

Shirehampton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132196
Local Authority	City of Bristol
Inspection number	341305
Inspection dates	23–24 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael Merchant

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	426
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Juliet Huddart
Headteacher	Miss Louisa Munton
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils. They also talked to some parents who were present at the start and finish of the school day. They observed the school's work and looked at the improvement plan, data collected by the school about the pupils' progress, records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching and a range of other school policies. They also analysed 90 questionnaires which were received from parents and 101 questionnaires which were received from pupils.

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

- the progress that pupils make as they move from Key Stage 1 to 2
- how well the teaching takes account of the needs of groups and individuals
- how well teachers inform pupils about what they need to do to improve their work
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels in bringing improvements in the outcomes for all pupils.

Information about the school

Shirehampton is larger in size than most other primary schools. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than that seen nationally as is the proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are two Nursery and two Reception classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school provides a wide range of extended services including a breakfast and after school club. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2008.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with Section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' attainment and progress in Key Stage 2.

Children join the Nursery with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age. Overall they make satisfactory progress in most areas of learning and at the end of Reception reach the levels broadly expected for their age. They make good progress in Key Stage 1, but as pupils move into Key Stage 2 their progress slows considerably and is not good enough. Pupils' achievement therefore is inadequate. For the last four years, results in English and mathematics in national tests at the end of Year 6 have been significantly below average and are declining. In 2008, the school was in the bottom 6% of all schools nationally for the progress made from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.

Insufficient progress has been made since the last inspection to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to keep an accurate check on the progress that different groups of children make.

The new headteacher has begun to tackle the school's weaknesses with energy and passion, although there has been insufficient time for actions introduced by her to overturn the legacy of underachievement. She has brought a 'breath of fresh air' to the school, as one colleague commented. In the short time she has been in post, she has put in place effective measures. For example, she rightly identified that assessment of pupils work has not been regular enough and has not given them enough guidance on how to improve. She has introduced improvements which have resulted in pupils making better progress in the last year. Inspectors found teaching to be satisfactory, but there is still not enough good teaching to make up for lost ground. The headteacher has ensured that all school leaders now have a thorough understanding of how the school is doing and what needs to be done to improve. As a result, self-evaluation is accurate and well founded and this, together with better teaching and improved progress, means the school has a satisfactory capacity to sustain improvement. However, the roles and responsibilities of middle managers have not been developed well enough for them to be accountable for standards, progress and care in their respective areas.

Pupils are happy in this caring school, but their awareness of different ways of life in the diverse society in which they live is not developed well enough. Parents are very supportive, and even those who have some criticisms recognise that their children love coming to school. As a result, attendance is improving, pupils enjoy learning and are eager to participate in all activities. This is what the school does well.

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- It cares watchfully for all pupils and fully complies with all requirements regarding safety.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and her actions have begun to lead to better teaching and improved progress in some year groups.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2, so that the majority of pupils reach the nationally expected standards at the end of Year 6 by:
 - giving more opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and writing skills in English and their problem-solving skills in mathematics.
 - Increase the rate of progress that pupils make through Key Stage 2 to ensure that, by the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils have made sufficient progress by:
 - building on current assessment practice to ensure that pupils' progress in all subjects is checked twice per term
 - giving detailed feedback to pupils, after assessing their learning, on the next steps they need to take to further improve.
- Extend pupils' awareness and understanding of different cultures and ways of life by:
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to gain first-hand experience of culturally diverse communities.
- Allow middle managers to become accountable for standards, progress and care for pupils in their respective areas by:
 - ensuring that subject leaders carry out regular, focused monitoring and evaluation tasks that inform and update action plans
 - ensuring that appropriate assessment and feedback to pupils are undertaken in their subject area, to track pupil progress and identify potential underachievement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Children settle quickly when they join the Nursery class and make satisfactory progress from starting points which are generally lower than expected for children of their age. Progress accelerates as pupils move through Years 1 and 2 because teachers expect much of the pupils and have rightly focused on developing their basic skills. All groups of pupils make the progress expected in Key Stage 1 and many make good progress, particularly in writing. This is the subject where attainment has improved most in Years 1 and 2 since the last inspection. Strategies introduced to promote writing across all subjects and to support the development of better writing skills have been effective. In a successful literacy lesson, pupils worked with great enthusiasm in pairs to devise appropriate adjectives to describe and write about the short film clip they had just

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watched. This improvement in standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 has not been mirrored in Years 3 to 6. Standards have declined in English, mathematics and science since the last inspection and have been significantly below average for the last four years.

