



# Sherington Church of England School

Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 110407  
**Local Authority** Milton Keynes  
**Inspection number** 288662  
**Inspection date** 28 February 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Jeffrey White

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>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Sherington
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Newport Pagnell
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-7		MK16 9NF
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01908 610470
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	26	<b>Fax number</b>	01908 610470
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Nigel Anderson
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Arlene Bourne
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 March 2001		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This is a very small school. The number of pupils decreased in September 2006 because of a change in the age of transfer. Consequently the school now has three rather than four year groups. No pupils take free school meals. Attainment on entry to the school is usually average but often fluctuates because of the very small numbers in each cohort. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, although small, has risen in the last two years.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school that has improved well since its last inspection. The headteacher, governors and staff have managed the change in the school's character effectively to ensure that it runs smoothly.

A strong Christian ethos permeates the life of the school and underpins the promotion of pupils' personal development and well-being, which are outstanding. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and their attitudes to learning are highly positive. Attendance is very good and pupils clearly enjoy their work. Pupils are very well aware of how to stay healthy. For example, they grow vegetables in the school's garden and then thoroughly enjoy cooking and eating them. Pupils talk knowingly about how safe they feel and know who to turn to if they need help. They work together harmoniously and are learning basic skills well in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils are very well involved in the local community. As one parent commented, 'The school is at the heart of the life of the village'.

Excellent personal development ensures that pupils are well prepared for their learning. The Foundation Stage provides a good start to the children's education and they make good progress. The quality of teaching and learning is good in each class and as a result pupils' achievement and progress are also good. Standards are above average and the very small number of pupils who took the tests in 2006 did very well to exceed their targets. The headteacher and staff have worked successfully to raise standards in writing. They are aware that more needs to be done to improve pupils' spelling and handwriting but do not always correct pupils' mistakes in these aspects of English. Pupils are well aware of their progress in reading, writing and mathematics but less so in science. Pupils are well cared for and are given good guidance to help their personal and academic development.

The headteacher, staff and governors are committed to improving the school and its capacity to improve is good. Parents are very happy with their children's education and are strongly supportive. Leadership of pupils' personal development is outstanding. Good monitoring of standards and progress is followed by effective action to improve standards and progress. Governors are increasingly more involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's work and support the headteacher well. Self-evaluation is good overall but targets in the improvement plan are not always precise enough.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Mark pupils' work more thoroughly to help them improve their handwriting and spelling.
- Introduce targets in science to help pupils become more aware of their progress.
- Sharpen up targets in the school improvement plan.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievement is good and consequently standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Good progress in the Foundation Stage ensures that the children are well prepared to start the National Curriculum when they enter Year 1. The youngest children enjoy their learning and the very effective induction procedures means that they settle happily into the life of the school. Throughout the school the excellent behaviour and attitudes result in a very positive climate for learning that helps pupils to continue to make good progress, including those with learning difficulties. Pupils participate well in small groups and in whole class discussions. They talk well about their work. Standards in science are above average by the end of Year 2 but progress is more inconsistent than in English and mathematics.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being, including their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, contribute very strongly to their standards and achievement. The school has no hall but every effort is made to ensure pupils get plenty of exercise. They thoroughly enjoy the fruit provided and are highly enthusiastic about tending their vegetable plot. Pupils feel that they have excellent opportunities to give their opinions and the headteacher and staff value their views. For example, their contributions have led to the provision of better play equipment. Pupils work exceedingly well in a safe environment. They are very confident workers who enjoy working together; these attributes combined with their good grasp of basic skills prepare them excellently for the next stage of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The good teaching and learning ensure that pupils achieve well and make good progress. Children in the Foundation Stage are helped to work alone and with each other, for example, when joining together to play percussion instruments. Throughout the school pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and participate in activities extremely well. They respond particularly well to the teachers' calm approach and use of humour. Some aspects of the teaching are excellent, for instance, in a very well managed discussion of a story book the teacher had high expectations of pupils' use of vocabulary. Consequently they improved their use of language. Good teaching has helped pupils' writing to improve, especially in the use of grammar and the development of ideas. However, pupils do not always take enough care with their handwriting and spelling. Teachers make good use of assessment to meet the range of pupils' needs. The marking of pupils' work is often helpful but not always rigorous enough.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good because it meets the range of pupils' needs well and is enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities. The headteacher and senior teacher have worked together well to revise the curriculum to cater for two key stages rather than the previous three. These revisions are appropriate at this stage and are contributing to continuity in the pupils' learning. Inevitably, the revised curriculum will need more time before it becomes fully established. Pupils especially enjoy the good links between subjects such as art and design, literacy, ICT and history. The school's attempts to improve creativity are meeting with some success and there is some good work in art and design and design and technology. The pupils value visits and visitors to the school. 'Themed' weeks, such as an 'African week', help to broaden pupils' knowledge of cultures different from their own and contribute well to their personal development.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Good care, guidance and support enable pupils to work in safety. Their pastoral development is given very strong priority so that they know they are valued and looked after. Thorough induction procedures for the youngest pupils, including home visits and close liaison with the pre-school group, ensure a smooth transition into the Foundation Stage. Links with external agencies are very productive. Health and safety procedures and risk assessments are rigorous. In general, pupils are given good academic guidance. Effective use is made of targets in literacy and numeracy and consequently pupils are aware of their progress in reading and to a lesser extent in writing. They are less aware of their progress in science because they do not have targets.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good and have improved since the last inspection. In such a small school the headteacher inevitably has a considerable teaching commitment in addition to her leadership responsibilities. She manages these challenges well. The school works extremely well in partnership with others to foster pupils' well being. Leadership of pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding. The headteacher, staff and governors are working well together to continue to move the school forward and their successes so far give a clear indication of good capacity for improvement.

Pupils' performance is monitored well and followed by effective action to improve standards and achievement, for instance, in features of pupils' writing. Raising standards in spelling and handwriting now needs more attention. Governors meet their responsibilities effectively and are well aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are refining their monitoring procedures to develop more rigorous

evaluation of the school's work. The school improvement plan is a useful tool to guide the school's direction but its targets are not always as sharp as they should be.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
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

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

## 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 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 your help on my visit to your school. I very much enjoyed talking to you and hearing what you like about your school. Your behaviour is excellent and your attitudes to your learning are outstanding. Your school is good and your headteacher and staff look after you very well and help you to make good progress in your work. They and the governors want you to do well. You told me how very happy and safe you are and you know who to talk to if you have a problem. You are also learning how to be healthy and I was pleased to see some of you enjoying healthy food.

You have improved some of your writing with the help of your teachers. I think your teachers could now help you to improve your spelling and handwriting even more. You enjoy having targets for literacy and numeracy to help your progress and you could now have targets in science to help you further. Your headteacher, staff and governors will now continue to work together to help you make these improvements. I have asked your headteacher, teachers and governors to sharpen up the targets in the school improvement plan.

With best wishes

Jeff White,

Lead inspector.