

Shoscombe Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109236
Local Authority	Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number	337249
Inspection dates	6–7 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Hazel Callaghan

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	87
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Fred Chaytors
Headteacher	Mrs Sylvia Such
Date of previous school inspection	9 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons and held meetings with staff, governors, parents and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school development plan, a variety of policies and reports, pupils' work and the school's records for monitoring pupils' standards and progress.

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

- how assessment is used to ensure teaching and learning are consistently good
- the effectiveness of strategies used to help pupils know how well they are doing in their work and how to improve
- how governors and leaders monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school, especially in ensuring pupils make good academic progress year on year.

Information about the school

Shoscombe Church of England Primary is a small school. It serves the village of Shoscombe but also takes pupils from a wider area. The vast majority of its pupils come from families of White British backgrounds and none speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is smaller than that found nationally but varies significantly from year to year. The school consists of four classes. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Reception class along with a few pupils from Year 1. The school has successfully gained a number of awards including Activemark Gold, Chartermark for football, Healthy Schools Award and the International School Award 2007'2010. The school has gone through extensive roof repairs over the last year and the additional upheaval of a huge oil leak which put a large part of the school grounds out of action over the last term. The deputy headteacher who teaches one of the four classes was absent on sick leave during 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Shoscombe Church of England Primary is a good school. It provides well for pupils' academic and personal development with the result that pupils achieve well and reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in their learning. They become confident and responsible by the time they leave the school and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils of all backgrounds and abilities make good progress in their work but there is a relative weakness in the standards reached by the boys in writing. They often achieve as well as boys do nationally but not as well as the girls in the school. This has been recognised by the staff and positive changes have been made to the choice of available books so they motivate boys' greater interest and desire to read. The school is now seeking other strategies to raise their standards in writing. At present lessons focus usually on one subject at a time and although teaching is good overall there is scope for activities to be more stimulating and relevant to pupils' interests. More meaningful links between subjects are being made but this work is still in its infancy and not enough focus is placed on giving pupils positive reasons for writing.

The school has suffered from a huge disruption during the last year and despite being surrounded by scaffolding inside and outside as well as the noise and dust, it is to the staff's and pupils' credit that the school not only continued to function but that pupils achieved well. Now the scaffolding has gone and the restrictions in movement have been removed there is a real sense of freedom but this has also been accompanied by some decline in standards of behaviour. The vast majority of pupils behave well at all times but there a few pupils, including those who have emotional and learning difficulties, who do not behave well consistently. This is usually managed well in lessons but not as effectively at break times and this has affected the behaviour of some of the other pupils. Pupils say they feel safe in school and know that staff look after them well. They have no concerns over bullying and they feel Shoscombe is a super school. As one parent put it: 'Overall, the school is a great school and my son has developed well.'

A strength has come from the difficulties of the last year. The staff report that they feel much closer as a team and there is a real commitment to moving the school forward. The governors are also feeling a new sense of direction due to the visionary leadership of the new Chair of the Governing Body. Good progress has been made in many areas since the previous inspection. Standards in Year 2 have risen steadily and the more able pupils are now challenged effectively to reach higher standards. The school has introduced a range of successful strategies that help pupils understand what they have done well in their work and engage pupils' understanding of how they can improve. The school has also improved systems for monitoring its effectiveness and the achievement

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of pupils. The school evaluates its work satisfactorily and correctly identifies areas for improvement. Teaching has improved and the weaknesses seen at the previous inspection have been eliminated. The school's capacity to sustain improvements as demonstrated by its track record is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop a more creative curriculum that captures pupils' interest and increases their desire to write so that boys in particular make better progress in writing.
- Ensure that all pupils benefit from good teaching by sharing good practice.
- Raise expectations for all pupils' good behaviour and ensure that any inappropriate behaviour is managed well at all times.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Even though it still early in the year and many pupils are in new classes with new teachers, learning is good. Most pupils want to do well and respond well to the challenges set for them by their teachers. Pupils in the Years 5 and 6 class, for example, listened carefully to the teacher's explanation of their tasks and in pairs worked carefully to gather ideas about how to describe an inanimate object as if it was real. They took their inspiration from a poem about the sea, read by the teacher, and wrote some really imaginative thoughts of their own. Two girls, for example, likened a stapler to a hungry monster who clashed its jaws and spat out mouthfuls of metal. Boys also developed an effective range of ideas but their standards, which were representative of boys through the school, were not generally as high as the girls in writing.

