

Shaldon Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113217
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	325775
Inspection date	19 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Robert Pyner HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	196
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jon Rawson
Headteacher	Francis Moule
Date of previous school inspection	14 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Bridge Road Shaldon Teignmouth TQ14 0DD
Telephone number	01626 873329
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an additional inspector, with another inspector shadowing the process. Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the impact on pupils' learning of the teaching for all age groups
- how well data on progress is used to improve standards and achievement, particularly at Key Stage 1 and in mathematics
- the effectiveness of leadership at all levels in raising pupils' standards and achievement.

Evidence was collected from performance data, school documents, observations of teaching and the work produced by pupils. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, the chair of governors and staff also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were largely justified, if sometimes generous, and they have been included as appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Shaldon Primary is slightly smaller than average and serves an area that is broader than the village community in which it is situated. The school is oversubscribed and parental choice means that a large proportion of pupils travel from surrounding areas. Pupils come from a variety of backgrounds but attainment on entry to the school is broadly in line with that expected. Most pupils are of White British heritage and very few do not speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national average, as is the percentage with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is in line with the national figure.

The school has been designated as a National Support School. Since September 2008, it has been involved in a management partnership with a primary school in another part of the county. This is planned to continue for two years. Under this partnership, the strategic leadership of both schools is provided by an executive headteacher, with day-to-day management at Shaldon being undertaken by an associate headteacher and an acting deputy headteacher. Staff from both schools share expertise and experience. Each school has its own governing body.

The school has achieved the Healthy School and Sportsmark Gold awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Shaldon Primary School is a good school where everyone is valued and cared for very well. The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding, as are pupils' personal development and curricular provision. The school has gone through a period of change over the last year, entering into a management partnership with another primary school that has affected the structure of the senior management team. The school's managers have made good use of the opportunities this has afforded for the development of staff experience and activities for pupils. The large majority of the parents' responses in the confidential questionnaire for the inspection supported the school and particularly noted the effectiveness of the care and support for pupils. However, a small minority noted a lack of clear communication from the school over a number of issues, including the management partnership. The school is aware of this, and has already set up a working group of parents whose role is to develop a variety of strategies aimed at improving communication.

Reception children settle extremely well as a result of a very well thought out induction programme and effective liaison with numerous pre-schools within the community. Children make excellent progress throughout their time in Reception but this slows somewhat in Key Stage 1. The 2008 Year 2 results were broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics, at both the expected and higher National Curriculum levels. An exception was in writing at the higher Level 3, where there was an improvement on the previous year. Achievement accelerates markedly at Key Stage 2 and the results for 2008 show that pupils made excellent progress in English over the key stage. Attainment in this subject is significantly above national figures at the higher level, and over half of the pupils reached this level in 2008. Progress in science is also good, but there is a clear disparity between these subjects and mathematics, where progress overall is only satisfactory and standards remain stubbornly close to the average, particularly in terms of the proportion of pupils gaining the higher level. The school is disappointed that work to raise performance at the higher level at Key Stage 1 and mathematics across the school, including developing stronger links with parents through focusing on how to support pupils' work at home, has not yet been sufficiently effective in terms of improved standards. However, taken overall, pupils are well prepared in basic skills, and particularly their personal development, for the transfer to secondary education and later life.

Overall, the quality of teaching is good, and there are some outstanding elements. Teachers are enthusiastic; some display excellent subject knowledge in English and science, and have high expectations. They generally use effective questioning to engage and challenge pupils and provide good pace in lessons so that understanding builds as the lesson progresses, and they generally plan well for their classes so that pupils of all abilities are provided with work that is well matched to their needs. However, these features were not always seen consistently in the lessons observed during the inspection. Teaching assistants are very well deployed to support individual pupils or groups. All classes are effective learning environments which build on the excellent relationships at all levels in the school to ensure that pupils make progress. Some classes show very effective involvement by pupils in assessing their own work and developing appropriate strategies for improvement. The school is currently working to enhance its assessment tracking system to further develop the ability to identify underperformance and provide appropriate intervention for individuals or groups, but particularly for more able pupils. Oral and written feedback on work is part of the school's assessment cycle and the school highlights the importance of discussion between staff and pupils on how to improve. Marking

is positive and encouraging and there are examples of clear guidance for individual pupils on what they need to do to improve, although this is not fully consistent across the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress due to the effective support that they receive.

There is a calm, supportive learning atmosphere in the school, with pupils working eagerly, focused on doing their best. Not surprisingly, pupils love school, delight in learning and have enthusiasm for gaining new skills. Their behaviour, both in and out of lessons, is excellent and they report that they are not troubled by bullying. They are extremely sensible, tolerant and aware of others when playing in the small playground areas within the cramped school site. Pupils' friendships are strong and they enjoy celebrating others' achievements. They are rightly proud of their school. Attendance is improving and is good.

