

Shalford Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124992
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	293160
Inspection dates	5–6 July 2007
Reporting inspector	George Rayner

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	86
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs S Singleton
Headteacher	Mrs C Herlihy
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2001
School address	Station Row Shalford Guildford GU4 8BY
Telephone number	01483 562143
Fax number	01483 562143

Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This school is much smaller than most. It serves a village on the outskirts of Guildford. Most pupils come from relatively advantaged homes. A below average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and none are currently at an early stage of learning to speak English.

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 with outstanding features. Parents agree. They say that their children make good progress and are very happy here. One voiced the opinion, shared by many in saying, 'Our son runs to school each day, which is testament to how happy he is to be there'.

All at the school are highly committed to ensuring that pupils learn well in a secure and happy community. The school makes full use of its small size to ensure that it is a very happy place with a family atmosphere. Its commitment to the pupils is shown by outstanding care, guidance and support. This results in excellent personal development and well-being. Pupils say emphatically that they enjoy school. They show this by their very good attendance, excellent behaviour and great enthusiasm for joining in with all that the school has to offer.

Children enter the Foundation Stage with standards generally matching those expected for their age. Good teaching and learning, supported by a good curriculum, lead to good achievement, so that standards are above average by the end of Year 2. Provision in the Foundation Stage is well geared to the way in which young children learn by playing and exploring. As a result, children's good progress leads to them exceeding expectations when they enter Year 1 and having a strong platform for their future learning. Overall progress is good in Years 1 and 2. The pupils make excellent progress in reading because the teaching is highly effective in helping them to develop their skills. As a result, standards in reading are high. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 in mathematics. This is because teaching is less effective in moving pupils' mathematics skills further forward. Consequently, not all are confidently or proficiently able to use their skills to solve problems.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides exemplary leadership. She gives staff a very clear direction, while encouraging them to work together creatively to share responsibility for moving the school forward. In most respects, the school's self evaluation is giving it an accurate view of the areas in which it needs to improve. This has ensured that the school has improved well since the last inspection and has a good capacity for further improvement. The outcomes of monitoring activities are not consistently being used well enough to identify exactly where improvement is needed. This is frustrating the school's ambition of being outstanding in all areas. For example, there has not been a sharp enough focus on raising standards in mathematics to match those in reading and writing.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve mathematics teaching so that it helps all pupils to become competent and proficient in using their skills to solve problems.
- Ensure that the outcomes of self evaluation are consistently used to provide a sharp focus for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and reach above average standards by the end of Year 2. Children make very good progress in the Foundation Stage, so that they enter Year 1 with above average standards. Their progress in personal and social skills is outstanding. Children leave the Reception class with a very good understanding of how to learn well, either working cooperatively with others, or independently finding things out for themselves. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' best

