

# Shelley Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115020
<b>Local Authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	357674
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Martin Beale

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	85
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peter Gode
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lesley Lewis
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 December 2007
<b>School address</b>	Milton Crescent Shelley, Ongar CM5 0FF
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited eight lessons, seeing five teachers at least once, and held meetings with staff, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and representatives of the local authority. Informal discussions were also held with parents as they arrived with their children at the start of the day. Inspectors observed the school's work, and scrutinised assessment information, pupils' books, records of pupils' progress and improvement plans. The team analysed 27 parental questionnaires, 35 responses to the pupil survey and 17 responses to the staff questionnaire.

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

- Has the action taken to improve teaching helped to improve the pupils' progress and raise their attainment?
- How well do teachers meet the needs of all pupils in their classes, including providing challenge for the more-able?
- To what extent do marking, feedback and other assessment information help the pupils to improve their work and meet their targets?
- How effectively does the school support the development of its more potentially vulnerable pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities?

## Information about the school

Pupil numbers have increased in recent years in this small primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average and more pupils than in most schools join or leave other than at the usual times. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has fallen to broadly average. Their needs are mostly associated with learning difficulties related to literacy. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Reception class and the older pupils in three mixed-age classes. During the past year the school has experienced staffing difficulties, including the long-term absence of some members of the teaching staff. Since the last inspection, a privately run pre-school has opened on the site; this will be subject to a separate inspection. The school has received the Activemark award.

**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:

- the learning and progress of all groups of pupils
- consistency in the quality of teaching
- the use of assessment to support learning
- the extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs.

Children make a sound start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but they do not make consistently good enough progress as they move through the school. Consequently, by the end of Year 6 too many pupils have not achieved the expected levels in English mathematics and they do not all achieve as well as they should.

The headteacher is accurate in her assessment of each teacher's qualities and her action to raise their performance has been successful in some cases. However, inconsistencies in teaching are leading to an uneven pattern of progress for pupils over time, although there are improvements in some classes. This is because lessons are not always pitched at the right level to move learning forward or to provide challenge for the more-able pupils. The rigour of assessment procedures has improved under the leadership of the headteacher. Assessment information is being used with skill in some classes to guide lesson planning and to help pupils to understand how to improve their work, but this is not universally the case. Similarly, teachers do not consistently encourage learning by making use of skilled questioning or providing opportunities for pupils to work together. Adult support is not always used effectively to support learning.

The pupils' good behaviour adds much to the welcoming atmosphere in school. They know how to stay safe and take steps through exercise and diet to keep healthy. Attendance levels have risen and persistent absence has fallen significantly because of the action taken by the headteacher. The pupils' school life is enriched in many ways, and benefits from outside expertise particularly in sport. This broadens and adds interest to their daily experiences. However, although a start has been made, the planning of subjects and topics is not sharp enough to support teachers in meeting the needs of pupils of different ages and attainment. There are too few opportunities for pupils to acquire literacy and numeracy skills in subjects other than English and mathematics, and maximum use is not made of reading sessions. Plans are in place to extend the range of intervention programmes to help pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities meet their individual targets.

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The school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement. The headteacher has a clear picture of the school's current position and understands where progress is needed in her drive to eliminate underachievement. This has been possible by the introduction of rigorous systems to monitor the work of staff and evaluate the performance of the school. Since her appointment one year ago, she has overseen improvements in several key areas such as health and safety procedures, attendance, tracking the pupils' progress and monitoring the performance of different groups. She has also laid the foundations for improvements in others, although staffing difficulties have limited scope for more rapid developments in teaching and pupils' achievement.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' learning and increase their rate of progress by ensuring teachers consistently:
  - use assessment information to identify the next steps in each pupil's learning and to plan lessons that meet their individual needs
  - challenge the thinking of the more-able pupils
  - engage pupils through more skilled questioning
  - provide opportunities for the pupils to work collaboratively by discussing their ideas with others or working together in groups
  - deploy all adults in the classroom to maximise learning at all times.
- Help pupils to understand better how to improve their work by:
  - giving them sufficient time to respond to their teacher's marking
  - sharing with them what they need to do to move their work consistently to the next level
  - providing opportunities for them to assess their work and that of others.
- Provide a curriculum that is planned more closely to meet the pupils' needs by:
  - extending the range of intervention programmes to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
  - providing guidance to teachers on how to maximise the impact of reading sessions
  - ensuring that basic skills are promoted more effectively across subjects and topics.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**4**

