

Sheddingdean Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125958
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	359972
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Paul Canham

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Spencer
Headteacher	Richard Benton
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons, observed seven teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, and a group of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including assessment and attendance information, lesson plans, safeguarding arrangements, school development planning, minutes of governing body meetings and pupils' work. Inspectors considered the 59 questionnaires received from parents and carers, as well as those from staff and a sample of pupils.

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

- The extent to which higher expectations increase the level of challenge.
- How much improvements to assessment procedures have strengthened monitoring and extended the accountability of staff and the governing body.
- The extent to which the recently extended senior leadership team and the governing body influence the school's direction and performance.

Information about the school

Sheddingdean is smaller than most primary schools. The very large majority of pupils are from families of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is above average. Pupils' special educational needs include speech, language and communication and moderate learning difficulties. ♦ Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception class. Since the last inspection, there have been a substantial number of changes to staffing.

The school has achieved the Sportsmark award, Healthy Schools status, the Eco-Schools Silver certificate, Fairtrade status and the International Schools 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school which serves its community well. Its good care and support places a high priority on enhancing pupils' self-esteem and raising achievement. Such positive features are reflected in many aspects of pupils' well-developed personal qualities, including their interest in what they do and their enjoyment of learning. The large majority of pupils attend regularly. However, despite the school's determined efforts, a small numbers of pupils do not come to school often enough. Pupils behave well and say that they feel safe and secure in a supportive environment. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and adopt them well in their daily lives. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and one parent's comments sums up the views of others, 'The children are known as individuals and their educational needs are quickly identified and catered for.'

The strengths in collective leadership are the key factors in driving improvement. Systematic monitoring and rigorous tracking systems have been established and staff are held accountable for attainment in their subject areas. The school's awareness and vision are well informed by an accurate self-evaluation. As a consequence, the governing body and school leaders have a clear understanding of where the school is now and of the priorities that need to be addressed to maintain improvements. Consequently, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is good.

Progress is good throughout the school. The push for consistently good teaching is evident in the continual review of classroom practice. Topics that link different subjects provide pupils with good opportunities to work on activities that interest them and develop their investigative skills. They encourage pupils to read and write for a range of purposes and to find out the meanings of different words. Good relationships are used well to raise academic expectations. Consequently, pupils progress well in lessons that are, typically, well paced, pitched at the right level and lift their interests. However, on occasion, pupils are not challenged enough from the start of the lesson. Recent improvements to pupils' performance levels reflect the good progress, effective teaching and the range of rich learning opportunities available in a broad and creative curriculum. As a result, pupils' achievement is good and attainment at the end of Year 6 is average, often from below average starting points. Intervention work, including well-tailored support for individual pupils, is successfully supporting all pupils.

Pupils' well-developed personal outcomes are reflected in their maturity, enthusiasm and involvement in the many activities that support the smooth running of the school. Pupils are respectful and value the views of others. They have a good understanding of the characteristics that shape different communities, especially in other countries. Popular clubs and after-school activities provide pupils with many opportunities to develop confidence and refine their creative and performance skills.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure teaching is consistently good or better by always providing challenging tasks that are pitched at the right level throughout the lesson.
- Improve attendance by making use of the good partnership with parents and carers, and sharing termly attendance information with them.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' enjoyment of learning, as seen in their eagerness to become involved in engaging and well-paced activities in English and mathematics, is a characteristic of lessons. They work well in small groups and readily share information by showing a determination to complete the tasks and get them right. Pupils work well independently of the teacher, for example when working in pairs and small groups in preparation for their creative writing. Pupils speak confidently about words that sound the same but are spelt and used differently in their writing. Pupils participated with much enthusiasm when using information and communication technology (ICT) to identify and draw a range of shapes. They showed great satisfaction in completing tasks when solving number problems, for example, during mathematics. In music, pupils sing enthusiastically, tunefully and with confidence.

Children start school with below expected levels of knowledge and understanding in several key aspects, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Improvements are such that pupils' attainment has been lifted by Year 6 to average and all groups of pupils achieve well. School data show that levels of attainment and the rate of progress are improving rapidly and securely. There are no significant variations in the rates of progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or by the very small number of pupils from different minority ethnic heritages. ♦

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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	3
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	2
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ 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?

Positive relationships and good subject knowledge are key strengths of teaching. Incisive questioning often gives pupils opportunities to think about their work and reflect on their answers. Well-paced activities and topics, such as those that encourage imaginative writing and those that link different subjects, successfully capture pupils' interest and grab their attention. However, on occasion, introductions are long and some activities do not always expect enough from pupils. Assessment is used well to guide planning. Marking strategies are used extremely well to give pupils closely tailored support and relate progress to their individual targets

Attractive and informative displays give an insight into the range of pupils' learning experiences. The revised curriculum provides a carefully considered balance between basic skills in English and mathematics and the enhancement of pupils' creative and performance skills. Planning links different subjects and pupils are given opportunities to reinforce their learning and develop their skills, especially in writing, through topics. Skills, including the ability to work collaboratively and independently, are encouraged. The teaching of different languages, including French, Spanish and Japanese, adds an additional positive dimension. The curriculum is supported by a well-planned programme for personal, social and health education. It is underpinned by the effective use of ICT, which provides good opportunities for independent learning and gives pupils access to a

