

# Sharps Copse Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 133303               |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Hampshire            |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 316072               |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 13–14 September 2007 |
| <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>                     | 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                                    | 259                                |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body                 |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mr Richard Setford                 |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Ms Carol Koerner                   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 13 October 2003                    |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Prospect Lane<br>Havant<br>PO9 5PE |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 02392 484 545                      |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 02392 456 550                      |

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school serves families from a wide range of backgrounds some of whom face particular economic and social challenges. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is well above the national average and entitlement to free school meals is much higher than average. The Nursery attached to the school is subject to a separate inspection. The school has experienced a great deal of turbulence over the last few years. A new headteacher and four newly qualified teachers have been appointed within the last fifteen months although the new headteacher was acting headteacher for a year prior to her appointment as substantive head.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 3(13) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it reasonably is expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' standards and achievement and to teaching and learning.

Standards are low and much lower than they should be in English and mathematics. Achievement is therefore inadequate even given the low starting points of the pupils. The school's analysis shows that this unsatisfactory progress has been because of weaknesses in teaching and issues with behaviour. This has been exacerbated by the high turnover in staffing in recent years. There is now a strong leadership team and a stable staff, which is enabling improvements to be made. In particular, the school has improved standards of behaviour significantly, lessons are no longer disrupted and learning is therefore better. Behaviour and attitudes across the school are now good and underpin a caring school community. Pupils are starting to make better progress due to the additional support given and the improvements in the quality of teaching, but some weaknesses remain despite the school's strenuous efforts. Teachers do not always match work well enough to pupils' needs or use marking rigorously enough to secure improvement in their work. Consequently, there is insufficient good teaching to enable pupils to catch up lost ground. The most significant improvements have been made in the Foundation Stage. Here, the children now make a good start because of the good provision.

Pupils' personal development is good. Relationships at all levels are good. Pupils say that they really enjoy school because it is a fun place to be. This is reflected in improved attendance and a huge drop in the number of exclusions. Pastoral care is good and consequently pupils feel safe and secure. The nurture team make an outstanding contribution to enabling pupils with emotional difficulties to participate fully in the life of the school. Academic guidance is satisfactory. The school tracks pupils' progress year on year satisfactorily, giving support where needed. However, it does not have a clear view of progress over time, which limits its ability to set realistic targets. Although some effective assessments take place, there are weaknesses. Pupils do not have well focussed individual learning targets to help monitor progress in the short term. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, although it is good in the Foundation Stage.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Evaluation is mainly accurate but the school has too generous a view of achievement. Senior leaders did not recognise the need to establish quickly tracking procedures enabling them to monitor pupils' progress over time. As a result, they were unclear about the extent of the underachievement and set targets for improvement that were too low. This apart, senior leaders have an increasingly clear vision for improving standards across the school and detailed action plans. In a short space of time, they have had a significant effect on improving the ethos of the school to create a strong sense of community to which parents and pupils are proud to belong. As parents tend to say, 'the school is a happy place where our children are well cared for and our views are listened to'. The school has a sound capacity to improve further and a committed team in place to ensure it succeeds.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

There is good provision in the Foundation Stage. It is well organised and managed and ensures good attention is paid to children's learning needs through an appropriate, well-constructed curriculum. There is a good balance of teacher-directed and child-chosen activities. However, occasionally, there are too many activities for effective adult support. Frequent assessments of children's progress ensure that work is well targeted at their needs enabling them to make good progress across the areas of learning. Assessment data are used well by teachers and this contribute to the good quality teaching.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve achievement in English and mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that lesson activities are closely matched to the needs of pupils so that they are always challenged to do their best.
- Improve tracking systems so that they give clear information on pupils' rates of progress so that the senior leadership team has a clear view of standards and progress across the school and uses the information to set realistically challenging targets.
- Ensure pupils have sharply focused individual targets and clear guidance on how to improve their work so that teachers can accurately plan their learning in order to move them on more quickly.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 4

Standards are low and achievement is inadequate in English and mathematics. However, the pupils' rate of progress is increasing due to higher expectations of progress year on year and additional support for underachieving groups. Levels of attainment on entry vary year on year and have sometimes been low. They are currently below average. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress across all areas of learning so that they many are working securely within the goals expected for their age. However, few children exceed them. Provisional national test results in 2007 show standards that are exceptionally low in English and mathematics for pupils at both key stages. Results reveal that pupils in Years 2 and 6 have made inadequate progress. In addition, pupils in other year groups are not achieving well enough. The school has moved swiftly to put a clear action plan in place to address weaknesses, particularly girls' underachievement in mathematics. The school failed to meet its own targets for 2007 partly due to staff turbulence affecting teachers, but also due to weaknesses in its tracking systems. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress toward the targets set in their individual education plans due to the small group support they are given. However, without this support, they achieve in line with their classmates. Those pupils with emotional difficulties who are supported in the nurture unit make good progress.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Relationships are very good and consequently pupils behave well. Pupils have developed good skills to help them resolve conflicts and so work harmoniously together. They clearly understand what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and know how to stay safe and, for example, they speak knowledgeably about keeping safe on school trips. Pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes

to work and this is reflected in their improved attendance that is now satisfactory. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and value each other's contribution in lessons. They feel safe from bullying and as one pupil said, 'there is very little bullying and the anti-bullying week helped a lot'. They enthusiastically describe their fundraising for two children in Tanzania and also how much they have learned about life in that country. The school council is active and recently improved enjoyment of lunch times by training some Key Stage 2 pupils to act as football and rugby coaches for younger pupils. There are good links with the local community, for example, pupils recently took part in the Leigh Park Carnival. Additionally, there are strong links with local schools involving sporting activity, gifted and talented clubs and projects to improve the local environment. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are not yet adequate to ensure future economic success, however the school provides many opportunities for them to experience 'employment' such as running the stationery shop or acting as sports coaches, news reporters and tour guides.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 4**