Where pupils are interested and engaged by teaching, they become involved in their learning and are starting to make improved progress. However, at times they do not develop their skills and understanding rapidly enough. This is changing, but has meant that gaps between their low attainment on entry to school and national expectations by the end of Year 6 have not been closed sufficiently. While most pupils learn to concentrate and persevere with the tasks they are given, this can be without great enthusiasm and interest. A few do not take pride in the presentation of their work. When given the

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opportunity to undertake tasks together, pupils develop the skills needed for them to work with others as part of a team. Classrooms are calm and generally have a purposeful atmosphere because the pupils accept and respond to their teachers' expectations by behaving well.

The pupils work and play together well. They are open and friendly and help newcomers to the school to settle in quickly and make new friends. They say that they feel safe in school and are confident to share any concerns with staff. While they recognise how to deal with any risks they might face in their lives, this does not always extend to taking sensible steps when using the internet. They are keen to stay fit and healthy. This is seen through the high take up of school lunches and their enthusiastic participation in sporting activities such as cross-country running. Furthermore, they shared in decisions about new lunch menus and older pupils run the healthy food tuck shop. Pupils contribute to life in the community but, in spite of the school's work to broaden their horizons, they do not always have an understanding of the diverse nature of modern society.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

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

**How effective is the provision?**

Teaching is improving but remains inconsistent across the school. This is largely because teachers are not all focused sharply enough on planning activities and adopting methods that meet the individual learning needs of the pupils. In the most effective lessons, teachers are sensitive to the differing ages and needs of the pupils. They provide regular

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opportunities for pupils to develop their ideas in discussion with others, and to have their understanding checked through the teacher's questioning. However, at times, whole-class teaching is pitched at one level and some pupils lose concentration when they are not actively engaged in their learning. Increasing use is being made of resources including the new technology in the classrooms as an interactive tool to stimulate the pupils' interests.

Implementation of the new marking policy helps pupils to see how to improve their work, but they do not always have the time to respond to their teacher's marking and quickly correct any errors. In some classes, their individual learning targets do not give sharp guidance about the steps needed to improve their levels over time.

The headteacher has identified that the curriculum has not been adapted sufficiently to cater for the needs of pupils, particularly in the development of their literacy. Planning for reading sessions is having an uneven impact on attainment as are changes to the teaching of writing. The 'creative curriculum' links learning, making it more accessible to the pupils, and is becoming a more effective vehicle for promoting basic skills. Visits are used well to support learning and the older pupils are looking forward with anticipation to their residential trip later in the term. Opportunities are also provided for older pupils to learn to sail and for selected pupils from across the school to develop their confidence and social skills through trampolining.

The school is knowledgeable about potentially vulnerable pupils and works well with other agencies to support the achievement and well-being of pupils with learning difficulties. Criteria by which pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified have become sharper, and the expertise of outside agencies used well to help them reach their personal goals. Arrangements to help the pupils settle into school, at whatever time this might be and move on to secondary school, are handled sensitively and smooth their transfer from one stage to the next.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>3</b>

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

The direction the headteacher has mapped out is supported by a new and cohesive staff team, who share her determination to improve pupils' achievement. Her aim of enabling all pupils to succeed individually has yet to be consistently realised, but firm foundations have been laid. More accurate assessment and new systems to check on pupils' progress are helping to identify where they are not on course to reach their targets and the action needed to help them to catch up. This analysis is also used well to monitor the progress of different groups to identify any gaps in achievement so that remedial action can be taken. The role played by others in leading developments in their areas of responsibility is

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improving, and teachers are able to develop their skills by working alongside experts from other schools.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors support the school and understand the challenges it faces. They are becoming increasingly systematic in checking on its performance and planning for its improvement. They take seriously their responsibilities for safeguarding pupils and ensure that everyone working in school has been properly vetted. Under the headteacher's guidance, they have tightened procedures to assure pupils' welfare and safety.

