

Shifnal Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123424
Local Authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	340334
Inspection dates	16–17 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Marian Harker HMI

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mike Mullet
Headteacher	Dr John Turnock
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. They observed nine lessons, saw eight teachers and held meetings with parents, groups of pupils, staff, governors and key partners. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation relating to self-evaluation, the tracking of pupils' progress, the school improvement plan and the safeguarding of pupils. Inspectors looked at pupils' work and analysed the responses of 93 parental questionnaires, in addition to those completed by pupils.

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

- the achievement of different groups of pupils as they move through the school
- the consistency in the quality of teaching
- how well the school has tackled areas of weakness identified at the last inspection

Information about the school

This is an average sized primary school. The proportions of pupils who have statements of special educational need and/or disability or those from minority ethnic groups are lower than average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is 8.5%. There have been a number of changes in teaching staff since the last inspection including the appointment of a new deputy headteacher. The school has recently achieved a number of awards including the Quality Mark for Basic Skills, Artsmark Gold, the Challenge Award for Gifted and Talented pupils and the National Healthy Eating Award.

Privately run childcare provision is based on the school site. Pupils attending the school have access to independently managed after-school and holiday clubs. These aspects of provision are inspected separately because they are not managed by the governing body.

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

3

Main findings

This is a happy, caring school that is satisfactory and clearly improving. 'My child has been especially well looked after, and as a parent I have felt that my views have been important to the school': this is typical of the many positive comments made by parents. The school's engagement with parents and the care, guidance and support received by pupils is outstanding. Pupils have an outstanding understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. The curriculum is carefully planned to meet the needs and aspirations of the pupils. Those pupils who have particular gifts or talents regularly receive individualised work. A wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities are offered. Participation rates are good and this enhances pupils' good personal development.

Children join the school with starting points that are broadly in line with expectations for their age. Most pupils and groups represented within the school make satisfactory progress and their attainment is in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2. Some groups make good progress and a few make outstanding progress. Progress in Year 6 is at least good as a result of good teaching and additional support for identified groups of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, due to the diligent care and support they receive. During the inspection, the majority of teaching observed was judged to be good, although this has not yet fully impacted on pupils' progress over time. In the best lessons observed, teachers closely matched work to the needs and abilities of all the pupils, particularly those who were more able. This practice is not yet a consistent feature of teaching across the school. On occasions, teachers are not as focused as they could be on involving the pupils in assessing their own learning.

The headteacher provides dedicated and reflective leadership. He is developing a team with a common purpose, who are becoming more involved in monitoring the school's effectiveness. Self-evaluation is generally secure, if a little generous. This is because the school's tracking and monitoring systems are in the early stages of development. The school improvement plan does not clearly convey the most important areas for school improvement. Since the last inspection, the school has improved a number of key areas of its work, in particular the achievement of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There is a trend of improvement in outcomes and provision across the school. All of these factors contribute to a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- – Raise attainment and accelerate progress so that it is consistently good or

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better by:

- increasing the proportion of lessons that are good or better
 - involving pupils in assessing their own learning
 - ensuring that all work is closely tailored to meet the needs of all ages and abilities, particularly in mixed class settings
 - providing greater challenge for more able pupils.
- Identify very clear priorities for school improvement by:
- improving the effectiveness of school improvement planning, so that it includes measurable milestones, clear objectives and is linked to raising attainment and accelerating progress
 - increasing the effectiveness of tracking and monitoring systems, so all senior leaders have a clear view of the quality of teaching, levels of attainment and achievement across the school.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

'I love my school because the teachers care and I feel very safe': this is typical of many comments reported by pupils and it reflects the view of parents. Pupils and their families are very well supported by the learning support and pastoral care mentor who contributes strongly to pupils' outstanding understanding of staying safe.

Pupils are polite, considerate and caring towards each other. Behaviour is good. There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to contribute to the school community. For example, pupils serve lunch to senior citizens when they visit the school, promote an eco-friendly school environment and fundraise generously for local and national charities. Pupils have an outstanding understanding of how to keep themselves healthy. There are many opportunities for pupils to work with specialist teachers, particularly in physical education, and this enhances their understanding of a healthy lifestyle.

In lessons, pupils get on very well together and collaborate happily in pairs and groups. They have a positive attitude to learning and sustain their concentration well. In the best lessons observed, pupils enjoyed opportunities to discuss their learning and participate in practical activities. Recent improvements in the provision for information, communication and technology (ICT) are supporting pupils' development of skills for the future.

The large majority of pupils make the expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics as they move through the school. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in the national tests in 2009 was slightly lower than average. The most recent school data and lesson observations indicate that this has improved to at least average. Although there are some slight variations, boys and girls generally achieve average standards.

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A strong community ethos permeates all aspects of school life and contributes to pupils' good social and moral development. The school has established links with a school in France and pupils have many varied opportunities to express their feelings through the arts, sporting and cultural activities.