Although most of the teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory or better, teaching is not yet good enough to address the legacy of underachievement. There are still weaknesses in teaching which hamper pupils' progress. Teachers do not yet plan well enough for the wide range of pupils' needs nor do they use marking effectively enough to ensure improvement in pupils' work. In whole-class sessions, teachers do not always ensure questioning sufficiently challenges all groups of pupils.

However, through effective monitoring and coaching, teaching is improving. Some good teaching seen during the inspection confirms this, with effective questioning and work well matched to pupils' needs. Additionally, as a whole, teachers have good relationships with pupils, manage them well and use a range of resources to engage them in their learning. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning through focused small group work, particularly for pupils with learning difficulties.

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall. It is well planned to meet children's needs, enabling them to become confident learners who make good progress across the areas of learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. A two-year cycle ensures coverage and continuity for pupils in the newly established mixed-age classes. There is an appropriate focus on literacy and numeracy. However, although planning sometimes identifies work for different groups, it is not sufficiently based on a clear match to pupils' learning needs and this hampers progress. Recently improved information and communication technology resources and use of interactive whiteboards in lessons is having a positive impact on learning. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good. It is well planned to cover all areas of learning in a relevant and stimulating manner.

Pupils have good opportunities to take part in sport and to learn new skills through a good range of extra-curricular activities. This helps to promote pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy their residential visits to the New Forest where they learn new skills involving teamwork.

Visits from the police and fire service and an annual themed fortnight on healthy eating reinforce what the pupils need to do to stay safe and healthy.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Pastoral care is a strength. Pupils are very well cared for, feel confident that any bullying will be dealt with swiftly and know teachers will listen to their concerns. Procedures to protect them, including child protection and vetting of all staff, are securely in place. Provision for pupils and families under pressure are extremely good. The school's nurture team, home/school link worker and learning mentor work tirelessly to ensure a high level of provision and secure very positive outcomes for pupils' self esteem and capacity to learn. The school's highly successful strategies to re-integrate excluded pupils ensure that few re-offend.

The school tracks pupils' progress year on year and carries out annual assessments satisfactorily. Support is now given, where needed. Tracking progress over time is still not effective. It hampers the school's ability to set challenging targets based on an accurate measure of what pupils already know. Marking and target setting, although in place, are not yet sharp enough to move pupils learning on quickly enough.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall and good in the Foundation Stage. The senior leadership team, which has only been fully in place for a year, has provided good leadership to oversee a huge improvement in behaviour and attitudes and develop a strong caring ethos. Their self-evaluation procedures have many strengths and key areas for improvement have been identified. They have minimised exclusions, improved standards and provision in the Foundation Stage and started to raise standards across the school. Monitoring of teaching is rigorous and records show improvements in the quality of teaching overall. However, a few staff were slow to improve despite intensive support and professional development and this has meant that the progress made by pupils has not accelerated as quickly as it should have. Phase leaders roles are developing well and leaders have just begun to assume responsibility to coordinate assessment and tracking procedures within their year groups. Governors are supportive and very committed to doing their best for the school and its pupils. They are beginning to hold the school to account for its performance.

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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 |
|---|----------------|

### Overall effectiveness

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 4   |
| 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?  | 4 |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners   | 4 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 4 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress                              | 4 |

### 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?          | 4 |
| 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                     | 4   |
| 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?  | Yes |

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

11 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sharps Copse Primary and Nursery School, Havant, PO9 5PE

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and really appreciated the help you gave us with the inspection.

There are many good aspects to Sharps Copse School that you appreciate and enjoy. However, your school is not yet as good as it needs to be and we have given it a Notice to Improve which means more inspectors will visit the school to check on progress. The school test results in English and mathematics are not high enough and you need much more help from teachers to ensure you do as well as you can.

Here are the things we like about your school:

- all staff are working hard to make your school a better place to be and where you feel safe and very well cared for
- you behave well and have good attitudes to your work
- you enjoy school and all the activities on offer, particularly the Rock Challenge where you all had a lot of fun
- you make good progress in the Foundation Stage.

These are the things we think could be better:

- your work in English and mathematics needs to improve
- we have asked your school to make teaching better so the work you get is at the right level and challenges you more.
- you have targets for your work and it is marked regularly, but these need to be matched more closely to what you need to learn so you can make faster progress
- the senior staff of the school need to make sure they are clear about the progress you need to make so that you learn well enough.

Yours sincerely

Janet Sinclair

Lead inspector