



Shepeau Stow Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120422
Local Authority LINCOLNSHIRE
Inspection number 291726
Inspection dates 9–10 October 2006
Reporting inspector Michael Best

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Dowdsdale Bank
School category	Community		Shepeau Stow, Shepeau Stow
Age range of pupils	4–11		Spalding, Lincolnshire PE12 0TX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01406330395
Number on roll (school)	93	Fax number	01406330395
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Rowan Yorath
		Headteacher	Mr David O'Brien
Date of previous school inspection	27 March 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4–11	9–10 October 2006	291726

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than the average primary school. Pupils come from the local area, and the surrounding towns and villages. The proportion of pupils joining the school other than at the usual starting age is above average. The attainment of children entering the Foundation Stage is below average. Although the proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language is below the national average, it is increasing in the school. The proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those with statements of special educational needs, are above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a happy and caring school where pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and disabilities, successfully develop into confident and rounded individuals, and act as responsible and considerate members of the community. Parents express their confidence in the school. They find the staff approachable and they appreciate greatly the help and support their children receive. They are particularly pleased that their children enjoy school so much. Pupils' personal development is good. Their behaviour, both in lessons and around the school, is excellent. Pupils are keen to learn, and have a good understanding of how to keep safe. The school promotes healthy lifestyles well and pupils are actively involved in a wide range of physical activities. Pupils' key skills are satisfactory as is their preparation for the next stage of their education and the world of work. Standards in the Foundation Stage are broadly average. Children make good progress from a below average starting point in the Reception year (the Foundation Stage). Standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly average, with results strongest in mathematics and weakest in writing. Standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly average. Standards in the statutory tests in English and science have mostly held steady over time but in mathematics they have declined in each of the last two years. Achievement is only satisfactory because some pupils, particularly the more able, make uneven progress as they move through the school. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Classes are managed well and working relationships between adults and pupils are strong. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers and provide much valuable support for pupils, particularly those with more acute learning difficulties. Other pupils, notably the more able, are not always sufficiently challenged and this slows their progress. The curriculum provides a good range of opportunities which promotes all pupils' academic and personal development. The care and support of pupils are strengths but the guidance they receive is only satisfactory. Assessment procedures are appropriate and manageable but teachers do not make the best use of assessment information to challenge their pupils consistently. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher successfully articulates a clear vision for the school's development. The quality of the school's self-evaluation is adequate but it lacks the necessary rigour to focus and inform forward planning. The governing body is supportive of the school and satisfactorily meets its statutory requirements. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. It provides satisfactory value for money and has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics at the end of Year 6 by improving pupils' use of their mathematical skills and knowledge as they move through the school.
- Improve teachers' use of assessment information to increase pupils' rate of progress when they are working independently, especially the more able.
- Strengthen the rigour of the school's evaluation of the information it collects about its work in order to prioritise and inform its plans for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Good progress in their personal and social skills, and in their language development, enables pupils in the Reception year to make an effective start to their education. Some pupils are still working towards the goals expected for children of this age when they move to Year 1, particularly in their early writing skills. By the end of Year 2, pupils are starting to move ahead in reading, but many still find writing challenging. The recent introduction of a new approach to teaching letter sounds is helping to raise standards in literacy. Achievement in reading and writing in Key Stage 2 is better in English and science than in mathematics. The school has rightly identified shortcomings in pupils' use of their mathematical skills and knowledge as contributing to the lower test results at the end of Year 6. Pupils have individual targets for improvement and most know what they need to do to achieve them. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress. Pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. The progress made by more able pupils is not consistent.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Foundation Stage children quickly settle into the school routines because of the good focus on their personal, social and emotional development. They get on very well with each other and with adults. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities feel fully involved in the school and its community. This is because all pupils value and respect each other's views and opinions in lessons, and welcome each individual's contribution and involvement in their games and activities at break times. Pupils say emphatically that bullying is not an issue in the school. Visits and visitors help pupils to develop a broader understanding of the wider world. Attendance is broadly average. The school's arrangements for ensuring regular attendance and punctuality are effective. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of a balanced diet and are well aware of the dangers of drug, alcohol and substance abuse. Pupils express their ideas for improving the school with confidence and maturity. For example, they say, 'We need more copies of Lord of the Rings in the school library because you really need to get into it'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lesson introductions, involving whole class teaching are generally effective with teachers giving explanations and using questions well to check pupils' understanding. However, in the middle section of lessons where

