

# Shakespeare Infant School

## Inspection report

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Unique Reference Number	115888
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	326285
Inspection dates	7–8 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Vanessa Ward

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Woolford
Headteacher	Jane Skinner
Date of previous school inspection	27–28 April 2006
School address	Shakespeare Road Eastleigh SO50 4FZ
Telephone number	023 8057 3888
Fax number	023 8036 6414
Email address	headteacher@shakespeare-inf.hants.sch.uk

Age group	Error! Reference source not found.
Inspection date(s)	Error! Reference source not found.
Inspection number	Error! Reference source not found.

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## Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence, including pupils' work, data on their progress, the school improvement plan and management documentation, as well as the questionnaires completed by 88 parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how effectively the school is improving writing skills throughout the school, including the use of speaking, listening and drama
- how successful the outcomes are for pupils' personal and social development
- how well the school promotes community cohesion across its religious, ethnic and socioeconomic context
- how effectively the recent changes are improving provision and outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Information about the school

Shakespeare Infant School is average in size. Almost all of the pupils are from White British backgrounds, the rest coming from a wide range of ethnic groups. A very small number of pupils are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. These difficulties mainly relate to speech, language, communication and social/emotional development. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average.

The school provides an Early Bird club for parents who need to bring their children to school before the start of the school day. The school admits up to 90 children into the three classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are organised into three mixed-ability classes, although they move into ability classes for English and mathematics lessons.

The school has won several awards, including the Activemark and Healthy School awards.

## Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

1

Capacity for sustained improvement

1

### Main findings

Shakespeare Infant School provides an outstanding education for its pupils. Its logo of 'We Care' is central to all that it does and underpins pupils' success. Pupils achieve extremely well because of the attention that is paid to their individual needs, both in their learning and in their personal development.

Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, the staff and governors are united in their commitment to strive for constant improvement in order to enable all pupils, regardless of their background or ability, to achieve their best. School self-evaluation is both rigorous and accurate and takes into account the views of pupils and parents, as well as those of all staff and governors. This leads to challenging targets being set, accompanied by thorough tracking and review of progress towards them. The governing body is highly effective, both in supporting and challenging the school.

Substantial improvements have taken place since the previous inspection. These include rising standards, much greater involvement of pupils in evaluating their learning, a more creative curriculum and increased attendance. These, combined with current successful initiatives and the proven commitment of the staff to embrace change, indicate the school's outstanding capacity for further improvement.

When children first start school, their skills are less well developed, sometimes markedly so, than most four-year-olds. However, the excellent teaching, teamwork and leadership enable them to make excellent progress, so that by the end of Year 2 standards are above average. For the more able pupils, standards are high in reading and mathematics. The school has identified that standards in writing could be higher and is working hard, and successfully, to bring about improvement. Recent strategies are proving effective in capturing pupils' interest and accelerating their progress.

Excellent teamwork is a feature of the teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Constant review of the provision seeks to improve children's learning. This has led to successful organisational changes and to the purchase of more resources. An outdoor area for the youngest children has been refurbished but is currently not used as fully as it could be for play-based learning. The staff know their pupils very well and keep a close check on their welfare. Pupils thrive in this supportive environment and make excellent progress in their personal development. Their behaviour is exemplary and they enjoy school very much, embracing with enthusiasm all that it offers. The very rich curriculum, including school visits, clubs

and visiting experts, contributes much to this enthusiasm.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Plan and implement more play-based learning for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the newly resourced outdoor area by the start of the next academic year.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

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The progress pupils make over time is outstanding. During the inspection, the progress seen in lessons was at least good and sometimes outstanding. The inspectors focused particularly on the quality of pupils' writing. This was because standards in writing are lower than those for reading and mathematics. The school has implemented several initiatives to increase pupils' interest in writing and to accelerate their progress. Frequent reviews of the impact of these, together with appropriate adjustments, are ensuring their success. An increase in speaking, listening and drama opportunities throughout the school is helping pupils to prepare their writing much more effectively, as is an increase in the opportunities to write at greater length. Previous initiatives to close the gap between the attainment of boys and girls and to raise the attainment of different groups of pupils have been successful. The additional support provided for pupils with speech, language, communication and social/emotional difficulties is particularly effective. Children writing in a Reception class were very well supported by staff who encouraged discussion and enabled them to build successfully on previous learning. This high quality of support enables nearly all of these pupils to attain the expected level by the end of Year 2.