In the time that the new headteacher has been in post, the school has turned a corner. The quality of learning in all lessons is now at least satisfactory and in nearly a third of lessons seen it was good. For instance, in a particularly effective Year 4 numeracy lesson, all groups of pupils made good progress because of the teacher's very high expectations of what was expected of them and searching questions, which prompted all to think. Pupils currently entering Year 6 had made better than expected progress in reading and mathematics and the expected progress in writing, as they moved through Year 5. The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are clearly defined. Detailed plans are in place to meet individuals' needs. Their progress is now satisfactory because planning in lessons is beginning to take sufficient account of these plans.

In discussions, pupils are very clear about how to stay safe and understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy being active and show this through their participation in activities at break times and in clubs. Although pupils from all backgrounds work and play together well, their awareness of different ways of life in other communities is not developed well enough. The school takes appropriate steps to tackle unnecessary absence and has worked with parents and the community to reduce the number of days lost from school. Absences are routinely and rigorously followed up. In the last year these steps have brought a modest but important improvement in attendance, which is now broadly average. Pupils develop good social and interpersonal skills. However, their low attainment in English and mathematics and poorly developed skills in information and communication technology mean that pupils are not well enough prepared for the next stages of their lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2

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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Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Rigorous monitoring through lesson observation and clear feedback to teachers have improved the quality of teaching and learning, and most pupils made satisfactory progress during the last school year. However, the proportion of teaching that is good is not sufficiently widespread to enable pupils to make up for previous underachievement.

There are some common strengths which thread through the good teaching:

- teachers' subject knowledge is secure
- pupils' behaviour is managed effectively
- teachers explain tasks clearly
- recent school initiatives have improved teachers' planning so they are clear about what they expect pupils to learn
- relationships are positive and pupils are confident about tackling their work.

In a minority of lessons, pupils benefit from particularly effective teaching and from teachers who have high expectations for pupils' potential achievement. In these lessons, pupils progress rapidly in their learning. However, weaknesses in teaching are inhibiting pupils' progress from being good in many lessons. Questions are not always used effectively to probe pupils' understanding and the most able pupils sometimes mark time because the work is too easy. The pace of work in some lessons is pedestrian and opportunities are missed to encourage pupils to explain their ideas fully and so improve their language skills.

Assessment procedures to check pupils' progress have improved recently. Consequently, teachers are now more aware of the progress different groups of pupils are making, including those who need to make up lost ground. Improvements in planning mean that the learning needs of all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are now being met. Teachers' marking is much improved recently as a result of school actions. Pupils are now receiving useful feedback which recognises their strengths and also identifies areas for improvement. They have targets in English and mathematics, but their knowledge of these is variable. Pupils are at a very early stage of evaluating their own progress towards these targets.

The school recognises the need to develop a more diverse and creative curriculum that will offer greater challenge to the more able children and accelerate their progress in all

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curriculum areas. Leaders are aware that there are still not enough opportunities for pupils to write in different subjects and this has a negative impact on the speed at which writing skills can improve. The well-supported creative and educational activities outside normal lessons make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, their levels of enjoyment and their personal development.

Care, guidance and support are strong features of the school's provision. The school has a caring ethos in which all pupils, especially those who are vulnerable, receive good support. Those who have statements of special educational needs receive carefully tailored support that allows them to benefit from lessons in mainstream classes. Links between support staff, the special needs coordinator and the teachers are particularly effective in ensuring that these pupils play a full part in all aspects of the life of the school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
	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?

