthy. The Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory. Along with resources it is under review, as the school has recognised it has limitations.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good overall. Pastoral care and support of pupils is excellent. Parents and carers have considerable confidence in the care provided for their children. All arrangements for ensuring health and safety, risk assessment and child protection are fully in place. Supervision of pupils at break and lunch times is very well controlled ensuring the outstanding behaviour of pupils.

The school has a good understanding of pupils' achievements and is effective in identifying any weaknesses in learning. Pupils have targets for improvement which are proving effective in writing and number. However similar weaknesses exist in reading which the school has yet to address, although plans are in place. Support is good for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and there are very good links with outside agencies so that specialist support is provided when necessary. Pupils with individual education plans are carefully monitored to ensure they make sufficient progress. The small minority of pupils who speak English as an additional language is equally well supported.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the headteacher are excellent. Within a year of appointment she has provided the school with a very clear sense of direction and established very good systems to make learning more appropriate for pupils. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and business manager and, under their direction, staff and governors are empowered to review the school's provision and introduce changes in order to raise standards. For example, the school has identified that the performance of boys is greater than girls in writing by Year 2 and recently introduced strategies are now under review. As a result of very good leadership and management in information and communication technology, pupils have many opportunities to extend their skills in learning across the curriculum. The special needs coordinator is effective in gaining specialist support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those speaking English as an additional language and provision is good. Following the recent appointment of a senior manager in the Foundation Stage, systems are being introduced to improve provision, although these are still at an early stage of development. The school has a good capacity to improve.

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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
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?	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

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	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, 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

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed finding out about all the interesting things you are doing, especially plans for your 300th birthday celebration. We hope that the 'Balloon Launch' went well. Inspectors think that you have a good school.

What we really liked about your school is:

- you enjoy school and behave very well at all times
- you do good work in lessons and achieve good standards in reading, writing and number
- you make very good use of whiteboards, computers and other equipment to help you learn
- adults take very good care of you and help you to learn
- parents, carers and other visitors enjoy coming to your school and joining in with all your fun activities.

To make your school even better we have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to make sure that you know how to improve your work and help you practise reading, writing and number in other subjects. Also we think that your teachers could make activities more challenging in the Foundation Stage.

Best wishes for your school's 300th celebrations.

Yours truly,

Bernice Magson

Lead inspector