Pupils feel very safe and, as a result, are free to play and learn happily. They show care and consideration for each other. They take part enthusiastically in the many opportunities for healthy play and exercise; the 'Huff and Puff' club is very popular. The achievement of the Activemark for the past three years reflects the school's commitment in this area. Pupils enjoy a good choice of lunches, plus water and fruit, and all comply with the expectation to bring healthy food and drink to school. They are proud of their Healthy School Award. Pupils are confident in expressing their ideas. They are currently developing a link with a school in Africa and understand very well the issues involved. The basic skills of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology, combined with opportunities to work collaboratively and manage funds, prepare them very well for the future.

### *These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	1
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	1
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	1
How well do pupils behave?	1
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	1
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	1
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	1

## How effective is the provision?

A wide range of teaching styles, combined with lively and varied activities, promote pupils' enthusiasm for learning and excellent progress. All of this is underpinned by very positive relationships between adults and pupils, and excellent guidance from support staff. Teachers have a wide repertoire of skills that they use well in meeting individual needs. The use of a treasure hunt for clues around school, to help pupils understand that some words contain silent letters, the acting out of verbs in the playground and the imaginative use of puppets all promote pupils' interest and skills in writing. Good use of questioning and discussion helps pupils to rehearse their ideas before writing them down. Pupils in Year 2, dressed to represent the character they were portraying, expressed their opinions for and against the building of a bridge and this helped to formulate the arguments they wrote in a letter. Staff cooperate very well in planning and this ensures consistency of learning for pupils in different classes. Assessment is frequent and rigorous and the information generated is used very effectively to provide extra support when needed. Pupils know their learning targets and are successfully involved in assessing their own progress.

The curriculum is exceptionally broad and offers varied learning experiences for all. It is imaginative and very well planned to embrace both academic learning and personal development. Individuals and groups needing additional support are well catered for. The school provides meaningful opportunities to help pupils learn basic skills across a range of subjects; a letter written from an imprisoned Guy Fawkes to his mother made letter-writing purposeful and provided good links between English and history. Innovative approaches to writing fully exploit a wide range of challenges that greatly increase pupils' motivation to learn. The curriculum is imaginatively and excitingly extended by partnerships, out of school learning, and clubs and activities. Celebration of pupils' achievements helps to boost their self-esteem. The planning and structure of the curriculum are very good, providing different levels of challenge and pupil groupings. This enables pupils to learn at a pace which consolidates learning and supports progress.

Transition arrangements and links with partners in the pre-schools, junior and secondary schools are extremely positive and ensure that pupils are supported fully when they transfer in or out of the school. Movement from the Reception year to

Year 1 is very carefully managed to provide continuity of learning. Support for pupils who join mid-year, return after absence or are learning to speak English are very effective. The school's communications and partnership with parents and other agencies are excellent. These are used particularly effectively in supporting pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils who attend the Early Bird club are very well cared for, and parents express complete satisfaction with what is provided. Vulnerable pupils are totally integrated into the life of the school, with careful regard being paid to their needs, while helping them to develop independence. The school's strategies for encouraging attendance and following up on absence are very robust. This has improved attendance since the previous inspection and the school continues to work closely with the parents of the few persistent absentees. Current attendance figures are adversely affected by the long-term illness of a few pupils.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

The quality of teaching	1
The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

