

Shenton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120037
Local Authority	Leicester City
Inspection number	313486
Inspection dates	20–21 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Paul Edwards

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	427
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Allison
Headteacher	Anne Pinnock
Date of previous school inspection	16 June 2003
School address	Dunlin Road off Humberstone Road Leicester LE5 3FP
Telephone number	01162 628778
Fax number	01162 530793

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Shenton is a large primary school and most pupils are from Asian or Asian British Indian backgrounds. A small proportion are from Black or Black British African backgrounds, with the rest of the school population coming from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Some 95% of the pupils speak English as an additional language and almost two thirds of these are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. An acting headteacher was appointed in January 2008 for two terms and several other senior posts are held on a temporary basis.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Shenton is a satisfactory school with some good features, particularly the level of pastoral support, which enables pupils to enjoy school and to get on well with one another. Parents are appreciative of the way their children are cared for and acknowledge the high degree of racial harmony. It is to the school's credit that the temporary leadership, with good support from the governing body, has ensured that the considerable staffing disruptions have not had a negative impact on the work of the school.

Children enter the Nursery with skill levels that are very low. The good provision in the Foundation Stage ensures they make good progress in all areas, although they enter Year 1 with skill levels below those expected for their age. There is good support for the many pupils at an early stage of learning English, enabling them to make good gains in their learning of the language. Standards are below average overall by the end of Year 6 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The school's continuing effort to raise pupils' writing skills, particularly those of boys and Black African pupils, is showing considerable success. Standards in writing are now much closer to the national average. Although the satisfactory teaching enables most pupils to make satisfactory progress overall, more able pupils do not do as well as they should in mathematics and science and, to a lesser extent, in English.

The good personal development and well-being of the pupils is the result of many overlapping features of the school. For example, the school has developed a particularly strong drama programme that has been used very effectively to raise the pupils' self-esteem, improve behaviour and raise the quality of pupils' work in English. This has resulted in a significant drop in exclusions and recorded racist incidents. Pupils are confident, behave well and get on well with one another. Their improving literacy skills are preparing them satisfactorily for the next stage of education. The physical education curriculum has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The enthusiastic participation by all pupils in the good range of after-school sports clubs and their improving diet demonstrate a good understanding of the need to keep healthy and fit.

Parents are rightly pleased with the good quality care, guidance and support given to pupils. A parent's view was typical of many when commenting, 'My children are very happy at school because teachers care for them very well'. The staff have established a very strong caring ethos that is reflected in the school's commitment to providing a secure and happy learning environment for all pupils, whatever their background or need. Considerable effort has gone into adapting the curriculum to make it interesting for all pupils. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in other subjects but this good practice has not been extended to numeracy and science.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Senior staff and subject leaders have been effective in developing good procedures to assess and track the progress of pupils. However, most are new to their roles and have not, as yet, ensured that teachers are using the information to match work sufficiently closely to the needs of all pupils. The leadership has an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is in a sound position, being well placed to make further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Nursery and Reception year achieve well because of the consistently good teaching and the good range of interesting activities. Although children's skill levels are below those expected for their age on entry to Year 1, they make good progress from their very low starting points. Children make particularly good progress in their personal development because of the very good induction procedures and support they receive on starting school. The good teaching and support enable the high proportion of children at an early stage of learning English to make good progress in acquiring early English language skills. There is a happy, purposeful atmosphere in lessons and staff provide children with good opportunities to work independently, with good intervention where necessary. The good curriculum includes effective use of the large outdoor areas to support learning for children in the Nursery class. However, the school rightly recognises it needs to explore how it can provide similar opportunities for children in the Reception classes. Assessment procedures are good, the provision is well led and managed and the school has created a welcoming, caring environment.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teaching always provides sufficient challenge for more able pupils, particularly in mathematics and science, but also in English.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop numeracy and science skills across the curriculum.
- Develop the skills of senior staff in monitoring the effectiveness of new initiatives.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

