

Sherrier Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120188
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	327219
Inspection dates	21–22 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Marion Wallace

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	403
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Joanne Cooper
Headteacher	Lyndsey Beckett
Date of previous school inspection	21–22 March 2006
School address	Bitteswell Road Lutterworth Leicestershire LE17 4EX
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 24 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, governors' minutes, subject improvement plans, assessment information and curriculum planning. In addition, 122 parent questionnaires were received and analysed.

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

- How well more able pupils achieve in writing at both key stages.
- How well boys in Years 5 and 6 achieve in English and mathematics.
- How well teachers use assessment information to challenge different groups of pupils.
- The impact of the senior management team in bringing about improvements.

Information about the school

Sherrier is a large primary school in Lutterworth. Most pupils come from Lutterworth and the surrounding villages. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The percentage with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The headteacher has been in post for two years. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision in two Reception classes. The school has achieved the Healthy School award. The number of pupils joining the school during the course of the year is usually average but in 2008 a significantly high number joined during Year 6. There are three classes in Year 5 and two classes for each year group for the rest of the school. At the time of the inspection the deputy headteacher was on maternity leave.

A family playgroup not managed by the governing body is on the school site and is inspected separately.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Sherrier is a satisfactory school. There are areas of strength but also areas that the school acknowledges need to be improved. While achievement is satisfactory overall, it is inconsistent between different groups of pupils and different subjects because teaching does not consistently make the same positive impact on pupils' learning.

The key strengths of the school are:

- the school ethos is friendly, warm and welcoming, relationships are very good and pupils make good gains in their personal development
- the provision in the Reception classes is consistently good
- pupils' achievement is good in science
- pupils and parents appreciate the good range of extra-curricular activities
- care, guidance and support are strong so pupils behave well and are sensible and enthusiastic learners
- the satisfactory quality of teaching is improving and there is a growing proportion of lessons which are good or outstanding
- links between subjects help make learning relevant and interesting
- the headteacher and senior management team lead the school well and have a clear vision for its future improvement.

The rigorous systems for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the school are playing their part in improving its performance, although middle managers play a less effective role in driving school improvement than the senior leaders. The work done to redress the dip in achievement and standards which occurred after the last inspection, and the effective action being taken to eradicate remaining pockets of underachievement, demonstrate the school's satisfactory capacity to improve. Key weaknesses which remain are:

- teachers do not consistently use assessment information to match tasks closely to the learning needs of pupils
- achievement in writing, especially for more able pupils in Key Stage 1, is less well developed than pupils' learning in other aspects of core subjects
- the role of middle managers has yet to be fully developed, particularly the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in the subject they lead.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress and raise standards in writing in Key Stages 1 and 2 by:
 - ensuring key skills are taught consistently well
 - improving standards of presentation
 - helping pupils learn to use a wide range of vocabulary to enrich their writing
 - improving spelling by ensuring younger pupils regularly practise words they find difficult
 - improving pupils' pencil grips and the quality of handwriting.
- Ensure that teaching is of consistently good quality by:
 - ensuring all teachers use assessment more effectively to plan lessons that provide appropriate challenge to groups within the school
 - helping pupils know how to improve through consistently good quality marking.
- Increase the rigour of school monitoring and evaluation by:
 - improving the skills of middle managers in measuring how effectively pupils are being taught and how well they are learning in the different subjects.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enjoy learning because lessons are well organised and strong relationships contribute to a positive climate for learning. Pupils relish using their imagination and working in small groups. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson, pupils really enjoyed creating a home for animals and giving reasons for the type of home provided to best meet the animal's needs. In a Year 5 lesson pupils enjoyed marking their partner's work and identifying writing that effectively persuaded the reader of their arguments.

While achievement is satisfactory overall, including for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the quality of learning throughout the school is not yet consistently good. Expectations are rising but are not yet totally consistent. The best learning was observed in Year 6 and well illustrated in a literacy lesson where high expectations assisted pupils' excellent progress. Not a moment was lost as pupils evaluated personal reactions to the style and content of various newspaper articles. This prepared them extremely well for their own writing. While sometimes good and occasionally outstanding teaching is making a positive difference in accelerating progress, this has yet to be shared more widely. Nevertheless, the school's tracking and inspection evidence indicates significant improvement in attainment and progress this year for all groups, with pupils on track to reach their increasingly challenging targets and proportionally more pupils working at the higher levels than in previous years. Examination of pupils' work shows that the quality of key writing

skills, presentation, spelling, handwriting and the development and use of a rich range of vocabulary are not consistent throughout the school and this is limiting pupils' achievement in English and their future economic well-being.