Good learning was also evident in the Reception class where children retold in detail parts of the story they had heard the previous day and showed with great pride the letters they had written. It was also clearly seen in a science lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2 who were exploring the importance of plants while reinforcing their awareness of healthy eating. The imaginative use of resources and effective teaching stimulated the pupils' good interest and enthusiasm for learning, so pupils of all abilities achieved well.

The good quality of learning observed during the inspection enables pupils to make good progress, as seen in the standards attained last year. Good progress usually continues in all classes. However, some instability in staffing has resulted in pupils' behaviour not always being effectively managed; this, together with an occasional lack of challenge, causes the quality of learning to dip. Expectations for pupils' consistent good behaviour are not always made clear outside of lessons with the result that even those with good attitudes forget their usual exemplary behaviour. Pupils' respect for adults and their care for each other, however, remain strong. This was clearly exemplified when a girl quickly took a cup of water to a boy who had hurt himself falling off a chair. Her reward was from another pupil who gave her a hug of 'well done'.

Pupils enjoy school and attend very regularly. They respond well to responsibility and want to do their task well. The school council, for example, is proud of its part in improving the school grounds now that the diggers and builders have gone. Members

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confidently tell other pupils to bring their concerns to the council so they can be discussed. Pupils are eager to raise money for those less well off than themselves.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

All the school's work is effectively underpinned by the care and support given to each child. One parent reflected the views of many in the comment, 'One of the school's great strengths is the attention paid to pupils as individuals, and the fact that staff are concerned about them whether they teach them or not.' Staff are appropriately trained and child protection has a high profile. The school responds quickly and appropriately if there are concerns. Good procedures to support children starting school help them to settle quickly and strong links with local secondary schools ease transition at the end of Year 6. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well by teachers and the teaching assistants to work on targets set for their development and so that they participate effectively in lessons.

Teachers develop pupils' interest in learning with the result that pupils listen and concentrate well in lessons. Teachers make their lessons interesting and increasingly

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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make effective links between subjects so that learning is more meaningful. However, this style of teaching is still developing and not yet sufficiently well planned across the school. Teachers use the assessment of pupils' work to accurately identify the next steps in learning and these are shared with the pupils either as the objectives for the lesson or as personal targets for learning. Good links are made with a range of outside agencies and other schools to support pupils' learning and welfare.

An example of these positive links was the recent joint venture where pupils from Shoscombe and those from two other local schools shared a presentation about keeping safe given by a visiting theatre group. Additional activities, such as visits and visitors and various after-school clubs, enrich the curriculum and broaden pupils' experiences. Personal, social and health education is a strong element. Pupils develop empathy for others when they learn about those less well off than themselves.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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?

As one member of staff commented, 'the staff have come through the difficulties of last year to become a strong team.' The strong leadership of the new chair of governors working alongside the headteacher has given real strength of purpose to the school which has enabled staff to overcome the difficulties of the last year and to aim for even greater achievements. Concerns over the quality of teaching at the previous inspection have been addressed and new staff have benefited from good levels of guidance and advice from the headteacher and support of other staff. Good partnerships are made with families when children start and this continues through the school but currently there are some parents who have lost confidence in the school's ability to manage some pupils' behaviour. Most, however, feel that the school works well with families and that staff support pupils very well. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements and are carried out appropriately. During the building work, continuous health and safety assessments were made by the headteacher and chair of governors to ensure the safety of pupils and staff.

