

Great and Little Shelford CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110831
Local Authority	CAMBRIDGESHIRE
Inspection number	288790
Inspection dates	17–18 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Alison Pangbourne

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Alistair MacGregor
Headteacher	Mrs Alison Evans
Date of previous school inspection	14 October 2002
School address	Church Street Great Shelford Cambridgeshire CB2 5EL
Telephone number	01223 843107
Fax number	01223 841441

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school is of average size. It is over subscribed. Most pupils come from White British families with a few from minority ethnic backgrounds. Almost none are at an early stage of learning to speak English. When children start school their attainment is above expectations, although this is not the case for all children. The proportion eligible to free school meals is well below average and the number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. There is an independently run pre-school and after-school club facility on the site. The school is emerging from a period of high staff turnover, mainly due to a secondment opportunity, long-term sickness and the rearrangement of job-share appointments.

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. Parents are positive about it. One wrote, 'The atmosphere is very conducive to learning and the teaching is of a good standard.' The pupils agree, saying, 'Everybody is friendly, the teachers listen to you and make learning fun.'

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Their behaviour is excellent and they are polite and friendly to visitors. They confidently take on a wide range of responsibilities because they are given such good care and support. The outstanding emphasis on healthy lifestyles and keeping safe means that pupils know what makes a healthy meal and how to keep fit. They make an excellent contribution to the community, acting as 'buddies' and reading partners to younger pupils and taking part in a wide range of charity events. Attendance is good and pupils very much enjoy coming to school.

The curriculum is good and has some significant strengths. Provision for music is outstanding and the singing of the choir is exceptional. Creative weeks encourage pupils to develop their skills in a wide range of subjects. Artwork is of high quality. A wide range of visits, visitors and out of school activities further enrich learning. Provision is good for pupils with learning difficulties and for those who speak English as an additional language.

All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve well. Children get off to a flying start in the Reception class and most exceed the standards expected at the beginning of Year 1. Pupils make good progress through the school. In recent years standards have been consistently above average by the end of Year 2, with the exception of 2005, where standards were broadly average. In that year there was an unusually high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. By the end of Year 6, standards have been consistently well above average. In 2006, standards were exceptionally high in Year 6, particularly in mathematics.

Achievement is good due to the high standard of teaching and learning. In some classes, teaching is particularly good. Exciting teaching and learning methods motivate pupils strongly. Relationships between all staff and pupils are good. Expectations of pupils are high. Tasks are well matched to the needs of the pupils and this has a positive impact on their progress. The school sets class targets for pupils but these are often too broad. Pupils do not always have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve because they are not sufficiently involved in setting their own targets. They are however, able to evaluate their progress in individual lessons against the success criteria that are shared with them.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides vision, direction and good leadership. The school is emerging from a period of high staff turnover and the leadership team is now settled and working effectively to improve achievement. Subject leaders fulfil their roles well. They monitor strengths and weaknesses in their subjects thoroughly. The chair of governors provides positive leadership and is committed to enabling the governors to work even more closely with the leadership team to raise achievement. They have an accurate view about how well the school is doing, but the school improvement plan covers many areas and is not sharply focused enough. The senior leadership team and governors are currently working to sharpen the school improvement plan to clarify links between subject leaders' action plans, management objectives and self-evaluation priorities. Value for money is good. The improvements since the previous inspection show that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the target setting process for pupils so that targets are precise and pupils have a good understanding of what they have to do to improve.
- Continue to revise the school improvement plan to provide clearer direction and a sharper focus on the top priorities for development.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in the Reception class because the quality of teaching is high and the imaginative curriculum encourages them to learn and to be independent. Achievement is good and the majority exceed the standards expected by the beginning of Year 1.

