

Shirley Community Nursery and Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110663
Local Authority	CAMBRIDGESHIRE LA
Inspection number	310378
Inspection dates	4–5 March 2008
Reporting inspector	George Falconer HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	419
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Karl Grenz
Headteacher	Mrs Angela Leach
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Green End Road Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB4 1RW
Telephone number	01223 568885
Fax number	01223 506076

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	4–5 March 2008
Inspection number	310378

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is a newly formed two-form entry primary school with a 52 place nursery. On 1 September 2006 the former Shirley Infant school was extended to incorporate the former St Andrews Junior School. Therefore the school currently operates on two sites. The headteacher was appointed in September 2007. The school is situated in one of the more socially and economically disadvantaged areas within Cambridgeshire. The percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is much greater than found nationally. A much larger than average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties. There is a large traveller population. The school provides for a larger than average percentage of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL). Several pupils with EAL are from eastern European countries and are at the very early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the usual times is much higher than average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory but there are many good elements that are developing well to improve the quality of education provided for its pupils.

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good and the senior management team is strong in supporting the new strategies and processes that have recently been put in place across the two sites. Subject co-ordinators are developing their roles in order to monitor and more fully integrate the curriculum to suit pupils' present and future needs. The chair of governors is very much involved at a strategic level and has a core of governors who involve themselves in the life of the school. Governors as a whole are beginning to develop their roles more critically in supporting the school's drive to raise standards.

Attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is below and sometimes well below expectation for some. However, pupils make good progress in the warm and stimulating learning environment. Attainment of pupils overall at the end of the Foundation Stage is still below average.

By the time pupils reached the end of Key Stage 1, attainment tests in 2007 showed pupils to be well below average. However, current school records and inspection observations show that progress in lessons is now satisfactory and sometimes good.

By the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 2, progress for the majority is broadly satisfactory but attainment results in 2007 were well below average in English, mathematics and science. This was largely because the changing nature of the school, the high proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the usual times and because of very low levels of attendance. These aspects have affected pupils' achievement and standards quite markedly.

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements with plans to make it more exciting and enjoyable as well as creative and more cross-curricular in approach. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and ranges from satisfactory to outstanding. Provision for the potential higher attainers is not yet fully developed.

Personal development and well-being are satisfactory overall. Pupils enjoy their education and their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. Attendance figures are inadequate but are showing signs of improving. The behaviour of pupils at school is good overall. Care, guidance and support is satisfactory and the quality of care extended to individuals and to groups of pupils is very good.

The leadership and management have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas to develop and the school has a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start because the atmosphere is warm and welcoming and helps them settle in quickly. Children enjoy the wide range of stimulating experiences that adults organise for them indoors and outdoors. Adults model language well to extend children's speaking skills and provide a good range of opportunities for children to practise new words and phrases. The recently introduced curriculum is having a positive impact on progress. Teaching is often good and ensures an effective balance between practical learning experiences and the

direct teaching of key skills. Adults track children's progress regularly but this information is not yet analysed carefully enough to identify and address weaker aspects of children's development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science at Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Improve the attendance of pupils.
- Improve the provision for potential higher attainers.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Standards as depicted in the latest national tests are well below average in Key Stage 1 and exceptionally low in Key Stage 2. However, the headteacher has succeeded in quickly putting new strategies in place that provide greater attention to detail for the needs of individuals and groups of learners. Already, the school is seeing the impact of this action with progress in lessons ranging from satisfactory to good as judged during the inspection period.

From the below and sometimes well below starting points of the pupils on entry, they make good progress in the Foundation Stage where the priority is placed on speaking and listening and on personal, social and emotional development.

The latest national test results in 2007 showed that pupils continued to make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 in writing and in mathematics but not in reading. Reading scores at the end of Key Stage 1 showed the pupils' levels of attainment were well below average. The intervention strategies now in place, particularly the new Foundation Stage curriculum and the guided reading, are helping to improve progress and to raise attainment levels.

In Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make satisfactory progress overall including pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English. However, results at the end of Key Stage 2, in the 2007 tests were well below average for pupils overall. Further intervention strategies and booster classes are now in place to help the current pupils to achieve higher levels and they are working effectively. However, current school data suggests that standards remain below the national average. The inspection agrees with this.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils are beginning to develop an understanding of healthy eating and drinking and most take adequate exercise. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. They are interested in each other's cultures and languages and feel strongly about racism and other forms of prejudice. They reflect on the beliefs of others intelligently and enjoy the opportunities that they have to share their own feelings. Pupils feel totally safe in school and implicitly trust the adults around them. They have warm, friendly but respectful relationships with the adults in school. They embrace roles as school counsellors and playground buddies and are particularly welcoming to new arrivals, including those from other countries. They demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and an obvious enjoyment of all that the school has to offer. This does not, however, prevent levels of attendance being inadequate. The school is trying very hard to improve this, and pupils are becoming progressively involved in the various initiatives. The behaviour of pupils is good and

they have taken an active role in developing ways of preventing and dealing with bullying. Satisfactory achievement in basic academic skills combined with good social development means they are adequately prepared for the next phase of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers enjoy warm relationships with their pupils and this makes for a pleasant learning atmosphere in classrooms. They manage pupils' behaviour carefully, yet ensure that they understand the boundaries and expectations. Teachers use a good range of strategies to maintain pupils' interest. Lessons usually move on at a good pace, which maintains pupils' motivation and interest. Occasionally, however, pupils spend too much time listening to the teacher, rather than doing things for themselves and they become bored and inattentive. This hinders their learning. Teachers cater especially well for pupils learning English as an additional language, including Eastern European pupils. Key vocabulary is identified in lessons and pupils benefit from good opportunities to use this in paired and group discussions. Teachers track pupils' progress carefully, but do not always use this information well enough to plan activities that meet the needs of more able pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Good links are being made between some subjects and pupils say that this helps make their learning more interesting and relevant. The core subjects of English, mathematics and science are well organized and there are a significant number of support groups and extra sessions to help pupils access the curriculum; however, there is very little extra provision for potential higher attainers. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used in a large range of subjects; for example pupils design classroom layouts, create Powerpoint presentations about different religions and produce news reports. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' personal development, giving them many opportunities to reflect on their own experiences and understand those of others. There is a good range of well-attended extra curricular clubs, both after school and at lunchtimes and pupils particularly enjoy the opportunities the school provides to learn beyond the classroom.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides very good levels of pastoral care, especially for vulnerable pupils. Adults take the time to get to know pupils well so they can offer support and encouragement when needed. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is good. Traveller pupils and those pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported. There are satisfactory arrangements for first aid, health and safety and child protection. A new system of target setting for pupils has been introduced and this is beginning to involve pupils more in their learning. However, teachers' marking does not always provide clear enough advice to pupils about how to improve their work and this restricts their motivation and progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. She has given a strong sense of direction to the school during her short space of time in office and has already made a positive impact through her strategic decisions and actions. This includes the re-organisation of the senior leadership team. The leadership and management of a split site school brings its challenges but the careful planning and deployment of staff is having a positive effect on the ethos of the school as a whole and on the aspirations of staff and pupils alike. The headteacher is strongly supported by enthusiastic senior managers. The chair of governors provides strategic support and a core of governors work with the school on a regular basis. Not all governors are yet fully engaged in their roles.

The attention given to individual pupils and to groups of pupils is informing the teachers of their progress over time. The school is developing ways to improve pupils' achievement and levels of attainment by setting targets, reviewing progress and analysing results more rigorously. Current school data is showing the beginning of improvements to pupils' attainment levels but the headteacher realises there is still more work to do to. Resources, including external agencies, are used well. The leadership and management now have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas to develop and the school has a good capacity to improve.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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
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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	4
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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

6 March 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Shirley Community Nursery and Primary School, Cambridge. CB4 1RW/ CB4 1TF

Thank you very much for your very warm welcome and for talking to us about your school when we visited you recently.

It is easy to see that you really do enjoy being at school and you enjoy learning a great deal. You really like the teachers and the other adults in school and you feel safe and secure. You obviously feel that it is a good place to be. We were impressed by how you got on so well together and how you respond well to adults too. You certainly like taking on responsibilities in school and many of you enjoy the after school clubs and those very important extra lessons to help you to become better learners and to understand more in your learning.

We talked with your headteacher and with your teachers whilst we were in school. As a result, they are going to concentrate really hard on improving your learning in English, mathematics and science so that your knowledge and understanding will improve. We saw a science booster class after school and it looked very enjoyable. It is a good example of what the school is doing to help you further. Your teachers are also going to plan more ways of supporting everyone in their learning, including those children who are a little more able and can perhaps reach for those higher levels.

The school already does many things to try to get all of you children to school everyday but it does need your help. By coming to school everyday, you will have the opportunity to be able to make much more progress in your learning and to know a lot more in English, mathematics and science as well as the other subjects you are taught.

Best wishes

George Falconer

Her Majesty's Inspector