Pupils feel exceptionally safe and secure because they know that staff have their well-being at heart and are always prepared to listen, help and take action. Parents appreciate the level of care and support offered to the pupils, which includes a counsellor and learning mentors. Pupils' awareness of the need to stay fit and live a healthy life is outstanding. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Moral and social development is outstanding. They show a very well developed understanding of fair play and right and wrong actions. They have a very strong social commitment to both their school and the local community and, through Christian and other celebrations and visits, they learn to value both British and other multicultural lifestyles and faith systems.

Pupils accept responsibility with considerable maturity and impressive independence of thought and action. The school council is a confident group which has a strong voice in the school community and a significant impact on decision-making, based on shared family values. An example of this is the sponsorship of a child in Angola and support for various charities.

The school rightly prides itself on being a 'thinking school' which constantly strives to develop and refine the curriculum and flexibly adapts and uses cross-curricular links, focusing on developing and honing pupils' knowledge, competencies and skills. This has an excellent impact on pupils' personal development, particularly in their enthusiasm, confidence, concentration and ability to transfer skills to different situations. The development across the school of thinking skills, speaking and literacy is particularly strong and so pupils feel really comfortable when working independently. For example, Year 6 pupils were able to discuss in pairs and in a class group how they could construct a budget for their pocket money, then develop their understanding to consider how the government could decide how to distribute resources. This independent learning is further developed by the Learning Platform, an information and communication technology (ICT) project whereby pupils can continue their learning at home. Enrichment activities are very good, with a balanced range of activities, including sports and music tuition. Learning is enhanced by stimulating visits to places of interest and knowledgeable visitors to the school.

Leadership and management are effective and the changes in senior leadership over the last year have been used as a platform to develop new opportunities for both schools in the management partnership, although this is yet to impact fully on Shaldon's achievement and standards. All staff and governors work well as a team and excellent pastoral arrangements contribute very well to the safety and care of the pupils. The senior leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and a clear focus on raising standards as well as meeting pupils' social and emotional needs. Self-evaluation is mostly accurate and developed well to include the views of stakeholders as part of improvement

planning. The school development plan involves all members of staff and governors, together with some parents working within an innovative domain structure, which means that there has been improvement across a range of areas within the school. The plan itself is comprehensive, although some targets are not sharp enough in defining clear outcomes by which success can be gauged. Also, it has yet to have a significant impact on achievement in Key Stage 1 and mathematics across the school. The school's contribution to community cohesion is good, and includes effective strategies for engaging with the local community and links with schools in Europe and further afield through an ICT project. Governance is good. Governors are well informed, proactive and ably led by a well-informed chair.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children join the school with the skills expected for their age. They make outstanding progress and the current year group are on course to reach well above average standards by the time they move into Year 1. Very good induction procedures include home visits to all families before they start school. The school has very good links with local pre-schools. Parents are very well involved in the learning and development of their children through an effectively used home/school diary and reading record and by the way in which they contribute to the child's knowledge, skills and understanding. Teaching and learning are related to imaginative and exceptionally well planned and highly appropriate experiences. For example, children really enjoyed finding out what happened to ice cubes when placed in different parts of the classroom. An excellent balance between adult-led and child-chosen activities leads children to make outstanding gains in learning. Rigorous assessments are undertaken that contribute to the next steps in children's learning. The outside area is allowing children to develop well their curiosity about the world around them and their physical and creative skills. However, the area is constrained by lack of space and this restricts some learning opportunities. The excellent leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensure outstanding ongoing provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement and standards in Key Stage 1 and mathematics across the school, particularly by sharpening assessment and providing consistently high quality challenge and support for more able pupils.
- Build on the work of the Parent Action Team to improve communication with parents so that they feel better informed about school developments and activities.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
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	1
The extent to which 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 learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

20 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shaldon Primary School, Teignmouth TQ14 0DD

Thank you for making my colleagues and I feel so welcome in your school when we visited recently, and for helping with our questions. We really enjoyed talking to you and found everything that you said very interesting, especially your views about life at school and how you like working and playing together.

I thought you would like to know what we found out about the school. We agree with you and your parents that your school is good. These are some of the things that we particularly liked.

- You really enjoy school, work hard in your lessons and make good overall progress, but the achievement of pupils in the Reception class and in English across the school is outstanding.
- You behave excellently and are very kind and thoughtful to each other.
- Your teachers work hard to help you to learn, make your lessons interesting and provide you with excellent opportunities to take part in exciting activities and think for yourselves.
- All the staff work well together to take excellent care of you and keep you safe and healthy.
- The leaders of your school are working hard to make improvements and make sure that you achieve as well as you can.

No matter how well a school is working, there are always improvements that can be made. There are two things that we have asked the school to do. The first is to improve the achievement of the pupils in Key Stage 1 and in mathematics across the school by concentrating on children who can manage harder work. Some of your parents told us that they felt that communication with the school could be better. Therefore we have asked school leaders to build on the work already started with the Parent Action Team to develop better ways for the school to communicate with your parents.

You can help to improve your school even more by continuing to work hard and help each other. I am sure that you will.

Best wishes

Robert Pyner

Her Majesty's Inspector