Governors have gone through a period of change but are regaining their good links with parents and providing good support for staff. Many aspects of their work are being evaluated and strengthened so they are able to bring challenge as well as effective support. The school actively promotes community cohesion. Staff and governors under the vigorous leadership of the chair of governors have successfully forged stronger links

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with the local community through their fundraising for the roof and in seeking a solution to the congestion outside the school each day. Good international links have been a feature of the school for some years. Pupils' understanding of other religions and cultural diversity is good. They are reflective and sensitive to others. Senior leaders check on the learning of all pupils to ensure that those of all abilities, backgrounds and needs make good progress. A comment from another member of staff sums up this inclusive ethos: 'The family feel and close relationships ensure the individual child is focused on every day.'

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	3
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. They start in the Reception class with a range of knowledge and experiences at the level typically expected for their age and make good progress so most children reach above average standards. Even at this early point in the term children show they have settled well, respond well to the adults and recognise daily routines. They show interest in their activities and there is a hum of activity throughout the day. There is a good balance of activities led by adults and those chosen independently by the children. The classroom and the area outside are used well to stimulate their interest and desire to explore things for themselves. The restrictions created by all the building work last year prevented many of the usual opportunities for using the school grounds but this is already changing. Children's progress is monitored carefully and next steps in their learning planned effectively. Children's welfare is carefully monitored and good levels of support are provided. Staff are evaluative of the provision for these young children and

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plans are underway to improve the accommodation both inside and out. Each child's progress is carefully checked but the data collected about the whole class are not always analysed effectively enough so that strengths and areas of potential weakness are identified quickly.

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	3

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents are very supportive of the school and feel that staff are approachable and supportive. Many parents commented on their child's good progress and happiness at school. The inspection confirms these views. There were, however, a number of parents who expressed concerns about some aspects of behaviour, especially in the playground, and consequently their anxieties over whether pupils were sufficiently supervised. Many of the negative comments were linked with a few parents' views that their concerns have not been recognised by the school. The inspection showed that the vast majority of pupils behave well. Bullying is not an issue that concerns most pupils and they feel safe at school. The removal of the scaffolding and equipment from the school has given the play areas back to the pupils. They are supervised well by staff but some re-evaluation of which parts of the grounds should be used at different times is needed to ensure that these good levels of supervision are maintained at all times.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Shoscombe Church of England 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 42 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 87 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	62	16	38	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	65	14	33	3	7	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	10	24	27	64	3	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	48	18	43	3	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	62	13	31	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	38	21	50	4	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	67	13	31	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)	15	36	20	48	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	41	20	48	2	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	24	21	50	6	14	3	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	33	17	41	5	12	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	45	12	29	4	10	2	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	50	19	45	1	2	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.



8 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shoscombe Church of England Primary School, Shoscombe BA2 8NB

Thank you for making us so welcome and answering our questions when we visited you recently. You are rightly proud of your school and what it does for you. You and your parents are correct in thinking that you go to a good school. Here are some of the things we found.

- You get a good start to your education in the Reception class.
- You make good progress and you reach standards in Year 6 that are better than most pupils of your age.
- Most of you behave well. You are polite, friendly and helpful to everyone. Most children get on well together for most of the time.
- You enjoy taking responsibility, especially those on the school council, and you enjoy helping the younger children.
- You told me that you like your teachers a lot and you feel very safe in school. I could see that you are taught well and you enjoy trying to meet the challenges teachers set you. I could see that you want to do well in your work and you understand the targets teachers give you to help you improve.
- Everyone in the school works together as a strong team and there is a good partnership with other schools and places overseas which makes your work interesting.

Even though Shoscombe Church of England Primary is a good school, there are some things it can do to make it even better. We have asked the headteacher and governors to:

- make links between some of your subjects so that activities become more interesting, you enjoy your learning even more and you will be keen to write about what you know
- share good teaching so that all classes make good progress all the time.
- help all pupils to behave well.

Thank you again for helping us and remember you can do your part in making Shoscombe a happy place by behaving sensibly and helping one another.

Best wishes

Hazel Callaghan

Lead Inspector

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