progress is in reading, where it is outstanding. As a result they reach high standards. Pupils know who their favourite writers are and can speak thoughtfully about what they have read. Pupils show their well above average writing standards when they write imaginatively in a variety of styles. Pupils do not build as effectively on their achievements in mathematics from the end of the Foundation Stage. Consequently, although most develop above average skills by the end of Year 2, some do not and lack the confidence to tackle mathematical problems. Because their needs are carefully identified and efficiently provided for, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make as good progress as their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They have a very clear idea of right and wrong and know that they are lucky to learn in a close-knit and happy community. They help and often compliment each other, as for example when an older boy told a Reception class girl that she is a very good reader. The last inspection identified a weakness in pupils' understanding of other cultures. The school has significantly improved the help it gives to pupils so that this aspect of their development is now very good. Pupils know why it is important to eat and drink healthily. One said about her empty plate at school lunch, 'It's easy to eat all of my greens anyway because the meals are yummy'. Pupils live very active lives. They love the daily morning movement sessions and say that these really get their day off to a flying start. Pupils have many ways to contribute to school life and they do so enthusiastically. They know why their work as friendship monitors is important. Pupils report that the school council has made many suggestions for improving school life, for example making rules to ensure that lunchtimes are happy occasions. Pupils' good progress and their good teamwork and enterprise skills prepare them well for their futures.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers use assessment well to ensure that their lessons meet the needs of all pupils. They make their expectations for effort and behaviour clear and in a very encouraging way, so that pupils gladly work hard and behave excellently in lessons. Teachers often use creative ideas to provide stimulating activities, for example, when Year 2 pupils worked in teams, producing newspapers to a deadline. Such activities promote excellent progress and personal development because the pupils are highly involved, in charge of their own learning and making the very best use of their capabilities. Teachers and teaching assistants work together well to ensure that pupils who need extra help receive it quickly. Teachers use marking well to encourage pupils and often give them guidance on how to improve. They are increasingly involving pupils in evaluating their own work and effort. Teachers give pupils varied, interesting and very effective opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills. In a few mathematics lessons, the pace of work is sometimes too fast for a few pupils, so that they do not always become fully secure in one area before moving on to the next.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Good overall, the curriculum has outstanding features. It is having a good impact on pupils' achievement and contributing to their excellent personal development. In the Foundation Stage children have stimulating opportunities to learn by playing and exploring. In all years, the curriculum provides well for the particular needs of pupils because the teachers successfully adapt lessons for their classes. Staff are working together to build a curriculum based upon creative ideas to make lessons fun and to stimulate pupils to be independent and enthusiastic learners. Although this is not yet fully effective in all lessons, it is increasingly providing experiences that parents say, '... make our children talk about their learning with excitement'. Enrichment makes an excellent contribution to pupils' learning and personal development. A very good range of well attended clubs provides opportunities to take exercise, work in teams and develop cultural interests. A rich variety of trips and visitors to the school enhances pupils' interest in what they learn in the classroom.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

All procedures to ensure pupils' safety are very diligently and effectively carried out. Pupils are very well known to staff and all know that they will quickly receive help if they have a problem. As a result, pupils feel extremely secure and quickly grow in confidence. Liaison with families very effectively ensures continuity of care between home and school. The school works very closely with specialist agencies to ensure high quality expert support for any pupils who need this. Parents of pupils with physical difficulties speak highly of the support that they and their children receive. In addition to ensuring their academic progress, this has helped them to grow in confidence and be happy and popular members of the school community. The school tracks each pupil's progress very carefully and uses the information very well to support any who are in danger of underachieving.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Parents, staff and governors are united in saying that the headteacher's leadership is inspirational. Staff are responding well to the very clear direction the headteacher provides. They are working together to devise a creative approach to providing effective leadership in all aspects of this small school's work, called 'Leaders of Learning'. Although it is not yet fully developed, it is already succeeding in germinating innovative ideas for curriculum development and for ensuring that 'every child matters'. This is resulting in a leading role in sharing good practice with other local schools. Governors support the school very well and are willing to challenge it when necessary. The school's self evaluation has given it an accurate view of its quality and performance in most areas. However, inconsistency has led to overestimation in some instances. In particular, the priority for improving mathematics standards has not been as sharp as it should be. In other areas, the school has succeeded well in maintaining above average standards since the last inspection. In addition, it has further improved pupils' care and personal development to an outstanding level.

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?	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

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	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	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?	1

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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

18 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shalford Infant School, Guildford, GU4 8BY

Thank you for welcoming me to your school recently. I enjoyed meeting you and I am grateful for the help you gave by talking to me and showing me your work. I was able to see that yours is a good school. Some things are very good indeed.

You make good progress in your learning. Your reading skills are very high. I really enjoyed hearing some of you read because you did it so well. It was good to hear some of you say that the school has helped you to love reading. This also helps you to become very good writers. In Years 1 and 2 most of you make the progress that you should in mathematics. Not all of you are sure enough about how to work things out, though. I have asked your teachers to give you more help to do this well.

I could see that you are very well cared for. You know that you are lucky to go to a small school that it is like a happy family. You help your teachers a lot by coming to school regularly, behaving excellently and joining in so happily. Some of you told me that the clubs 'are great' and you often have trips and visitors to the school. You make it worthwhile for the adults by showing how much you enjoy these.

Your parents and the other grown ups at home told me how much they think of your headteacher. The adults in the school agree. The adults know most of what they have to do to make the school even better, such as giving you more help to solve problems in mathematics. There are just a few things that they are not completely clear about and I have asked them to work on this.

Well done to you all and very best wishes for your futures.

George Rayner

Lead Inspector