

# Sharnford Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120157
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	313535
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 April 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Callow

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	60
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jean Harbour
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kathryn Allsopp
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 February 2004
<b>School address</b>	Henson Way Sharnford Hinckley LE10 3PN
<b>Telephone number</b>	01455 272456
<b>Fax number</b>	01455 272456

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The majority of pupils who attend this smaller than average sized school come from the village of Sharnford and are of a White British background. Very few are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much lower than at the time of the last inspection and is now below average.

The school has become part of a federation with a neighbouring school, All Saints Church of England Primary School at Sapcote, since it was last inspected. The headteacher at Sapcote was appointed headteacher at Sharnford in September 2006, alongside a shared governing body for the two schools. There have been a significant number of changes to the staffing arrangements at Sharnford in recent years. In addition, the senior management team is now drawn from members of staff from both schools.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Sharnford is a good school. The good teaching and learning are continuing to improve because of the benefits of working as part of a federation, under the strong leadership of the headteacher and the effective support of the governing body. The school has good capacity to improve further. Parents are keen to acknowledge that the close interest and responsiveness to the needs of each child has not been lost, but exciting curriculum opportunities have been gained, such as being able to participate in residential visits. As one parent said, 'Despite being a small school, Sharnford is very good at offering a wide range of opportunities, whilst not losing its strong sense of community and maintaining high standards of pastoral care.'

Achievement is good, because from broadly average starting points when children join the Reception Year, they reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. Standards in reading are exceptionally high. Good systems for tracking pupils' progress and accurate and thorough self-evaluation have quite rightly identified writing as a relative weakness across the school. A wide range of good strategies has already been put in place to remedy this and there are some encouraging signs of improvement, but their full impact has yet to be seen. Generally, pupils make less progress in all subjects in the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2, than in other year groups. Across the school, but in these years in particular, effective use is not always made of day-to-day assessments to plan sufficiently challenging next steps in learning for all pupils, especially for those who are more able. As a result, a small number of pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.

A more thematic approach to the curriculum has recently been introduced, not only to make learning even more enjoyable, but also to make it relevant to pupils' interests. Early indications show its success in these areas, as well as helping to develop their skills more systematically in different subjects and to provide real purposes for writing. In the majority of lessons pupils are very clear about what they are learning, which is helped by a good understanding of their targets. Pupils are keen to learn and have positive relationships with adults and with each other. Behaviour is good in class and around the school and all the pupils who were asked said that they felt safe and free from bullying. Older pupils take their responsibilities seriously, as is evident in the way they look after younger pupils whilst eating lunch and playing outside.

Pupils enjoy school very much, because they feel that they are looked after well and that their views are listened to and acted upon. The Healthy Schools award is an acknowledgement of the pupils' excellent understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. This is greatly encouraged by a strong emphasis on physical exercise at break times, with activities such as 'Huff and Puff', as well as in lessons and sports clubs after school. Pupils' spiritual development is also a strength, as was evident during assembly when they reflected on the wonders of the universe and were encouraged to make connections between the stars and 'people who shine'. Leaders have successfully created a school where high academic standards are appropriately balanced with a strong emphasis on pupils' good personal development. This was summed up well by one pupil who said, 'This school is like one big, happy family. We never leave anyone out.'

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

The care and concern for each child and a good programme of induction enable children to settle in well to school life. Good attention is given to their personal development and children

were observed during 'Circle Time' being sensitively encouraged to consider how it feels when another child is being unkind. Provision is satisfactory and improving because greater thought is being given to the learning needs of children in the Reception Year, as distinct from others in the mixed-age class. For example, recent alterations to the building are now allowing continuous access to activities which have been set up outside and there are better age-appropriate resources. There is much still to do however to raise standards. Achievement is no more than satisfactory because there is not yet a rigorous enough approach to planning to ensure that all children make the progress of which they are capable. In particular, adults are not making sufficient use of their observations of what children can already do in order to set up activities that will promote their next steps in learning and develop their skills. A wide range of good support is being provided to bring about improvement, including through the leadership of the Foundation Stage across the federation.

