

Sherwood Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 119339 |
| Local Authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 327005 |
| Inspection date | 27 January 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Dave Byrne |

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.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 371 |
| 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 | Mr Roger Turp |
| Headteacher | Mr David Fann |
| Date of previous school inspection | 1 July 2006 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Sherwood Way Fulwood Preston Lancashire PR2 9GA |
| Telephone number | 01772 719093 |
| Fax number | 01772 716138 |

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|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Age group | 4–11 |
| Inspection date | 27 January 2009 |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the achievement of pupils taking their prior attainment into account
- the accuracy of the school's view of teaching and learning
- the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the success of strategies for transition into Year 1
- the effectiveness of school self-evaluation in improving the school.

Evidence was gathered from performance data and other school documentation; observations of teaching and learning; the work produced by pupils; parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail. The inspectors found that the judgements made in the school's self-evaluation form were justified in almost all cases and these have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

Description of the school

This is a large two-form entry school which serves a relatively advantaged area. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average and the eligibility for free school meals is below average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Around a third of pupils are from other ethnic backgrounds, predominantly Asian or Asian British. The school makes provision for children at the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school where pupils achieve consistently high standards academically and in their personal development. It has a deservedly excellent reputation in the community which is reflected by it being oversubscribed. The school is better than it was at the time of the last inspection and has an excellent capacity to improve in the future. The school's success is rooted in the dedication of the staff team, the inspiring curriculum pupils receive and the exceptional leadership and management of the headteacher supported by an excellent governing body.

There are excellent partnerships with parents, the vast majority of whom cannot praise the school enough. They rightly rate the quality of care and guidance offered to their children as being outstanding. The school takes great care to ensure that pupils and adults are safe at all times. The current requirements relating to safeguarding pupils are fully met. The safe and secure environment enables pupils to flourish and learn. Their enjoyment is obvious on their faces. They smile and laugh when at play and are bursting with enthusiasm in lessons.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Good manners are the norm. Pupils put others first and politely open doors for others and take great pride in helping classmates and staff whenever they can. The cultural diversity within the school is celebrated. Pupils form friendships with others of differing cultural backgrounds and develop a mature understanding of the richness and diversity of modern society. Bullying is very rare and there is no racism. Important personal skills are very well understood; for example, pupils eat sensibly, taking advantage of the excellent school meals, and know the choices required to stay safe and healthy. Good opportunities are given for pupils to become aware of how democratic changes can occur. They talk with pride about meeting with the headteacher as school councillors and like the way their views are appreciated. Pupils develop into confident, self-assured young citizens and they are extremely well prepared for their future lives.

Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are consistently well above average. When the starting point to school is considered, this represents outstanding achievement. Standards at the start of Year 1 are typically above average. The children make good progress in Key Stage 1. A recently improved approach to teaching sounds and letters has had a marked impact on pupils' progress in writing. After some time when standards in writing were lower than reading and mathematics, they have risen and are now above average. During Key Stage 2, progress accelerates further. Compared to similar schools nationally, it is very rapid. As a result, the proportion of Year 6 pupils exceeding the national expectations is high. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds do as well as other pupils and any emerging variations in the performance of boys and girls are tackled swiftly by the school. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a strength of the school. A number of special programmes successfully support pupils who find learning difficult and they make a big difference to these pupils' development of literacy and numeracy. More able pupils are given work to extend their good skills including links with other schools, for example, to stretch talented mathematicians. In addition to the success gained in the core subjects, pupils also gain considerable success in sport and participate in prestigious musical and arts events in the city and further afield.

Teaching is good. It has some outstanding features. Lessons are usually planned carefully to meet all pupils' needs. Assessment is used very well to identify pupils who need to be helped

or challenged further and teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to helping individuals and groups. Pupils are set high expectations and this results in them having high standards in what they do. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used skilfully by many staff to attract and hold pupils' attention and to reinforce key learning points. Pupils develop confidence in using computers and say this adds to their enjoyment of learning. In the best lessons, pupils work rapidly because the teachers push lessons along with a real pace and sense of purpose. Marking is excellent in some classes, but in others it does not give sufficient guidance to enable pupils to improve their work and meet their targets. Where this inconsistency is the case, it slows learning.

