

Sherwood Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101443
Local Authority	Bexley
Inspection number	335716
Inspection dates	5–6 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Derek Watts

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	351
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Wood
Headteacher	Mr S J Fletcher
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 19 lessons or part lessons and held discussions with governors, pupils and staff. They observed the school's work, its policies, teachers' plans and school improvement planning. The inspection team analysed 107 questionnaires from parents, and others from pupils and staff.

Inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work. They looked in detail at the following:

- how well pupils are progressing in mathematics in Years 3 to 6
- the extent to which planning and teaching challenge and extend the more able pupils
- how well children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are progressing, particularly in communication, language and literacy.

Information about the school

Sherwood Park Primary is a large school. Over three quarters of the pupils are from a White British background. Other pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average but the proportion with a statement of special need is above average. A unit has recently been set up for pupils with autism, with capacity for eight pupils. The proportion of pupils who leave or join the school part way through their primary school education is higher than average. A before- and after-school club on site is managed by the school and was observed as part of the inspection.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Sherwood Park Primary is a satisfactory and improving school with some good features. Pupils' personal development is a clear strength of the school. As a parent commented, 'My child has more confidence and self-esteem since starting at Sherwood.' Pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning and the range of activities provided. They are considerate, friendly and polite. Pupils relate very well to adults and to their peers. As the pupils said, 'We care about people in our school.' Behaviour is good throughout the school and is often exemplary in lessons. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles extremely well by eating healthily and participating in regular exercise. They make a good contribution to the school and to the wider community. They readily take on additional responsibilities and raise funds for a variety of national and international charities. Attendance levels have improved since the last inspection and are now in line with national averages.

Children enter the Nursery with knowledge and skills that are broadly as expected for their age, and make good progress in most areas of learning. Good attention is given to language and early reading skills. By the end of Reception, standards are usually above average in most areas except mathematical calculation and early writing. There are not enough planned opportunities for children to extend their skills in these areas. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 and standards by the end of Year 6 are broadly average. Pupils joining and leaving the school can adversely affect attainment but pupils' progress measures have steadily improved since the last inspection. Successful strategies have been implemented to improve performance in writing and, as a result, more pupils attained the higher Level 5 in the most recent national tests. Standards in mathematics dipped, and raising performance in mathematics is currently a priority, with greater emphasis being placed on investigative and problem-solving work.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory but the proportion of good lessons is increasing. Leaders are keen to extend and share the good practice more widely. Teachers have established very good relationships with their pupils and this leads to positive attitudes and good conduct. Pupils are attentive, keen and respond well to teachers' clear instructions, explanations and questions. Technology is used well to illustrate key learning points. In some lessons, assessment information is not used well enough to plan teaching and to match tasks to pupils' abilities and needs. Activities are not always challenging enough to extend the more able, especially in mathematics. Time is not always used effectively so the pace of learning can slow down. A good curriculum provides interest and enjoyment for pupils. It is enriched by a wide range of additional activities.

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The headteacher and his staff have successfully created a positive and welcoming atmosphere for pupils, promoting good personal outcomes. Positive partnerships have been established with parents and carers, who are pleased with the care and education provided. The school has a clear understanding of its performance and has identified the most pressing areas to bring about improvements. Since the last inspection, the curriculum and care, guidance and support have improved and are now good. Senior leaders are taking positive steps to improve teaching and pupils' progress from satisfactory to good. Sherwood Park has demonstrated a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards by the end Year 6 from average to above average and increase the proportion of good teaching by:
 - using assessment information more consistently to plan teaching and match tasks to pupils' abilities and needs
 - providing challenging extension tasks for the more able pupils
 - sharing and extending the good teaching practice across the school
 - ensuring that time is used effectively to maximise learning.
 - Extend the opportunities for mathematical calculation and early writing skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage in order to improve children's attainment in these areas.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils' work in the lessons seen, assessments and national test results reflect broadly average standards and satisfactory progress. Initiatives to improve writing have been implemented well. Pupils write for a range of purposes and in different styles. Speaking and listening and drama are used effectively to inspire pupils and provide ideas for writing. Boys' writing has improved because teachers select resources and topics which motivate them. Pupils are applying and using their numeracy skills appropriately to solve a range of problems in mathematics. However, in the mathematics lessons seen, tasks did not always fully challenge and extend the more able. Both boys and girls are making satisfactory overall progress in English and mathematics, and differences in their attainment are not considerably different from the national picture. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive sound support and make satisfactory gains in their learning.

Pupils' moral and social development is good, and they show a good understanding of different cultures and faiths. Pupils feel safe and very well cared for at school. They are also confident that there is always a trusted grown-up they can turn to if they have a problem or if they are upset. Pupils show an excellent knowledge and understanding of healthy diets and the importance of taking regular exercise. The older pupils support the younger ones. Those on the school council represent their fellow pupils well and take

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their responsibilities seriously. Pupils are adequately prepared for the future economic well-being. Their personal and social skills are well developed. They make satisfactory progress in acquiring and applying literacy and numeracy skills.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers successfully create a positive classroom climate for learning, where pupils are managed well. In most cases, teachers share effectively the purpose of a lesson with the class so that pupils know what they are expected to learn. Pupils respond well to their teacher's clear instructions and explanations. Pupils have good opportunities to discuss their work.