Pupils start in Year 1 with broadly average standards and make satisfactory progress so that by the end of Year 2, standards are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. More able pupils, however, do not achieve as well in writing as in other aspects of their learning. Continued satisfactory progress enables pupils to reach broadly average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Inspection evidence shows that previous underachievement amongst boys in Key Stage 2 has been eradicated. The challenge for more able pupils, especially in English and mathematics, has improved significantly this year through focused interventions and improved teaching and learning. Standards in science are consistently above average because of strong and effective teaching in the subject.

Other key features of pupils' outcomes are:

- pupils behave well because they enjoy coming to school. Their attendance is above average
- most pupils say they feel safe because relationships are good and they can discuss any problems they have with adults
- pupils know what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, enjoying their fruit breaks and attending well at the good range of activity clubs
- pupils make a good contribution to the local and their own community, for example, supporting Fair Trade through links with a local community group
- pupils' have well developed skills in working collaboratively and cooperatively with others.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness contributes well to the strong sense of community within the school. Through learning aspects of philosophy, pupils reflect on their world and the issues facing future generations. For example, Year 4 pupils debated sensibly the implications for genetically modified animals and were acutely aware of the detrimental effect on the animals and the environment. Culture weeks reinforce pupils' awareness and knowledge of different lifestyles and beliefs well. When asked about visiting a mosque, pupils explained sensitively that they cover their hair and remove their shoes when entering through respect for those who follow the Muslim faith.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	3
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	3

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

To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	2
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	2
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory overall, with a significant number of lessons observed during the inspection which were good, and a few which were outstanding. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers mostly plan work that is well matched to different abilities within groups but this is not yet consistent across the school and results in pupils' variable progress. Not all teachers use assessment information well to plan work that challenges all groups effectively within the class. Consequently the match of work to pupils' ability is not always precise enough to ensure consistently good progress in learning. Indeed, a few pupils said they felt over challenged by some of their work. Teachers use questions well to check pupils' knowledge and understanding and pupils appreciate well-planned opportunities to discuss their ideas with others during 'talking partner' sessions. There is some excellent marking to guide pupils on how to improve their work, especially in Year 4 and 6, but this is not widespread.

The satisfactory curriculum generally matches pupils' needs but is not well enough adapted to meet pupils' academic aspirations in all subjects, particularly writing. Its strengths lie in the personal and social education programme, which assists pupils' good personal development. Pupils enjoy the 'connected curriculum' which links the skills and knowledge of different subjects very well. They are enthusiastic to learn even more, with one group stating clearly, 'We like everything we do.' Well-resourced and effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) is assisting pupils' future economic well-being. Curriculum enrichment is good and a wide range of clubs and activities are well attended, for example, athletics, chess and gardening.

Pastoral care is strong because the staff understand the needs of those who require extra support to help them move on. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enjoy their time in the 'Hive' and gain confidence in their own abilities to 'have a go' and build competence to tackle new work. Support for vulnerable pupils in the 'Munch Bunch Club' and the 'Daisy Chain' is very effective and ensures that they gain confidence to effectively share their feelings with others. This experience makes a positive contribution to other aspects of school life. All pupils feel well supported and cared for and their parents agree this is a school strength.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders demonstrate strong drive and ambition to take the school forward. The headteacher has a clear vision and is determined that the school should move forward. She has an accurate view of teaching in each classroom and is using this information to sharpen provision and target the most important areas that need improvement. The headteacher is well supported and challenged by an effective governing body who, with senior leaders, monitor and evaluate the work of the school effectively in the vast majority of areas. Tracking of achievement over time has been thorough and senior leaders are analysing data rigorously. They quickly identify any dips and swiftly put sensible strategies and interventions in place to promote improvement. The senior management team has been restructured and middle managers are new to their roles. They are not yet fully involved in monitoring provision, such as how well writing is promoted in their subjects.