Since her appointment a year ago, the effective headteacher has embarked on a mission to take the school on a journey to excellence. She works tenaciously to improve pupils' educational opportunities and communicates her high expectations persuasively to staff. Consequently, staff share a common sense of direction and a feeling that they are part of a successful team. With strong support from her effective deputy, she has set a precise path for improvement based on accurate and constructive self-evaluation and embedding initiatives which have begun to make a positive difference to pupils' achievements. Leaders are quick to recognise and praise the good work of staff and pupils and are alert to situations where people need more advice and guidance. In this way, the school promotes equality for all pupils and also makes sure there is no discrimination on any grounds.

Middle leaders are eager to be accountable for their respective areas but have too little responsibility for monitoring standards, learning and teaching and this is holding back improvements in pupils' achievement. The governing body fulfils all legal requirements and gives good attention to the welfare of pupils and staff with all safeguarding arrangements found to be effective at the time of the inspection. The governing body brings a wealth of relevant experience to its deliberations. It is extremely supportive of all the school's work and is growing into its role as a critical friend by asking the searching questions it needs to hold the school sufficiently to account. Because of the

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limited extent to which pupils are encouraged to become involved in the wider community and with others from different ethnic groups and cultures, community cohesion is not well developed and is no more than satisfactory.

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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a sound start in the Nursery classes. They settle in quickly and are keen to learn. Children play together well and are well behaved. They enjoy their learning. Staff provide well for children's welfare. There is a coordinated approach to using the indoor and outdoor learning areas. The outdoor area is well laid out to promote learning and children respond well to the opportunities it affords. Both inside and out, children have access to a varied and stimulating range of activities which support their personal development as well as their communication and language skills, creative development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. There is a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities. Phonics (the learning of letters and sounds) are taught daily. Adults generally support children well and their explanations are clear. Whilst adults regularly assess what children know, understand and can do, and plot these observations against the Early Years Foundation Stage profile, they are on occasions too generous in their judgements. Consequently, children sometimes appear to be achieving better than they actually are. In addition, the progress of different groups of children is not tracked or analysed well enough because the school does not have a clear picture of children's attainment when they enter the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The school clearly enjoys the confidence and support of those parents who returned the questionnaire. Almost all respondents felt that the school keeps pupils safe and helps them to maintain a healthy lifestyle. A number of individual comments reflected the good care, support and guidance given to pupils, particularly to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The inspectors agree with these views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Shirehampton 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 90 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 426 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	57	39	43	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	48	45	50	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	17	19	62	69	6	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	32	53	60	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	33	57	63	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	31	55	61	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	37	52	58	2	2	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)	30	33	46	51	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	28	54	60	3	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	28	54	60	7	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	27	57	63	4	4	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	34	38	50	56	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	40	44	47	52	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.



25 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shirehampton Primary School, Bristol BS11 9RR

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we came to inspect your school. It was great to hear from you about the things you like best about school. We had the chance to talk to many of you and it was really pleasing to hear about how much you enjoy the breakfast and after school clubs. You mostly get on well with each other and help your classmates if needed. We would also like to thank your parents for filling in a form that gave us their views about the school.

Whilst these are some of the positive things, we think that overall the school is not doing a good enough job and we have asked the headteacher, teachers and governors to make some urgent improvements. Someone will visit the school in the next six months to check how well it is doing.

These are some of the things we have asked the school to do to make it better for you.

- make sure that far more of you reach the levels that are expected of you in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6
- carefully watch the progress that you make so that none of you fall behind
- give you more chances to learn more about the beliefs and ways of life of people who come from different backgrounds from yourselves
- make sure that teachers who are responsible for subjects check on how well you are taught and how well you are doing.

Miss Munton, the staff and the governors want the school to continue to improve. You can help too by making sure you work hard all the time and always do your best.

Thank you once again for being so helpful.

Yours sincerely

Michael Merchant

Lead inspector

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