There has been a steady rise in standards at both key stages since the previous inspection. Standards are now below average at the end of Year 6. The pupils' skills in writing have improved considerably and are not far below those seen nationally. This good progress is the result of the school's effective focus on this aspect through its drama programme. Pupils from Black and Black British African backgrounds are now attaining standards similar to those of their classmates. Whilst children in the Foundation Stage make good progress, particularly in the development of their literacy skills, pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory. Although the school has, rightly, concentrated on improving skills in English, less attention has been paid to ensuring pupils make the same rate of progress in mathematics and science. More able pupils do not do as well as they should in both subjects because teachers do not expect enough of them. Whilst progress in English is better for all groups, there are still some occasions when the more able could do better. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are provided with satisfactory support, enabling them to make progress in line with that of their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school, behave well and have good attitudes in lessons. This positive approach to school has, in part, been brought about by using drama to improve behaviour and attitudes,

resulting in a school that is racially harmonious. Pupils' enjoyment of school is demonstrated by their improving, and satisfactory, attendance. When they start school in the Nursery, children quickly learn to look after one another. The rich diversity of faiths within the school is celebrated, providing pupils with a good understanding of cultures other than their own. Pupils show consideration for others and make a good contribution to the community. There is an active school council that successfully gives the pupils a say in the life of the school. Pupils make healthy choices about what to eat at playtime and are keen to participate in sports clubs. Pupils' improving basic skills and good social skills prepare them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Whilst teaching is satisfactory overall, there are good features in all year groups. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and successfully encourage pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour. They successfully develop pupils' speaking, listening and writing skills by providing opportunities to learn through drama. Pupils' interest and enthusiasm is maintained through the teachers' good use of resources such as interactive whiteboards. Teachers are beginning to make good use of assessment information to plan work. However, they are not yet pitching the work sufficiently highly to challenge the more able pupils to do as well as they should, particularly in mathematics and science. Pupils' work is marked well but teachers do not always ensure pupils respond to comments for improvement. Learning support assistants play an effective role in ensuring pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum helps pupils to build steadily on what they have already learnt. The school rightly gives high priority to supporting those pupils who are learning English as an additional language. There is a good personal, social and health programme that has a good impact on pupils' academic and social skills. There are good opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in other subjects, for example, Year 4 pupils' persuasive writing skills are developed through producing an advert for the Tudor House they design and make. There are missed opportunities to develop pupils' skills in mathematics and science through work in other subjects. Enrichment of the curriculum is satisfactory and provides pupils with a range of experiences outside lessons. Creativity is fostered very imaginatively through art, drama and music. Successful after-school clubs are popular with boys and girls, although limited mainly to sport.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Good pastoral care ensures that pupils feel safe and secure and are able to develop good personal skills. Induction procedures enable pupils new to the school to settle well and effective mentoring helps improve the behavioural and social problems of pupils. Learning mentors help to resolve problems quickly. There is good bilingual support to help pupils at an early stage of learning English. Academic support is satisfactory. There are thorough systems for assessing pupils' progress, especially in English and mathematics. The introduction of pupils' personal

targets means that pupils are beginning to develop a better understanding of how to improve their work, although this is not yet consistently good across the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified quickly and are given satisfactory support towards meeting their individual targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Senior managers have taken decisive action to tackle underachievement and positive initiatives have helped to raise standards. For example, the project on developing pupils' writing skills has had a good impact, particularly on the progress made by boys and groups of pupils that have underachieved in the past. The school is setting challenging targets to ensure that recent improvement is sustained. Good links with universities, other schools and providers are helping to enhance the school's provision.

Good systems for evaluating school effectiveness are sharply focused on whether all pupils are doing well enough. However, subject leaders, most of whom are new to their roles, have yet to get to grips with monitoring the effectiveness of initiatives to ensure all pupils progress as well as they should. Governors provide good challenge and manage resources well. Spending is carefully planned and directed on improving provision further. They have put into place effective contingency plans to ensure the school runs smoothly during a period of uncertain leadership.

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
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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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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?	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	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	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?	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?	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	3
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

21 February 2008

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Shenton Primary School, Leicester LE5 3FP

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. You were very polite and friendly. We enjoyed talking to you and you told us a lot about your school. Your school is providing you with a satisfactory education.

- This is what we found out about your school.
- You make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes and learn many new things. Satisfactory teaching means that you make steady progress in the rest of the school. You make better progress in your writing than you do in other subjects.
- You behave well, enjoy school and take responsibility well.
- Adults are kind and caring and they look after you well. They give those of you who are new to learning English good support.
- You are taught all the subjects you should be. The school is good at teaching you about the importance of staying safe and healthy and we are pleased you enjoy taking part in the many sporting activities on offer.
- Those in charge of the school are working hard to make it better.
- What we have asked your school to do now.
- Help those of you who find work easy to make better progress, especially in mathematics and science, but also sometimes in English.
- Help you to improve your work in mathematics and science by linking work to other subjects.
- Ensure those in charge of the school check that all the new things that have been introduced are helping you all to learn more quickly.

We enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn. We want you to help your teachers by continuing to work hard. We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Mr Paul Edwards Lead inspector

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