All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress through the school. They meet the challenging targets set for them. Achievement is good. This is reflected in the Year 2 assessments for 2006, where standards were above average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. In the national tests for pupils in Year 6, standards were exceptionally high, particularly in mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels is well above average at both Year 2 and Year 6. Similar standards were seen in lessons during the inspection.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding. It is a key strength of the school. Pupils are self-assured and develop into confident learners. They are keen to learn and eager to please because they are highly motivated. They are encouraged to reflect on how they develop skills, knowledge and understanding and think about how they might become more effective learners. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to be healthy and stay safe, for instance when choosing healthy meals at lunchtime and enjoy taking part in a variety of sporting activities. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. All staff expect a great deal of pupils and constantly encourage them to develop independence and think for themselves. This helps to foster high levels of maturity and responsibility. The strong links with the church effectively support pupils' spiritual development. Cultural development is supported well as pupils learn about Indian dance, Chinese New Year celebrations and African drumming. Pupils are polite and sensitive to the needs of others. They wholeheartedly support a range of charities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

In the best lessons, very exciting and imaginative activities inspire the pupils to learn. Very high expectations and thought provoking challenges mean that pupils have the confidence to express their ideas and teachers' responses contribute very positively to their learning. Generally, lessons proceed at a good pace and hold pupils' attention. Occasionally, introductions are overlong and impinge on the time for completing tasks. Tasks are set to meet the different needs of pupils and their level of attainment. Teaching assistants are well managed in all classes and contribute to the achievement of all pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties. Learning

intentions are regularly shared with the pupils so they have a clear understanding of what they are to learn. Pupils have targets in English and mathematics. However, these targets are too broad and imprecise and pupils are not fully familiar with them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has some outstanding features. There is a great deal going on. Music is outstanding. Pupils' singing is of a high standard and the choir is superb. Pupils play a wide range of musical instruments and the orchestra, which includes strings, woodwind and brass, plays together each week. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn French and are making good progress. Good links with the local village college, are particularly effective in improving learning in technology and French. Pupils enjoy special learning events, such as 'Creative Maths Week' that give an extra impetus to learning. Economic awareness is promoted well by activities such as visits to the shops by pupils in Year 1 to buy their own fruit. Pupils learn a good range of skills in information and communication technology. They are prepared well for transfer to secondary school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care and support are especially strong features of the school and underpin learning particularly well. Great emphasis is placed on ensuring the safety of pupils. Child protection procedures are in place and are understood by all staff. Pupils say they feel secure in the school. They receive clear guidance about how to stay safe and lead healthy lifestyles. They feel well supported by all school staff and would have no hesitation about sharing problems or concerns with their teaching teams and headteacher. General guidance is good but academic guidance, to show pupils exactly what they need to do to reach the next stages in their learning, is an aspect that the school has identified as an area for development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and senior leadership team show a strong commitment to the development of the whole child. This is seen in the emphasis on creativity and in providing a wide range of experiences to give pupils a broad education. Subject leaders fulfil their roles well. They have a good understanding of strengths and areas for development in their subjects. The governors are committed. The chair is guiding them effectively towards a closer involvement with the leadership team. The headteacher and governors have good systems for checking how well they are doing and what needs to be done next. However, the school improvement plan covers many areas and these are not clearly prioritised on raising achievement. Most parents are very pleased with the education provided for their children but some have unrealistic expectations about what the school is able to provide.

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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
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	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?	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.

Annex A

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

21 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Great and Little Shelford C of E Primary School, Great Shelford, Cambridgeshire, CB2 5EL

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn. We would like to tell you what we found out.

You told us that you enjoy school and that the grown-ups look after you well and help you learn. We agree with you. We were impressed by your excellent behaviour and the way you all get on so well together. We enjoyed hearing you sing in the church - it sounded beautiful! You know how to be healthy by eating the right foods and having lots of exercise. We thought that you have lots of interesting things to do in lessons and that you work very well independently. Your families know that you go to a good school.

We have asked Mrs Evans and the teachers to help you do even better by helping you to understand your targets. You can help by thinking for yourself about what you need to improve and by thinking about your targets when you do your work. We have also asked the school leaders to choose the most important things that will improve your school even more when they are planning for the future.

We hope you carry on enjoying your time at Great and Little Shelford Primary School and do well in your next school.

Best wishes

Alison Pangbourne

Lead inspector