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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers know their pupils well and relationships are strong. Lessons are well planned using up-to-date assessment information. In the best examples, activities are clearly planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils, particularly those in mixed age classes. This good practice is not yet consistent across the school. Support staff are used effectively to enhance and consolidate learning. Pupils' work is regularly marked and assessed by teachers. Comments are positive and encouraging but pupils are not always given clear advice on how to improve their work or reach the next level. Progress is regularly tracked in reading, writing and mathematics, and this enables the school to intervene early when a pupil is at risk of falling behind.

The curriculum has a good balance and breadth across subjects. Pupils are given regular

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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opportunities to apply skills they have learned in lessons. For example, pupils are responsible for producing the termly school magazine and selling advertising space to local businesses to cover the production costs. Provision for modern foreign languages is good and pupils learn to speak French from an early age. They are also given regular opportunities to work with professional craftsmen. During arts week, all the pupils worked with a pottery specialist. All of these aspects contribute positively to pupils' cultural and spiritual development.

Care, guidance and support have improved since the last inspection. Support for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable is diligent. Pupils feel very well cared for and this contributes to their strong personal development.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher leads by example in setting out and sharing his vision for the pupils at Shifnal. As one parent commented, 'I feel all the teaching staff and the headteacher care a great deal about each child's individual needs and they cannot do enough to maintain this.' The headteacher's high expectations are guiding the senior team towards building a stronger capacity for further improvement. However, more work remains to be done to clarify school improvement priorities through the school development plan and by ensuring that the whole team, including governors, have a secure view of pupils' attainment and achievement across the school.

Governors have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They use their expertise to benefit the school and fulfil their statutory duties. Safeguarding is good and a high priority for the school and governing body. A recent survey indicates that the school has a good understanding of its local and global context and is now actively pursuing links at a national level. All these factors contribute to the good promotion of community cohesion.

The headteacher, senior staff and governors play a leading role in ensuring equal opportunities are promoted. The school is aware that rates of progress are uneven and is taking action to improve outcomes for all pupils. The school has very positive relationships with parents and carers. Responses from parents who completed the questionnaire and those who met inspectors were very positive.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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

Induction procedures, including home visits, and strong links with the independently managed childcare provision on site are good and children settle quickly into school life. They make good progress because teaching is good and staff pay close attention to children's interests. This information is then used well to plan the next steps of learning. Staff work very closely with parents, getting to know the children well and developing strong partnerships. The learning environment is welcoming, well resourced and organised to provide a good balance of indoor and outdoor activities. Children feel safe and are beginning to understand how to keep healthy as they enjoy a nutritious snack together. Good leadership and management ensure that there is close teamwork between all adults involved and planning is detailed. Ongoing assessments and observations are used well to plan for individual children's needs. 'Learning journey' logs are well developed and provide a robust record of children's progress.

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

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Views of parents and carers

Almost all of the questionnaires returned were positive and parents believe that the school supports and cares for their children very well. Inspectors agree. All parents indicated that they were happy with how well the school was led and managed. A very few parents would like the school to take greater account of their suggestions and concerns. The inspection team found that the school provides many opportunities for parents to make suggestions and listen to their concerns. The inspection team found relationships between the school and parents to be outstanding.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Shifnal 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 93 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 221 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	56	60	37	40	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	64	69	28	30	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	46	49	46	49	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	51	55	38	41	4	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	54	58	38	41	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	51	43	46	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	51	55	42	45	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)	49	53	38	41	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	49	53	43	46	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	46	44	47	2	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	43	46	42	45	3	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	53	57	40	43	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	58	62	35	38	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



18 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shifnal Primary School, Telford, TF11 8EJ

Thank you so much for your warm welcome when we visited your school this week. We thought you would like to know the outcome of the inspection and what we found the school could do to become even better.

You go to a happy, caring school that is satisfactory and improving.

Your behaviour is good and you have an excellent understanding of how to keep yourselves safe and healthy.

All the staff care about you very much, want you to do well and make sure that those of you who need extra help or challenge are well supported.

You have many opportunities to develop your interests, go on visits, join clubs and be taught by specialist teachers.

Your school has very positive relationships with your parents.

Your headteacher leads the school well.

In order to make your school even better, we have asked your headteacher, senior staff and governors to do the following things:

- to make sure you all do as well as you can in all lessons, particularly those pupils who are in mixed age classes or are more able
- to ensure all your lessons are good, and you are given opportunities to assess your own work
- to make sure all leaders help the school by having a plan with clear targets for improvement and know how well you are doing.

Thank you for your comments on the pupil questionnaire. We have noted that a few of you believe behaviour could be improved. We were impressed with your good behaviour during the inspection. I am sure you will continue to help the school by always showing consideration towards each other.

Yours sincerely

Marian Harker

Her Majesty's Inspector

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