

Shenington Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123273
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	292631
Inspection date	1 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Daniel Towl HMI

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	84
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lady Allison Pollard
Headteacher	Mrs Frances Brown
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2002
School address	Stocking Lane Shenington Banbury OX15 6NF
Telephone number	01295 670273
Fax number	01295 678726

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The school's overall effectiveness was evaluated, focusing particularly on the following issues: pupils' progress, especially in writing, and the way in which the school checks pupils' progress and sets targets. Also looked at were aspects of students' personal development and well-being and aspects of the curriculum and pupils' care, guidance and support. Evidence was gathered from visits to lessons, discussions with pupils and staff, the analysis of parents' views and assessment data, as well as other written evidence. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a small school serving the villages Shenington and Alkerton, the surrounding districts and areas further afield. It is a socially advantaged area. A very small proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Almost all pupils have a white British background.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Shenington is a good school where standards achieved by pupils are above average. Pupils achieve well from the time they enter the school to the time they leave. Standards in English and mathematics have had an upward trend for the last three years. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress and children in the Foundation Stage get off to a flying start with their learning.

The school had identified that it needed to improve pupils' skills in writing. This has resulted in changes to teaching and learning in English, which is now consistently good throughout the school. Pupils' achievements in writing are carefully analysed and appropriate targets are set for improvement. The older pupils are very clear about what they need to do to improve their writing. The school has successfully improved its assessment procedures and the use of assessment by pupils themselves and clear success criteria given by teachers for each piece of substantial work are proving effective in raising standards. Pupils welcome the comments that teachers put in their books and find them helpful. Older pupils feel very well prepared for their next steps in education and for their forthcoming national tests. Pupils' good achievements in basic skills and their good personal development, by the time they leave the school, fully support their chances of future economic well-being.

Attendance is good and pupils say they enjoy school very much and like their lessons. Pupils identified a wide range of subjects that they liked. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. There have been some instances of bullying in the past and a survey showed that some pupils had been unhappy on the playground. The pupils now say that poor behaviour and bullying are rare and they know what to do if they are concerned, believing that it is well dealt with by the staff. Pupils develop good attitudes towards healthy living. A range of popular activities including physical education and sport, cooking and a gardening club, enhances pupils' knowledge of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. They understand the importance of healthy snacks. Pupils' knowledge of a wider and multiethnic community are successfully broadened by specific aspects of the curriculum especially geography and personal and social education. Other cultures are studied and issues about relationships and feelings are discussed. Older pupils, for example, are currently studying a text dealing with racism and are able to talk about its impact on their own understanding of people's behaviour about such issues.

The quality of lessons is mostly good resulting in pupils making good progress. Teachers are fully aware of the range of abilities in their classes and plan accordingly to meet their needs. There are some occasions when the use of commercial materials does not accurately meet the needs of all pupils, especially in mathematics, and this leads to less effective learning. The curriculum is broad and teachers do a good job in linking different subjects together, especially to develop and encourage writing for different purposes. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good, and effective links are made with parents and outside agencies to help these pupils make good progress. The school has extended its range of activities for gifted and talented pupils by working in partnership with other local schools to provide special curriculum events. Since the last inspection, the school has significantly increased the use of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning. It now features as part every pupil's experience each week, though the school has identified that it needs to continue to increase the range of software and hardware available in order to further enhance learning.

The management and leadership of the school are good. Self-analysis is accurate and there has been a clear focus on raising standards demonstrated by rising test results. Subject leaders play an important role in raising standards, exemplified in improvements in teaching and learning in literacy. The procedures to check the progress of pupils have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now good. The targets set for pupils are suitably challenging, but there is still room to be even more aspirational. The school is continuing to develop specific curriculum targets in English and mathematics to overcome areas where learning is slower. While the large majority of parents are supportive of the school, a small minority expressed dissatisfaction with the way the school is managed. Both the leaders and governors are aware of this.

Procedures to safeguard pupils meet all requirements. Good progress has been made since the last inspection to improve the quality of education and there is a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is well managed, teaching is good and children make good progress in a caring and safe environment. Assessment of children's progress is thorough. Staff have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in children's learning. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are identified early and in these cases very good links are made with parents. Children are taught with some of the younger Year 1 pupils and curriculum planning takes good account of this. There is an appropriate balance between teacher and pupil initiated activity but the current accommodation does not fully support a more creative learning environment and opportunity for spontaneous outdoor play. This will soon be rectified with an imminent building project to enlarge the premises.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all resources used in lessons are well matched to the needs of pupils, especially in mathematics.
- Ensure that even more parents feel well informed and confident in the management of the school.
- Improve the opportunities for Foundation Stage children to have more spontaneous indoor and outdoor creative activities.

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

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	2

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	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

15 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shenington Church of England Primary School, Banbury, OX15 6NF

Thank you very much for your help when I inspected your school. I enjoyed talking to you and finding out about how well you are doing. Shenington is providing you with a good education. You are making good progress with your learning from the moment you start school. You told me that you enjoy coming to school and like your lessons. I am pleased to see that you are developing your writing skills well, something that I know the headteacher and teachers have been working hard to improve. You learn about a wide range of subjects and have a lot of clubs. You also told me that you like physical education. That is good because it will help you to keep healthy. Keep it up.

I have asked the headteacher to make sure that the tasks from your textbooks in some mathematics lessons are used better to help you to learn well. The youngest children need more opportunities to play and have activities that are more creative and spontaneous but the new building, about to start, will help that. I have also asked the headteacher and governors to make sure that all your parents are aware of how and why certain decisions are taken.

I hope your school continues to do well.

Yours sincerely

Daniel Towl

Her Majesty's Inspector