

# Shirland Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112620
<b>Local Authority</b>	DERBYSHIRE LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	310952
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike Best

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	162
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Rex Moakes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Kim Buxton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 January 2003
<b>School address</b>	Chesterfield Road Shirland Alfreton Derbyshire DE55 6BN
<b>Telephone number</b>	01773832426
<b>Fax number</b>	01773 834071

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is smaller than the average primary school. It serves a mixture of privately owned and rented homes in this former mining area. Pupils in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 are accommodated in a more modern building about a mile away from the main school, which houses Key Stage 2 pupils. When they start in the Foundation Stage, children's skills and experiences are broadly average. Pupils from the nearby infant school transfer to Key Stage 2 and overall standards for the combined year group at the start of Year 3 are broadly average.

The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average in Key Stage 1 and broadly average in Key Stage 2. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average overall.

The school has experienced considerable turbulence in staffing since the last inspection, including the appointment of a new headteacher and creation of a new senior management team. At present, two members of staff are working at the school on a temporary basis. The local authority is seeking a single site for a new school to replace the existing accommodation.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory and this reflects the school's evaluation. The school provides a good standard of pastoral care for pupils, in particular for those who find it difficult to get on with others and concentrate on their work. Most pupils enjoy school and understand how to stay safe. Their attendance is above average. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is calm and orderly. Pupils enjoy regular exercise but many are not convinced about the benefits of healthy eating. They develop a good understanding of being members of a community.

Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and achieve well at the end of Year 2, with standards consistently above average or exceptionally high, particularly in writing. This reflects teachers' high expectations and pupils' enthusiasm for learning. In recent years, many pupils have made less than expected progress as they moved through Key Stage 2. During this time, teachers' expectations were not high enough and the targets set for pupils at the end of Year 6 lacked challenge. These issues were not identified quickly enough, because the school's systems for tracking pupils' standards and progress were ineffective. In response, the headteacher put in place a new tracking system and adopted more challenging targets, based on pupils' Key Stage 1 results. Older pupils' progress accelerated significantly during the last school year but there was not enough time for those in Year 6 to make up all the lost ground before the tests in summer 2007. These pupils' below average results, especially in mathematics and science, reflected their inadequate achievement from when they started in Year 3. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 are now making good progress and recent assessments indicate that standards in Year 6 are broadly average. This is because teaching is successfully meeting their differing needs and they are keen to learn. However, both teaching and progress are satisfactory overall because this improvement is not yet consistent throughout Key Stage 2. Teachers' planning lacks consistency, especially in using information about what pupils know and can do, to set and help them meet challenging targets. Consequently, pupils' learning does not develop systematically enough. Furthermore, when marking pupils' work, teachers' comments do not always guide pupils sufficiently as to how they can improve.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school's development. Initiatives aimed at raising achievement and on improving behaviour, particularly in Key Stage 2, are paying off. The recently strengthened senior management team has a good grasp of the issues facing the school. Consequently, targets for the future are now suitably challenging, even though the school's arrangements for rigorously monitoring and evaluating its work, and taking action are not yet fully embedded. Governors are supportive of the school but their quest for a new school has preoccupied them. Excessive surplus funds have built up in anticipation of this new building but the school has only recently employed additional staff to support pupils. This is not an efficient use of the school's budget and so value for money is currently inadequate. Nevertheless, much is new and parents voice their support for recent improvements.

The impact of these initiatives on pupils' progress at Key Stage 2 and the maintenance of good practice in Key Stage 1 indicate that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children settle quickly into routines and most reach the expected goals by the time they move to Year 1. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Planning does not always provide a sharp enough challenge for all children and the pace of some activities is not fast enough. The curriculum includes a reasonable balance of play-based activities, including the use of the outdoor area. Children get on well with each other and comply promptly to instructions. When working independently on models made from recyclable materials, they demonstrate enthusiasm and imagination. Children make choices about the materials and select different ways of joining them. They use language well to talk about the size and shape of their models, and handle tools and equipment carefully. Staff care well for the children and provide good support for those who need extra help. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The monitoring of children's progress and the use they make of this information is satisfactory overall.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the achievement of pupils in Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science.
- Ensure that there is consistent good practice in teaching and learning across the school, particularly in planning for pupils of different abilities, setting pupils challenging targets and using marking to help them improve their work.
- Ensure that subject leaders, senior staff and governors rigorously monitor, evaluate and improve the work of the school.
- Make efficient and effective use of financial resources to support pupils' achievement.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and this is reflected in their current work. Differences between the results of boys and girls are not significant and all groups achieve well. Although the school's targets for the end of Year 6 in the 2007 tests were largely met, the school acknowledges that these were not sufficiently challenging. Girls reached higher standards than boys. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and the more able pupils achieved satisfactorily. However, a number of pupils who had reached average standards at the end of Year 2 underachieved at the end of Year 6. The statutory targets originally set for the current Year 6 were not demanding enough but have been adjusted in the light of recent checks on their progress. The targets set for the current Years 6 and 5 are suitably challenging. As a result, teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve are higher, pupils' progress is improving and most are on track to reach standards that are satisfactory in relation to their prior attainments.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. Most enjoy coming to school, a few say they do not like lessons much and a significant minority offer little to discussions, attendance rates are above the national average. Pupils report that bullying is not a concern and understand how to keep themselves safe, including in active playtimes. Most pupils know how to lead a