pupils are working independently the pace of learning often slows because teachers do not match the work to pupils' needs sharply enough. There is not always enough challenge for the more able, and some average pupils are not sure about the next steps in their learning. Teachers' interventions, to explain and focus pupils' learning, reduce the time available for pupils to complete their work. As a result, whole class sessions at the end of lessons are not always effective enough in focusing pupils' thinking on what they have learnt and preparing them for the next lesson.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school offers a good range of activities to help pupils to learn. Planning reflects national guidelines and includes a comprehensive programme for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good. All pupils have full access to all that the school offers. Lessons satisfactorily promote the application of skills learned in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. The school offers its pupils a very wide range of opportunities in sport and music. Visiting sports coaches and instructors run after-school sports clubs and music teachers give tuition on a range of instruments. In the weekly timetabled orchestra practice, all pupils in Years 2 to 6 make music, whatever their individual standard. As well as enjoying learning these lifelong skills, all pupils are successfully developing their confidence, self-esteem and the skills to work in teams.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The high level of care and support for pupils, particularly for those with learning difficulties and disabilities, successfully nurtures their personal development and well-being. Good procedures for child protection are in place and risk assessments are effective. The school has good links with outside agencies and these partnerships are of significant benefit to pupils. There are close links with partner schools, particularly through the local primary school network, and appropriate transition arrangements with local secondary schools. Systems for monitoring pupils' progress are purposeful but teachers' use of this information to improve standards is only satisfactory because there is insufficient analysis of data to fine tune teaching and learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The governors, headteacher and staff successfully promote the school's inclusive and supportive ethos. The staff team works well together, sharing good expertise in supporting pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Daily routines are well established and the school runs smoothly. The governing body is supportive of the school. Its members have a good understanding

of what the school provides for its pupils. Subject leaders for English, mathematics and science are newly established in their roles. The main thrust of the school's monitoring of standards, teaching and learning is through the headteacher's formal lesson observations and discussions within staff meetings. Although this process provides much valuable information, it is not rigorously analysed and evaluated. As a result, priorities in the school's plans for improvement do not always focus sufficiently on what staff need to do to raise standards promptly, and the governing body does not have all the information it needs to hold the school to account.

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?	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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 behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

11 October 2006 Dear Pupils Shepeau Stow Primary School, Dowsdale Bank, Shepeau Stow, Spalding, Lincolnshire. PE12 0TX Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I visited your school earlier this week. Congratulations on your excellent behaviour, both in lessons and around the school. You told me you get on well with, and help, each other, and I saw this for myself both in lessons and at break times. I am pleased you enjoy the wide variety of musical and sporting activities available, and delighted that everyone is able to take part if they want to. The staff take good care of you and provide a great deal of help, particularly for those of you who don't find learning easy. They are working hard to help you grow up into interesting, healthy and responsible adults. I really enjoyed listening to the orchestra rehearsal on Monday and seeing how well you worked as a team. At the start of lessons, your teachers carefully explain what you are to learn. They ask some good questions and make you think about what they tell you. I am impressed with how well you settle down to work with each other or on your own, but sometimes the work your teachers give you in the middle part of the lesson is either too easy or too hard. They are not always sure of what you need to do to make the best use of what you already know. As a result, some of you are not doing as well as you should, particularly in mathematics. To help you all do better, I am asking your teachers to keep a closer check on how well they are teaching and you are learning, and to use this information to help them make plans for improvement. In our discussions, you showed me that you know your school well. Please help Mr O'Brien, the governors and the staff to make these changes, and do continue to work hard and enjoy yourselves at school. Yours truly Mike Best Lead inspector