That this is a happy school is testament to the school's efforts to tackle discrimination. The school feels keenly the importance of its role in the local community and the world beyond. Staff and governors have a clear understanding of its context and undertake a wide range of activities to support greater community cohesion. They also work closely with families to provide much-valued support including pointing them towards courses and services available in the area. Parents greatly value the close partnership with school, in particular the information they receive about their children's progress and the help provided so that they can support their children better at home. Fruitful partnerships have been developed with others, whether this is to extend learning opportunities or to provide expertise in support of the well-being of the school's more vulnerable pupils.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>4</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The children greatly enjoy their days in Reception. Skills on entry to Reception are rising. In the past they have been lower than those expected but the latest group have entered with skills much closer to those expected for their age. This is partly as a result of more having experiences of pre-school groups, with most having attended the group on the school site. This has also helped to ease their transition into the class, as close links with

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parents have been forged earlier and the children are already very familiar with their surroundings.

The children make satisfactory progress in all areas of their learning as the adults in the team are becoming increasingly aware of when to intervene to move learning forward and when to step back to let the children develop their own ideas. They encourage the children to talk about their work and ideas and, along with enjoyable role-play activities, support their speaking and listening. The activities planned inside and out reflect the children's specific needs and their interests. Most of the current class have settled in quickly to the routines and are starting to show independence by selecting resources and initiating activities themselves. However, not all are able to take the initiative without direct adult intervention and tend to see the outside in particular just as a space for physical activity.

The new staff team shares a common purpose even though the phase leader no longer teaches the class. The children's safety is placed at the heart of their work. As a result, they work and play safely, generally taking care and respecting others. The focus on developing early writing is starting to bear fruit for some, but not all take the opportunity to go to the activities provided without adult direction.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
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

Parents are very happy with the work of the school. They raised no concerns with the inspection team. The inspection concurs with their positive views about how the school helps their children to be safe and healthy, and ensures a smooth transition on entry or when leaving for secondary school. However, the team could not support the parents' views that teaching is good, meeting the needs of all children and helping them to make good progress. These features were found to be inadequate.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Shelley 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 27 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 85 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	11	41	15	56	1	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	16	59	11	41	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	8	30	17	63	1	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	4	15	20	74	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	12	44	14	52	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	33	18	67	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	48	14	52	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)	9	33	17	63	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	7	26	18	67	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	33	14	52	2	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	22	21	78	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	11	41	16	59	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	14	52	13	48	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 all 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



30 September 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Shelley Primary School, Ongar, CM5 0FF**

You will remember that we visited your school recently and I am now writing to let you know what we found out. I would like to thank you for making us feel welcome and for being so ready to share your thoughts about your school. We had a chance to talk to quite a lot of you and we have told your teachers how you were very helpful and polite. Your behaviour is good, and we were impressed by the way you help newcomers to the school settle in and make new friends quickly. Your attendance has also improved much in the last year. Well done for this and please keep it up.

We recognise that Shelley Primary School does some things well but there are weaknesses in important areas, so we have given it a 'notice to improve'. Some of the teaching has not been good enough and this has led to you not making the progress of which you are capable. The main things we have asked the staff to do are:

- make sure that lessons help all of you to learn better, are more challenging and involve you more in your learning
- make marking more helpful and give you better guidance to reach your individual targets
- improve the opportunities they provide for you to develop your basic skills such as reading and writing, and introduce programmes to help those of you who find learning difficult.

I am sure that the staff will do their best during the coming months to improve the school. They will be helped to carry out these improvements, and inspectors will visit again in about six month's time to check on the progress being made.

You can all play your part in helping the school to get even better by working hard.

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale

Lead inspector

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