healthy lifestyle but while the school provides a fruit tuck shop, many are not persuaded of the benefits of healthy eating. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school community, local events and charity fund-raising. Those on the school council are proud of the responsibilities offered to them and the ways in which they can help improve facilities for other pupils. However, while such opportunities help pupils to prepare well for their future, gaps in their learning hinder such skills.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. However, teachers do not always match the work they set to pupils' individual needs, which has a negative impact on progress, particularly for some younger pupils in Key Stage 2. In lessons where pupils make good progress, teachers identify small steps in learning and lead their pupils through these systematically. Pupils are well managed and there are good working relationships. A prompt start to lessons sets the pace for learning and pupils know what they are going to learn. Pupils work well together and are increasingly confident to 'have a go' when questions and problems get hard. Support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils say they value comments that highlight what they need to do to improve, but marking of this quality is not yet the norm in all classes.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Curriculum planning in Key Stage 1 is built around themes and topics, and now includes French. Links between subjects are being extended for the older pupils to help interest and motivate them, including a focus on local studies, sports and culture which incorporate opportunities to work with pupils from other classes. Extra-curricular clubs and activities, such as weekly music tuition, enrich learning well. There are satisfactory links with a range of agencies that support pupil's personal, social, health and citizenship education. However, while the basic curriculum focuses satisfactorily upon the development of literacy and numeracy skills, planning does not consistently ensure a suitable level of challenge for all pupils.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support of pupils are satisfactory. The pastoral care of pupils is good and work supporting their social and emotional development is paying dividends in improving behaviour. The Learning Mentor supports those with additional needs as do the Positive Play and Nurture groups satisfactorily. Pupils know their ideas and suggestions are taken seriously and some older ones are enjoying training to become peer mentors. Suitable checks are made on all staff and volunteers who work in the school and appropriate risk assessments are made for visits out of school. Staff have recently extended the way they check and track the progress pupils make. This is beginning to become systematic, but the information available is still not used well enough to help all pupils make consistently good progress.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory because the headteacher, supported by other leaders, is bringing about steady improvement, for example to behaviour and to the progress of older pupils. However, on appointment, the headteacher continued to carry out many of her former responsibilities as deputy headteacher. With the turnover of staff, her time has been thinly spread. Consequently, although satisfactory monitoring procedures are now in place, delays in evaluating information and in taking action have reduced the impact of such work. New subject leaders in literacy and numeracy have a good grasp of their roles and are focused on raising standards. However, they have yet to receive the time to evaluate the impact of teachers' planning or to resolve all of the uneven progress evident in Key Stage 2. By restructuring the senior management team, making new appointments and having the headteacher take the classes of absent teachers, the governing body has made significant savings. Nevertheless, because resources have not been targeted quickly enough to help pupils make up lost ground, the school currently provides inadequate value for money.

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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?	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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	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	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	3
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?	3
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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
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

21 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shirland Primary School, Shirland, Alfreton. DE55 6BN

Thank you very much for making us welcome when we visited your school last week. We enjoyed looking at your work and hearing about all the interesting things you do at school. We congratulate on your good attendance and improved behaviour. You enjoy school and know how to keep safe. You like taking regular exercise but we noticed some of you are not so enthusiastic about healthy eating.

The staff take good care of you and help you with your work. Children in Reception soon settle into school and they get on well with each other. In Key Stage 1, you work hard and do well - we were impressed by how accurately you solved your number problems. In Key Stage 2, the school has not always kept a close enough check on how you are getting on and many of you have slipped behind. Most of you are now working hard and catching up quickly because your teachers are now clearer about what you are capable of and what you need to do to improve. When they share this information with you, it helps you make even better progress. However, there is still room for improvement because the work some of you do is either too easy or too hard and you are not getting on as well as you should be.

There are four things in particular that we think the school should do now:

- Make sure you do as well as you can in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- Help you all make good progress by giving you work that helps you learn well, setting you challenging targets to aim for, and giving you suggestions as to how you can improve your work.
- Keep closer and more regular checks on how well the school is doing and act quickly to sort out any problems.
- Make sure that the money the school receives is spent on helping you to do as well as you can.

All these things need your help. From our discussions with you, we know you are up to the challenge. Keep working hard and enjoying school.

Yours truly

Mike Best

Lead inspector