In a high-quality English lesson in Year 6, pupils made extremely good progress in developing the skills of successful storytelling. They were inspired by the teacher's enthusiasm and strong subject knowledge. In pairs or small groups, pupils had good opportunities to discuss their ideas and express opinions. Skilful questioning by the teacher challenged the pupils and explored their ideas and understanding. Pupils were engrossed by a film extract that enhanced the lesson. Pupils discovered how voice,

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

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different effects and actions contribute to successful storytelling. This work provided a good foundation for developing writing skills.

Activities and tasks are not always sufficiently well matched to pupils' abilities and needs. The more able are not always sufficiently extended with challenging and demanding tasks, or moved on to extension work soon enough. Teaching assistants are usually used well to support pupils' learning, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, there are occasions when teachers do not use assistants fully during overlong introductions.

Since the last inspection, a more interesting and exciting curriculum has been developed. Good links between subjects add relevance and enjoyment to pupils' learning, although the improvements to English and mathematics are too recent to have had a full impact on pupils' attainment and progress. Good-quality art and design and design and technology contribute well to the breadth and range of the curriculum. Health education is given very good attention. This and the good sports partnerships make a valuable contribution to pupils' healthy lifestyles. A good range of additional activities are much enjoyed by the pupils and appreciated by parents. Pupils have good opportunities to learn to play a musical instrument. Popular clubs include athletics, cookery, choir, football, information and communication technology, orchestra and mini rugby. Residential visits to Surrey for Year 4 and to the Isle of Wight for Year 6 provide exciting outdoor activities and promote problem-solving and team-building skills well. There is good specialist provision for autistic pupils, whose needs are met well. The before- and after-school provision is a successful addition and is well attended. It is much appreciated by parents, as summed up by the comment, 'Breakfast and after-school clubs are fantastically run.'

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The experienced headteacher is well regarded by pupils, parents and staff. A positive ethos and good partnership with parents are at the heart of the school. Leaders and managers have a clear understanding of the school's strengths through systematic monitoring and review. The most pressing priorities for improvement have been identified. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and key subject leaders are well focused on improving pupils' performance. Pupils' progress is steadily improving and there has been considerable success in developing the curriculum and care, guidance

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and support. Leaders are not complacent and are aware that there is more to do before teaching and pupils' progress are consistently good.

Governors are supportive of the headteacher and the school. They have a clear understanding of what the school does well and are beginning to raise more challenging questions about pupils' performance. Statutory requirements are met and there are good procedures to protect and safeguard pupils. Equality is promoted well and discrimination is tackled effectively. Community cohesion is promoted well. The school has a good understanding of the community it serves. Pupils show a good understanding of their own and different faiths. Links with schools abroad are being developed to increase pupils' understanding of global issues. A productive partnership has been formed with the local community, and with the secondary school which shares the large site. Pupils from the autistic unit benefit from good specialist provision and are well integrated into mainstream classes.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Leaders and managers have maintained the good Early Years Foundation Stage provision that was identified in the last inspection. Induction procedures are effective and there are good partnerships with parents. Children new to the Nursery and those who join the Early Years Foundation Stage later settle quickly. Adults establish very good relationships with the children. They thoroughly enjoy their learning and relate very well to adults and their peers, making good progress in their personal and social development. Children feel safe, secure and well cared for at school because of the

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good attention given to care and welfare. A good range of learning activities is provided both inside and outside the classrooms. Children are well taught and there is an effective blend of adult-led activities and those allowing children to explore and learn independently. Speaking and listening pervade all activities and the teaching of letters and sounds is given good attention. There are appropriate systems to assess and record children's attainment. However, this information is not always used fully to modify the planning of teaching and learning activities. For example, planning does not focus on mathematical calculation or early writing opportunities in order to improve children's performance in these weaker areas.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
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 of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The inspection team received a good response to the questionnaires. All parents and carers who returned them are very happy with their child's experience at the school. They are particularly pleased with the sense of enjoyment, safety and the leadership and management. The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views. While leaders and managers are successfully promoting good personal outcomes for pupils and building good partnerships with parents, the impact on teaching and pupils' progress is satisfactory. A small minority of parents who responded to the questionnaire do not believe that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. The inspection team found behaviour to be consistently good and the school has effective procedures for dealing with any inappropriate behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sherwood Park Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 107 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 351 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	62	40	37	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	68	64	33	31	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	64	60	36	34	4	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	59	55	36	34	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	65	61	37	35	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	62	58	40	37	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	62	58	42	39	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	54	51	37	35	5	5	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	60	56	37	35	4	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	58	54	32	30	13	12	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	58	54	37	35	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	70	65	29	27	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	76	71	25	23	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



7 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sherwood Park Primary, Sidcup, DA15 9JQ

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school and showing us your work. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit and would like to tell you what we found. Yours is a satisfactory school. It has a number of good features. There have been good improvements since the last inspection.

These are the school's main strengths.

- You really enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning.
- The school is a positive and pleasant place to learn in.
- Children in Nursery and Reception get off to a good start.
- You get on really well with each other and your behaviour is good.
- A good range of learning activities, including clubs and visits, are provided.
- You have a first-rate understanding of how to keep healthy and fit.
- You feel safe at school because the teachers and other adults take good care of you and provide good support and guidance.
- You make good contributions to the school and to the wider community.

We have asked the headteacher and other teachers to do some things to make the school better for you.

- Some of you could make more progress, particularly in mathematics, by being given harder work, especially those of you who find learning easy.
- Teachers need to share the best features of good teaching with other staff, including ensuring that the learning moves on at a quicker pace.
- Children in Nursery and Reception could be given more activities to help improve their number work and their writing.

You can help by continuing to work hard. Finally, thank you once again for all your help. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Derek Watts

Lead inspector

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