

# Shere CofE Aided Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	125246
<b>Local Authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	315210
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Bernice Magson

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5-7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	59
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Lesley Austin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Caroline Herlihy (Acting headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 January 2004
<b>School address</b>	Gomshall Lane Shere Guildford GU5 9HB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01483 202198
<b>Fax number</b>	01483 202726

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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: the impact of strategies to raise standards in reading and mathematics in Years 1 and 2; how well teaching and learning and the curriculum are adapted to address the differing needs of pupils; and the quality of leadership and management, during a period of significant instability in staffing. Evidence was gathered from the school's records, planning and policies, from observing teaching and learning, from discussions with staff, pupils, parents and governors, and from a scrutiny of parents' completed questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence that the school's own assessments, as given in self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included in the report where appropriate.

## Description of the school

This is a small village school. Almost all pupils are of White British origin, and a few are of White European heritage. In each cohort, significant variations exist between the numbers of boys and girls, and in the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including physical needs, autism, or learning disorders. The school has achieved an Activemark for sport and has Healthy Schools status. Since the last inspection, the school has experienced significant turbulence in staffing, including two interim headteachers appointed in the last year. A permanent headteacher has been appointed for September 2008.

## 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, which serves its community well. Its vision, established over 150 years ago by its founders Louise Bray and Laura Lomax, remains relevant, providing the school community with a shared sense of direction for pupils to 'discover of the joy of learning in a loving atmosphere of individual care.' Indeed, led by an able interim headteacher and teacher in charge, staff and governors give pupils excellent care and support. As a result, pupils enjoy very much all the school has to offer and have excellent attitudes to learning. One parent reflected the positive comments of many others that, 'Shere has done wonders for my child, who goes to school with a smile on her face every day.'

Pupils achieve well because the teaching is good. The school sets challenging targets, and Year 2 pupils achieve exceptionally well in national tests in reading, writing and mathematics. However, although standards are consistently well above average, over time there has been a dip in pupils' performance in reading and mathematics. In order to redress this, a review of the curriculum for reading has taken place and the teaching of sounds and letters has a greater focus. A more rigorous tracking of pupils' progress is in place, and there is earlier identification of weaknesses in pupils' performance. The impact of this work is clearly evident as pupils in the current Year 2 have achieved extremely well in reading from above average starting points and many are working at the highest level possible for their age. There is evidence of good improvement also by those pupils with learning difficulties, because of the targeted support of skilled teaching assistants. However, the more robust assessment systems are not yet fully embedded, and do not involve pupils enough in assessing their own learning. The school has recognised that a similar review of provision in mathematics is now a priority. Currently, in some lessons, pupils do not always understand what it is they are to learn, because of a lack of clarity in teacher's explanation of lesson objectives. Teachers rely heavily on a published scheme and there are few opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in independent learning through practical activities.

The personal development of pupils is good. Pupils feel safe and secure. Behaviour and relationships are excellent, both between pupils and with adults. Pupils enjoy helping others and applaud each other's successes. The school council undertake their roles responsibly, eager to develop the school. They are working towards the purchase of 'a bright bin' to help with recycling in the school playground. Pupils understand the importance of healthy lifestyles and join in sporting activities enthusiastically. Pupils have a good understanding for their age of how to take care of themselves. They are developing good basic skills important for their future economic well-being.

A wide range of visits and visitors enhance a good curriculum. Good links are made between subjects to consolidate skills. For example in Year 1, pupils made good links between speaking and listening, writing and science as they recorded questions to ask a visiting gardener. An excellent range of out of school activities are popular with pupils, and enrich the curriculum further.

Leadership and management are good overall. The governors have managed well the recent turbulence in leadership, and in staffing. All adults have given good support in sustaining the school's vision and aims over time, particularly its Christian ethos. Parental support has also remained strong, because of good efforts to address any individual concerns. Self-evaluation is satisfactory. The school has benefited from the expertise of interim headteachers in reviewing

policies and procedures and implementing change, for example in the curriculum and assessment, and in staff training. However, there is limited monitoring and evaluation of the school's actions in order to measure the impact of strategies and to ensure that they remain relevant. Given the school's good track record, and with the appointment of a permanent headteacher and experienced staff team, there is a good capacity to improve.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The Reception year provides a good start for children's education. Children are happily settled and have good relationships with each other. They respond well to school rules and have positive attitudes to learning. Children concentrate well when working with adults, or independently, and make good progress in all areas of learning. Teaching is good overall and excellent in adult-led activities. Adults guide and question children very skilfully, challenging them to make new discoveries. There is an excellent focus on the teaching of numeracy and literacy. Sessions are very well structured and the learning moves forward rapidly. Already some children are achieving beyond expected goals for their age, such as in choosing even numbers on a number line to 20, and in identifying individual sounds and blends in words. Learning from independent play is good because, in a well-planned programme covering all areas of learning, the activities interest and excite children. However, some opportunities to extend the learning are missed because of limited staff involvement. Overall children achieve well and, from above average starting points, reach beyond expected goals for their age by the end of the Foundation Stage.

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

- Improve the curriculum and teaching and learning in mathematics in order to raise standards by Year 2.
- Develop assessment procedures, so that pupils are more involved in assessing their progress and identifying their next steps in learning.
- Improve monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance to ensure that actions to bring about improvement remain relevant and are fully embedded.

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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	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	1
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	2
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	1
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	3
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

27 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shere CofE Aided Infant School, Guildford, GU5 9HB

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. It was good to meet so many of you and I had a lovely time. I enjoyed finding out about all the exciting things you are doing and, in particular, meeting the members of the school council. I think that you have a good school and I can see why you enjoy coming. What I liked most about your school is:

- you reach standards well above those in most schools, particularly in your reading, writing and mathematics
- you work hard in lessons because there are exciting things for you to do
- the teachers plan activities which interest and challenge you
- everybody takes good care of you and this helps you to feel safe and secure
- your parents and carers are very glad that you go to this school
- all the grown ups are working hard to make your school even better.

To make your school even better I have asked your headteacher and the other grown ups to look at ways to help you do even better in mathematics. I think it would help, if the teachers could give you more information about how you are doing in your work, and more ideas about how you can get better. I have asked all the adults to check more regularly how the school is doing, so that it is always an exciting place to be. I am sure that your school will continue to improve.

I hope that you carry on enjoying school and learning many interesting things.

Yours sincerely

Bernice Magson

Lead Inspector