## How effective are leadership and management?

The strong determination to provide the very best for pupils is promoted by the headteacher and is followed through by the staff and governors. The leadership team is very effective and is well supported by highly motivated staff. Systems to improve the quality of teaching and learning are very robust. Staff share the responsibility for leading and improving subjects and readily pool their expertise. This is part of the strong teamwork among all who work in the school and it keeps school improvement at the forefront of development. Governors challenge the school about progress and standards and carry out their responsibilities very effectively. They are well informed about the school's strengths and about those areas where it can improve. The school is very successful in promoting equality of opportunity and it is this attention to the needs of the individual that enables pupils to make such good progress. Excellent attention is paid by all levels of management to ensuring the highest quality of safety and care for the pupils. There are rigorous procedures for safeguarding pupils. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion both in school and through links with the local and international communities. Its social and economic links are particularly effective. As a result of recent evaluation of its work, the school is strengthening its links in terms of faith and ethnicity. The allocation of funding is driven by rigorous analysis of pupils' needs. The outcomes for pupils show that the school gives excellent value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition	1
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and driving improvement	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are given an excellent start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Very effective links with pre-schools and parents, together with opportunities to visit school regularly before admission, enable children to settle quickly. They enjoy their time in Reception very much and make excellent progress. Relationships both among children themselves and with adults are extremely positive. The children behave very well and are gaining a very good understanding of how to keep healthy and safe. They develop good independence through being involved in planning activities. Staff understand and meet the needs of young children very well. They keep a careful check on children's learning and use the information successfully in planning what they need to learn next. There is a very strong focus on individual needs and, for those who need extra support, provision is excellent. Although many children start the school with skills that are well below those of most four-year-olds, especially in communication, language and social skills, most reach and many exceed the expected goals by the end of the year. Exciting activities, such as role play about voyages on ships, the growing of plants and preparing for a journey, all help to motivate children to learn. All of the adults interact very well with the children, asking challenging questions that encourage the children to be imaginative and to explain what they are thinking. The school's focus on improving writing is embraced fully in the Reception classes. Opportunities for informal writing during play have been increased. This heightens the children's understanding of the many purposes for writing, such as writing a list of items that need to go into a suitcase. Letter sounds and names are taught frequently and children transfer this learning to their own writing. Excellent leadership ensures that the provision is evaluated rigorously to enable it to improve further. An outdoor area has recently been redesigned and resourced and plans are developing to make full use of this to enhance outdoor play-based learning.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1



Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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## Views of parents and carers

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Half of the parents who responded were positive about every aspect of school life. The vast majority are happy with the progress their children are making. About half of the questionnaires contained specific comments and almost all of these were positive. Parents are very grateful for the high levels of care that are provided for their children. They also appreciate the approachability of the headteacher and staff. There were no common themes among the very few questionnaires containing negative comments. The inspection found no evidence to substantiate these issues but the school is aware of these concerns.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Shakespeare Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

The inspection team received 88 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 211 parents and carers registered at the school.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	82	5	1	

## What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



21 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shakespeare Infant School, Eastleigh, SO50 4FZ

I am writing to thank you for your help when we visited your school recently and to let you know what we found out. You were very friendly and helpful and a special thank you goes to those of you who met us to tell us about your school. Many of you and your parents told us that your school is excellent, and we agree.

There are lots of good things about your school. Here are some of them.

- All of the grown-ups take very good care of you and this helps you to feel safe and happy in school.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors work really well together to improve your school.
- You make excellent progress and, by the end of Year 2, you can read, write and do mathematics better than most seven-year-olds.
- Your teachers give you interesting things to do and help you to understand how well you are doing.
- You eat healthily, really enjoy taking exercise and behave very well.
- You show that you care for each other and this helps you to feel happy in school.
- The children in the Reception classes are given an excellent start to their school life.

To make your school even better, we have asked the teachers in the Reception classes to make more use of the outside area with all of its new resources to help the children learn even more.

You can help by always doing your best and by making sure that you go to school every day unless you are ill. This is very important because you will otherwise miss important opportunities for learning and you will not be there to share in the fun!

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

Yours faithfully

Vanessa Ward  
Lead Inspector

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