

# Shirley Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116105
<b>Local Authority</b>	Southampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	312177
<b>Inspection date</b>	10 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Janet Sinclair

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	264
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Simon Loveday-Lovell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Julie McKay
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 March 2005
<b>School address</b>	Wilton Road Shirley Southampton SO15 5XE
<b>Telephone number</b>	023 8077 5057
<b>Fax number</b>	023 8077 5057

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: overall achievement, the quality of personal development and the effectiveness of new leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation form (SEF), national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records, curriculum and planning documents, observation of the school at work, interviews with staff, governors, pupils and an analysis of parents' questionnaires. 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 the SEF were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

## Description of the school

Pupils join this large infant school with a wide range of skills and abilities that vary from year to year, but are average overall. The school has been through a period of significant staff change, including many new appointments at senior level. However, although the headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed within the last two years, they were previously in senior positions within the school.

The school has Enhanced Healthy Schools status and Investors in People accreditation.

## 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. It has a very caring ethos where pupils are highly valued and developed sensitively. Children thrive in the positive and supportive learning environment created for them. This leads them to make outstanding progress in their personal development and pupils are kind, helpful and contribute extremely well to the life of the school. The partnership between school and parents is excellent. Parents fully support the school and particularly appreciate the parents' forum, where their concerns can be voiced, and where the school, 'Listens and acts'. Parents who said, 'There is a strong sense of community and togetherness in Shirley Infant school', and 'We are delighted with the progress our child has made and the extensive range of opportunities he has experienced', sum up the views of most parents. The headteacher, fully endorsed by all staff and governors, provides a clear sense of direction and a strong focus on creating a supportive and vibrant learning environment at the heart of its community.

Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage and make good progress in all areas of learning. Current children are on course to exceed the goals expected of them on entry to Year 1. This good progress continues in Key Stage 1 so that standards at the end of Year 2 are consistently above average. Standards fell in the national tests in 2007 but this was due to a high number of pupils with learning difficulties within the year group. Pupils currently in Year 2 are on course to reach well above average standards. They achieve well because teaching is good and the school monitors their progress carefully, giving well-focused support where necessary.

Teachers plan and organise lessons well and use a range of effective methods to engage pupils in their learning, for example, searching for minibeasts in Year 1 as part of their science work and the exploration of a binary tree in Year 2 as part of their information and communication technology lesson. As a result, behaviour is excellent and pupils thoroughly enjoy their work. This is reflected in their good attendance. They say that, 'Teachers make lessons fun and are there to help them us when we are stuck.' Year 2 pupils, for example, are running a stall at the summer fair. This involves working out how much squash they have to buy, the prices they should charge and the change to be given - an activity that makes an excellent contribution to preparing them for their future lives. Teachers mark pupils work regularly but their comments are often too general to help pupils improve. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning, both within the class and through supporting small groups with their literacy. The school identifies pupils with moderate learning difficulties early and ensures they receive well-focused support enabling them to make good progress.

The good curriculum supports pupils' personal development very well through excellent enrichment activities. There is an extensive range of after school clubs, visits, visitors, special events and themed weeks. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their trips to Marwell Zoo and Domino Pizza as well as Science week and a visit from the Fire Brigade. There is outstanding provision for healthy lifestyles through the Extended Healthy Schools award, daily fruit at break times, cycling to school and the excellent work done by all staff, including the sterling efforts of the senior supervisory assistant, to ensure lunch times are healthy, enjoyable and sociable. This has ensured all pupils have an extremely good idea of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle such as, 'eating lots of fruit and vegetables, drinking plenty of water, physical activity in the playground and tennis'. Pupils' excellent contribution to the community is seen in their work as councillors. They have helped to completely transform the toilets, created the secret garden and are, 'kind and helpful' to everyone. Pupils felt particularly important when setting questions

for the senior leadership candidates. All pupils hold 'Playground Friends', who 'look after lonely people', in high regard. This concern for the welfare of others is reflected in their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Excellent pastoral care ensure pupils feel safe and well cared for, confident that any bullying will be dealt with quickly and that adults will listen to their concerns. Academic guidance is good, ensuring pupils make good progress. However, although pupils have targets for their learning that are also shared with their parents, they are not always clearly in evidence as part of their daily learning and this limits their usefulness.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher promote an open style of leadership with a strong emphasis on teamwork. As a result, they have quickly established an effective senior leadership team. Self-evaluation is good. The school improvement plan, which involves all stakeholders, is central to the school's development and an effective tool. However, some success criteria are too general to be clearly measured and this limits their usefulness as a guide to how successful initiatives have been.

Senior leaders, many of whom are new, have successfully taken on projects to bring about improvement. Clear action plans and effective professional development is already ensuring the school is moving forward on several areas such as preparing key staff for new roles, improving the learning environment and ensuring continued good progress for all pupils in spite of many staff changes. This, coupled with a very supportive but challenging governing body, demonstrates that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Very good induction arrangements and close liaison with parents enable children to settle well and become confident learners. Teaching provides an effective balance between teacher-led and child-chosen activities and good use is made of the outside area to extend children's learning and encourage them to work together. However, there are occasional missed opportunities to use questioning effectively to develop children's ideas and this limits progress. The deputy headteacher has worked hard to ensure continuing good provision during a time of staff change in the Foundation Stage.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the use of marking and target setting so that pupils know what they have to do to improve and have greater involvement in their own learning.
- Ensure that the success criteria in the school improvement plan are more specific and clearly measurable so that senior leaders and governors can clearly judge the extent of improvement.

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

<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>	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	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



## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

23 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shirley Infant School, Southampton, SO15 5XE

I am writing to tell you how much I enjoyed my visit to your school. Thank you for being so friendly and helping me with the inspection. I enjoyed meeting the school council members and pupils in Year 2. I was delighted to learn how much you enjoy school, especially your school trips, being helpful to others and taking part in community events such as the school fair.

I agree with your parents that your school is a good school. There are some outstanding features.

Here are some other things I particularly liked about your school.

- You have a good headteacher who is ensuring your school is a happy, safe place where you can work hard and do well.
- You make good progress across the school because you are taught well.
- You enjoy school, especially all the excellent extra activities, visits, visitors and special events you have.
- Your caring and thoughtful relationships and outstanding behaviour show how keen you are to learn and reflects the excellent care you receive from all adults.
- You make an excellent contribution to the school as school councillors and playground friends who want to make the school a better place for everyone.

Every school has something it could do better, so this is what I have asked your school to do to help you learn even more.

- Improve the way teachers mark your work and use your targets so that you are more involved in making improvements in your work.
- Ensure that the most important things the school needs to do to get better are clearly written out on the improvement plan so that everyone knows what they are, and what they need to do to achieve them.

Thank you once again for being such friendly and helpful pupils.

Yours sincerely

Janet Sinclair

Lead Inspector