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wide range of resources. Pupils' learning experiences are further enriched by a number of popular clubs, including gardening, and visits to places of interest. ♦

The good support for pupils' personal development and pastoral care is recognised and valued by parents and carers. One parent's comments sum up the views of others: 'The school is a lovely, local school with a nurturing feel. The staff really care about the pupils and their families.' Attention to pupils' health and well-being is reflected not just in the wide range of opportunities for physical activity but also in the provision of healthy school meals. With assistance from a number of outside agencies, individualised programmes of support, covering a broad range of personal and learning needs, are developed for pupils whose circumstances could make them vulnerable to underachievement. Close liaison with parents and carers, and outside agencies and tailored individual attention enables those pupils with the greatest need to gain confidence and self-esteem, and develop their literacy and numeracy skills.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Since the last inspection, the headteacher, with close support from the governing body and staff, has extended the senior management team and sharpened the focus on key priorities. These improvements have led to a systematic and rigorous approach to monitoring and a greater awareness of the path the school needs to follow to sustain improved performance levels. Strong collective leadership has developed a school that is committed not only to strengthening each pupil's self-esteem but also to raising achievement. Systematic monitoring has led to improvements in teaching and, consequently, to more rapid progress in lessons. The promotion of equality and approaches to tackling any form of discrimination are good. The school's collection of detailed data is beginning to help staff identify the needs of individual pupils at all stages of their learning. As a result, groups of pupils make similar progress.

The governing body readily challenges the school's work and continues to strengthen its monitoring role with the help of training, where appropriate. The governing body ensures that policies are systematically reviewed and resources are closely targeted at educational need. Attention to pupils' safety is integral to the school's work and safeguarding procedures are securely established. Local services and agencies are used well to enhance the safety and well-being of pupils experiencing difficult circumstances and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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Community cohesion is strongly promoted within the school and in the local community. The school demonstrates a good understanding of local needs and challenges through its close liaison with schools and outside agencies and the way it evaluates its effectiveness. The school has developed good links with international schools, including those in Japan and India. However, links with areas further afield in this country are not at the same level. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and play an active part in some school events, including after-school clubs and fund-raising projects. The use of the school's website and 'virtual learning platform' help parents and carers to understand their children's different learning experiences. ♦

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly, are eager to learn and make good progress, especially in reading, calculating, and knowledge and understanding of the world. Close links have been developed with parents and carers, and caring staff have successfully established a calm and welcoming environment in which children are nurtured from the start. Children's needs are identified early and support is good for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those who are more vulnerable. Well-planned themed topics ensure that all areas of learning are covered, with a particular focus on reading, speaking, listening, writing, and number skills. Children listen attentively and chatter enthusiastically about their work. They happily move from the classroom to the outside area when choosing different activities. ♦♦

The provision is well managed, and well-established procedures ensure that staff have accurate and reliable information about children's progress. Detailed planning and a range of stimulating activities take good account of the below-expected starting points and wide

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ability range. Adults move seamlessly in and out of activities and respond to individuals or take part in larger group activities. They give closely targeted support to activities directed by the teacher as well as those which children choose for themselves. Questioning by teachers is used well to probe children's understanding and capture their interest. Effective arrangements have been established for when children progress from Reception to Year 1.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

An overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaires expressed positive views about the school's work. A minority of parents or carers made written comments. Almost all of these expressed considerable satisfaction with the school and included positive remarks about the progress made by their children, the caring and welcoming environment, and the quality of the staff.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sheddingdean Community 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 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 196 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	75	13	22	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	48	81	11	19	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	40	68	19	32	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	71	17	29	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	43	73	16	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	58	25	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	61	21	36	2	3	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	51	27	46	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	38	64	19	32	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	54	24	41	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	51	27	46	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	43	73	16	27	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	44	75	15	25	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



24 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sheddingdean Community Primary School, Burgess Hill RH15 8JT

We very much enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for making us feel so welcome. This letter is to tell you about some of the things we found while we were with you. Yours is a good school which serves the community well. It is a place where you feel safe and benefit from good care and support. You told us it is also a school where you want to be, make friends, and enjoy taking part in the many interesting clubs and exciting activities. Almost all of your parents and carers who returned the questionnaire expressed considerable satisfaction with the school.

Here are some other important things about your school.

- You make good progress in lessons and reach attainment levels that are similar to those found in other schools.
- You are considerate and behave well.
- You respond enthusiastically to school activities, and lively and interesting lessons.
- You make a good contribution to the smooth running of the school and contribute successfully to local events.
- You have a good understanding of what makes for a healthy lifestyle and a good awareness of healthy eating.

To make things even better for you, we have asked the headteacher and staff to:

- make sure that teaching always challenges you throughout the lesson
- ask the parents and carers of those of you who do not attend regularly to make sure that you come to school more often.

We wish each one of you every success in your future education and hope that you continue to enjoy learning as much as you do now. You can all help the school by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Paul Canham

Lead inspector

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