

Shelley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115020
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	378984
Inspection dates	8–9 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Michelle Winter

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	81
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Gode
Headteacher	Lesley Lewis
Date of previous school inspection	28 September 2010
School address	Milton Crescent Shelley CM5 0FF
Telephone number	01277 362354
Fax number	01277 362302
Email address	head@shelley.essex.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Teaching and learning were observed in six lessons and all four teachers were seen. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents including safeguarding records, the school development plan, the school's self-evaluation, assessment data used to monitor pupils' performance, attendance information and behaviour logs. Inspectors scrutinised a sample of pupils' books. They also analysed the content of 32 inspection questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How effective is the learning of all pupils in mathematics, particularly higher-attaining pupils, and what progress do they make?
- What is the attainment and progress of those known to be eligible for free school meals and boys in mathematics and English?
- How effective is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage in securing good outcomes for all children?
- How extensive is the evidence to support the school's capacity to improve?

Information about the school

This school is much smaller than the average primary school with three mixed-age classes in the main school. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is in one Reception class. 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. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average.

The school was inspected in September 2010 and was given a notice to improve. A monitoring inspection in March 2011 judged that the school had made satisfactory progress in addressing the issues from the previous inspection and in raising the pupils' achievement. A children's centre and pre-school provision are located on the school site. These 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

2

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

This is now a satisfactory school. Leaders at the school are firmly focused on improving teaching and learning so that progress is faster and attainment is higher. The school evaluates itself thoroughly and accurately. This leads to tightly focused development plans which are effective in driving the school forward. Successes in these areas that have resulted in improvement in the school's overall effectiveness demonstrate the school's good capacity for improvement.

Regular, rigorous and accurate monitoring activities are effective in quickly improving teaching and learning, which are broadly satisfactory. Attainment over the last three years, particularly in English, has been low. However, much has been done to improve standards in all year groups. In 2011 pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 was broadly average in mathematics and English. Learning has improved and there is much that is good. In satisfactory lessons learning slows when pupils are unclear about how to achieve the lesson's aims because activities are not modelled for them. In some lessons activities are not precisely matched to the needs of all pupils or do not build on their prior learning well enough. In lessons that are good, pupils are provided with an exciting purpose for their work. In one mathematics lesson younger pupils were enthusiastically completing number problems in response to a letter from Aladdin. Detailed assessment information is used to provide appropriate challenge, including for the higher-attaining pupils. Progress for these pupils has improved but the levels of challenge are not consistent in all lessons. Ambitious targets are set for all pupils and in some year groups pupils are making accelerated progress in developing their basic skills in mathematics and English. Marking and feedback provides guidance to pupils about how to improve their work but this is more effective in some year groups than others. Most pupils know their learning targets but some are unclear about how to achieve them.

Much has been done to close the gaps in attainment for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for boys. Progress for these groups is now more evenly matched to the progress of all pupils. The school tracks the performance of pupils carefully including their improving attendance and the impact of well-targeted small-group and individual support programmes. Effective partnerships are providing additional support for pupils whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable,

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including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils make broadly satisfactory progress. The care of pupils is good. One parent of a child with medical needs was highly positive about the sensitive support her child receives and the inclusive approach of the school.

Assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils' moral and spiritual development. Through religious education lessons, they are aware of the major faith groups and their unique attributes. Pupils' understanding of other elements of diversity in this country and beyond is less well developed. The school has appropriate plans to improve awareness of cultural diversity and promote community cohesion. Links with schools in contrasting locations are at an early stage of development.

Most pupils feel safe at school and have a satisfactory understanding of unsafe situations, including when using the internet. Pupils are polite and friendly. They are happy to share their ideas and show their work to visitors. A very small number of pupils and some parents expressed concern about how unacceptable behaviour is dealt with. Those with behaviour difficulties are receiving good support and incidents of poor behaviour are uncommon. The school deals effectively with rare incidents of unacceptable behaviour but the process has not been communicated well enough to the whole school community. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is satisfactory and pupils respond appropriately to reminders about maintaining attention and appropriate talk. Most teachers make clear their expectations of pupils so that they know when to listen and when to talk, but this is not consistent in all lessons.

Up to 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment by improving the quality of teaching and learning, so that all of it is good or better, by:
 - giving feedback to pupils about how to improve their work, including through marking and target setting, consistently in all year groups
 - planning appropriate activities to meet the needs of all pupils
 - providing appropriate challenge to all groups of pupils.
- Improve behaviour by:
 - ensuring all teachers consistently set high expectations for pupils' behaviour in lessons
 - setting out clearly the school's systems to deal with poor behaviour and the impact of these systems.
- Improve the curriculum further by:
 - introducing opportunities for pupils to understand and celebrate the

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- diversity within and beyond the school, including through links to schools in contrasting locations in the United Kingdom
- developing global links to enhance pupils' understanding of how people live and learn in other countries.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Attainment on entry has improved and past weaknesses in the use of language are no longer present. There are strong partnerships with the pre-school provision on the school site which opened in 2009. Now pupils enter with skills expected for their age and are well prepared for school.