The outstanding curriculum is well balanced between academic activities and those designed to develop pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship. A good emphasis is given to developing the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT but not at the expense of developing pupils' creative and sporting talents or in promoting their confidence to perform in front of others. Some good opportunities are provided for pupils to become independent learners. An excellent variety of extra-curricular events gives pupils opportunities to taste a host of activities not included within the standard curriculum. Educational visits are frequently at the heart of learning and add interest and motivation to pupils' learning.

The headteacher is inspirational. His leadership is held in high regard by pupils, staff, parents and governors. He leads by example and is constantly supporting and cajoling staff and pupils to do as well as possible. An excellent management team and very efficient school bursar makes sure that the school runs smoothly. The school knows itself well, although it is cautious in its judgement. The school is constantly seeking ways of improving as is demonstrated by the school's success in raising standards in writing. It is very committed to promoting community cohesion. Plans within many subjects of the curriculum, coupled with a wide variety of initiatives involving pupils in local and regional events are included in school development planning. The impact on pupils' development is carefully evaluated as part of the school improvement planning process. The next stage of development is to strengthen international links. The governing body are experienced and rightly expect a lot of the headteacher and his team. Finances are managed meticulously to get best value from the budget.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children benefit from an excellent start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is a buzz of excitement as children learn and play together in the rich and stimulating indoor and outdoor environments. Under outstanding leadership and management, the staff team tailor activities to meet the diverse needs of children in the Reception unit. The mixed cultures are celebrated and children from a young age learn to value the differences as well as the similarities of others. High levels of care and welfare are in place which ensures that children are safe and secure at all times. Children develop good levels of personal, social and emotional development. Role play successfully extends many areas of learning. During one visit to the class 'shop', the inspector was not only fitted out with new glasses but was also persuaded to buy a host of fruit and vegetables! Children start school with levels of development that are typical for their age. Most children reach standards that meet, and in many cases exceed, the average for their age by the time they start Year 1. Smooth strategies for transition into Year 1 are firmly in place.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve marking in classes where it lacks sufficient detail to effectively guide pupils.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 1 |
| 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? | 1 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 1 |

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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|---|---|
| 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

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| How well do learners achieve? | 1 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 1 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 1 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress | 1 |

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

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|---|---|
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |

The quality of provision

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| 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? | 1 |

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 1 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1 |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 1 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated | 1 |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 2 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 1 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 1 |
| 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**

28 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sherwood Primary School, Lancashire, PR2 9GA

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. Please thank your parents for taking the time to complete and return their questionnaires which we have read and used to inform the judgements of your school.

Sherwood Primary School is outstanding. I was pleased to see how much you enjoy school and the way you work hard in lessons. Your behaviour and manners are impeccable and the way you think of others is reassuring. You benefit from good and at times excellent teaching which makes learning fun and interesting. The use of school visits and the wide range of clubs add much to the teaching that goes on in classes.

You get a really good start to school life in the Reception unit. Your learning is so much fun and very well organised to help every child. As you move through the school you learn at a rapid rate and, by the time you leave in Year 6, you reach standards in English, mathematics and science that are high and well above average for schools in England. You also do well in sport and music. These high standards, coupled with your confidence with others, mean that you are very well prepared for moving onto your secondary school.

Your school feels like one big family. Everyone gets on well and seems to care for others. This doesn't happen by accident. It is because of the efforts of the teachers and staff in the school. They make sure you are very well cared for and also do their best to help you to become independent in all that you do. I agree with you and your parents that the headteacher is superb. He makes sure that the school is working well and that you have lots of exciting things to do. Whilst much of the school is excellent, it doesn't mean that some things can't be even better. The headteacher and staff are always thinking of ways of improving things. I have identified one particular aspect which could be improved. This is to make sure that the way your work is marked is always useful in helping you to make your own work better.

I hope you enjoy school and continue to be the good citizens that you are.

Yours sincerely

Dave Byrne

Lead inspector