The school promotes equalities soundly, as reflected in the profile of achievement across ability groups. However, there are high levels of respect shown for one another that demonstrate the good set of values and principles the school promotes. The school improvement plan identifies appropriate developmental areas to raise the effectiveness of the school from satisfactory to good. Partnership with the local authority has effectively helped the school to strengthen the leadership team and improve the quality of teaching and learning, and it contributes to the improving picture in the school's provision. The school effectively deploys its resources, particularly to improve provision for pupils who need the extra support through the 'Daisy Chain', 'the Hive' and 'Deep Support' intervention programmes. At the time of the inspection, safeguarding procedures met statutory requirements.

The school has developed a range of links both within and beyond the community that raises pupils' religious, ethnic and social awareness, such as links with an orphanage in Malawi and visits to a mosque. There is a clear policy for community cohesion and strategies to promote it, for example, cultural week looking at different religions. The next step is for the governors to evaluate more fully the impact of these strategies in the outcomes for pupils and in the school's effectiveness in its duty to promote community cohesion.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and	3

tackles discrimination	
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Home visits and good links with parents ensure that children settle well into school life. Most children enter Reception with the skills and knowledge expected for their age but a significant number have weaker communication, language and literacy skills. Children make good progress in both the Reception classes and reach standards which are broadly average by the time they start in Year 1. Children make good progress in their personal development, behaving well and having good relationships with others. Children's personal, social and emotional development and their communication and language skills are developed well through role play. Children use their imagination well using a large cardboard box as their home, imagining they were polar bears in the Antarctic leaving home to hunt for fish in the snow. They negotiated well with each other, deciding how they would complete their task. More able children know about the benefits of healthy food, warning others that eating too many sweets can make you 'poorly'. Adults encourage children to respond individually to questions and talk to each other, helping them to make good progress in their speaking and communication skills. Excellent phonics teaching results in children creating their own sentences using the sounds such as, 'The oak tree has large roots in the ground, the cuckoo sang his song.' Leaders and managers know what works well and what needs to be improved, but opportunities to challenge children in all areas of learning in the outdoor environment are sometimes missed. Care and welfare are good and contribute to children's positive achievement.

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

Views of parents and carers

There were 122 parental responses, which is a usual number for a school of this size.

A large majority of parents are satisfied with the school. Parents regard the school as happy, welcoming and friendly. They say children enjoy attending and they make good progress. Parents regard the school as caring and supportive and say the staff are approachable. They identify strengths of the school as: the activities, the relationships with staff, the good start children receive in Reception, the school ethos and the pupils' enjoyment. The majority of parental criticisms were offered constructively and were mainly concerned with lack of information with regard to the progress their children are making. Some highlighted the need for more parental guidance to enable parents to help their children at home. All other issues raised in the questionnaires were discussed with the school and the headteacher is taking action to ensure they are resolved.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sherrier Church of England Primary 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 122 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 400 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	72	43	6	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.

23 May 2009

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Sherrier Church of England Primary, Lutterworth LE 17 4EX

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed talking with you and your teachers. We enjoyed your assemblies and were impressed by how polite and well behaved you all were and how you all worked together sensibly. You and your parents told us how much you enjoy school and all the activities. We found your school is satisfactory but things are improving.

These are the things we found that your school does well.

- You get off to a good start in the Reception.
- You make sound progress through the school and you reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6.
- You all enjoy learning and your attendance is above average.
- You behave well and are very sensible and know how to keep safe.
- You enjoy and benefit from the many activities, clubs, visits and visitors.
- Your school cares for you well and teaches you about how to be healthy, to respect and care for others.
- Your school council is well organised and is working well with your teachers.
- All staff and governors work well together to ensure the school continues to improve.
- Your headteacher has high expectations of you and she gives a very strong lead to everyone.

There are three things that we identify for staff and governors to improve.

- Make sure that you all reach higher standards in writing.
- Make sure that all teachers use assessment information to plan work that is closely matched to your ability so that you are all appropriately challenged.
- Make sure that your teachers check your progress in all the subjects you learn more frequently.

You can help with these improvements by sharing with your teachers your thoughts on how well you are progressing. This will help them plan the next challenge for you. Thank you for a very enjoyable visit to your school and best wishes for your future.

Yours faithfully

Marion Wallace
Lead inspector

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