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

- Improve the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage in order to raise standards.
- Use assessment information more effectively to plan sufficiently challenging next steps in learning, particularly for the youngest pupils and those who are more able.
- Raise standards in writing to the same high level as in reading.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils make satisfactory progress in the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2, reaching broadly average standards by the time they go into Year 3. Progress then accelerates rapidly as they move on up through the school. By the end of Year 6 the achievement of pupils, including those who have learning difficulties, is good, relative to their starting points on entry. When pupils leave the school, their standards overall are above average and exceptionally high in English. The school has correctly assessed that pupils do not make quite the same amount of progress in writing as they do in reading. A good range of intervention strategies and support programmes, such as 'Big Write', particularly to encourage boys, has been put in place to address this and they are beginning to show some success. A small number of pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable in other subjects too, particularly the youngest and those who are more able. This is because teachers do not always provide sufficiently challenging work for them to do.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' enjoyment of school is a notable strength and attendance has improved considerably since the last inspection so that it is now above average. Pupils' social and moral development is good, with even the youngest children, for example, being able to explain why fighting is wrong. Their cultural development is satisfactory and the school is rightly working hard to ensure that, in particular, pupils have a greater understanding of the cultural diversity in today's society. Through the school council pupils make a good contribution to the school community, bringing about improvements, such as the purchase of picnic benches and sports equipment. Less is done to contribute to the wider community, although a regular programme of fundraising supports a range of charities. Pupils' positive attitudes and their ability to work cooperatively, combined with good basic skills, demonstrate that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Good relationships are a strong feature of every lesson. Generally, pupils are very keen to learn, particularly enjoying, and engaging well with, practical activities such as role-play. They make especially good progress academically and socially at these times, as was observed when pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 were acting out what it means to be faced with a 'dilemma'. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they use this effectively to extend pupils' thinking when they ask questions. Interactive whiteboards are increasingly being used well to support both teaching and learning. The planning of lessons is usually thorough. However, teachers do not consistently make good use of day-to-day assessments of what pupils already know and can do to modify the planning and so provide work with exactly the right amount of challenge, particularly for the youngest and more able pupils.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

A good emphasis on pupils developing basic skills in literacy and numeracy is enabling them to reach above average standards in English and mathematics by the time they leave in Year 6. However, tasks for the youngest pupils and those who are more able do not consistently have the same good match to their needs as for others in the school. Writing for real purposes is being encouraged through a more thematic approach to the curriculum, which is starting to help raise standards, not only in this subject but also in others. Pupils' skills in information and communication technology have improved since the last inspection because of better provision. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and especially their excellent understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. An increasingly broad range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities, which enhances pupils' engagement and enjoyment, is being provided through the federation.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Child protection and health and safety procedures, including risk assessments, are rigorous and support pupils' well-being. The secure and caring environment contributes significantly to pupils' great enjoyment of school. Adults know the pupils very well, supporting those with learning difficulties particularly effectively to make good progress. The school's assessment procedures keep careful track of pupils' progress, enabling those at risk of underachievement to receive additional help. Pupils have a good understanding of their targets. However, despite pupils having their work regularly marked with positive comments, they do not consistently get written feedback that will support them in reaching these targets.

## Leadership and management

#### Grade: 2

Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance by the headteacher, governors and senior leaders is rigorous. Consequently, leaders at all levels have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are making increasingly good use of strengths across

the federation to bring about improvement, for example, the single senior management team brings skills from both schools. Another significant element is the deployment of a coordinator for each subject to work across the federation. The focus so far has been on English, mathematics and science and the coordinators of these subjects have already proved the arrangements to be a successful model for raising standards at Sharnford. They have quickly established a good understanding of priorities for improvement in their subjects, based on individual pupils' assessment data. They are raising the expectations of what pupils can achieve even further through the setting of more challenging targets. There is scope now for coordinators of all subjects to be working in this way. Not only is there an effective partnership with Sapcote, but also with a range of outside agencies and parents. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of Sharnford and keen to note its significant number of strengths.

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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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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	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

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sharnford Church of England Primary School, Leicestershire, LE10 3PN

Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming when we visited your school recently. Those of you we talked to were keen to tell us how much you enjoy going to school at Sharnford and we can see why. It is a good school.

Your school is improving all the time, particularly because it is now part of a federation with the school at Sapcote. You told us that you are now getting a wider variety of exciting opportunities, such as going on residential visits. We think it is also helping you to reach higher standards in your work.

- These are some of the other good things that are happening:
  - you make good progress in your work from when you join in the Reception Year to when you leave in Year 6
  - most of you have an excellent understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle
  - the adults look after you very well
  - you are learning to be responsible and caring people and to think about the needs of others as well as yourselves
  - you are being encouraged at times like assembly to reflect on life and the world you live in
  - the headteacher, governors and other leaders, consider carefully what is going well and what needs to be improved.
- These are some of the things that we have decided will make your school even better.
  - Provide those of you in the Reception Year with activities that are more suited to the needs of young children.
  - Use the ongoing assessments of how well you are doing to always ensure that your work challenges you enough, particularly the youngest of you and those of you who are more able.
  - Raise the standards of your writing to the same high level as they are in reading.

You can help by continuing to have the same good attitudes to your work that we saw when we visited.

With best wishes

Peter Callow Lead inspector

18 April 2008



Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Sharnford Church of England Primary School, Leicestershire, LE10 3PN**

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Lead inspector