Progress in reading is good and has recently been enhanced by the introduction of 'Bug club' which provides electronic books at appropriate levels for pupils to share with their parents and carers at home. Progress in writing and mathematics is improving strongly with good progress for most pupils in Year 1 to Year 4 as a result of good teaching. The precise teaching of specific strategies is helpful in improving progress in mathematics. In one lesson pupils were successfully applying these skills to simple word problems. Gaps in pupils' basic skills as a result of weaker teaching in the past are being tackled in Year 5 and 6 including through small group and individual support. This was successful last year in accelerating progress for pupils in Year 6 to broadly average standards in mathematics and English. Higher-attaining pupils were also well supported so that the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in English was in line with the national average. Assessment data indicate that more pupils are on track to achieve Level 5 in mathematics and English by the time they leave school. Achievement in other areas is improving also. The developing links between subjects are effective in raising attainment including in information and communication technology. Handwriting is improving with daily focused teaching of letter formation linked to spelling and reading. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are accurately identified. Appropriate support has been successful, resulting in some pupils being removed from the special needs register.

Some pupils have opportunities to take responsibility in school including through the school council which has influenced school decisions, for example in the school lunch menu. They take part enthusiastically in fundraising activities, including the 'Dressing Spotty Day'. Pupils understand well the importance of a healthy diet but the snack choices of some do not reflect this. A high proportion of pupils take part in the extra-curricular sporting opportunities provided. Attendance has improved and is now in-line with national averages. Pupils apply their basic skills across a range of subjects including writing in history topics. Information and communication technology skills are developing well through links to other subjects including mathematics and art.

Pupils develop empathy and spirituality well. In one assembly pupils sang respectfully and tunefully a song for the forthcoming remembrance service in a local church. Cultural awareness is less well developed. Pupils work co-operatively in small groups but sometimes they do not listen carefully enough to others or wait their turn to

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answer. Behaviour around the school is mainly calm and orderly; those with behaviour difficulties have opportunities to reflect on their behaviour.

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	4
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	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils’ behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teaching has improved since the previous inspection as a result of effective monitoring procedures and clear guidance about what constitutes a good lesson. Good questioning is used in many lessons to extend pupils’ learning and to challenge the more-able pupils but this is not consistent in all lessons. More teaching now involves stimulating starting points and presents a real purpose for learning. Pupils say they enjoy practical activities to support learning. They appreciated opportunities to investigate fractions by making and dividing pizzas. Younger pupils knew that learning how to divide in mathematics would help them to share sweets with their friends. Marking and feedback provides useful guidance to pupils about how their work can be improved but this is not consistent across all year groups or subjects. Detailed assessment records are not used consistently well to provide activities which match pupils’ needs exactly.

The curriculum provides more opportunities for writing when, for example, pupils write accounts linked to their history topics. The school’s extensive grounds are used well to promote learning. Pupils enjoyed working outside to build a shelter and learn survival skills. The school offers a range of extra-curricular activities which are popular with pupils. Local visits and visitors to the school further enrich the satisfactory curriculum.

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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The school provides a welcoming and friendly environment. It provides good care and guidance, particularly for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Effective transition arrangements are appreciated by parents and carers. One parent commented that, 'The school has fantastic ties with the pre-school which made the transition into foundation very easy with the teacher visiting the children in preschool and vice versa. They have also done some combined trips and activities together.' Sensitive work with individual families has resulted in reduced persistent absence and improved overall attendance.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is ambitious for the school. She is supported by an effective leadership team. Leaders communicate high expectations to the whole school community and challenging targets are set for improvement. The school evaluates the impact of its plans to improve thoroughly and regularly, and satisfactorily promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination. The monitoring of teaching and the tracking of pupils' progress are rigorous and helpful in setting high expectations for all. Leaders of literacy and numeracy have been effective in improving provision and outcomes in their subjects. Effective partnerships with local schools and the local authority have contributed well to the improved teaching, learning, pupils' progress and leadership at the school.

The governing body understands the broad strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors are visible in the school, as volunteers in classrooms and helping to provide additional activities including sailing for older pupils. The governing body receives regular information about the performance of the school. However important attainment data is not routinely benchmarked against national standards so that clear comparisons cannot be easily made. Safeguarding checks have been completed for all staff, governors and regular volunteers at the school and this is carefully recorded. All staff have appropriate and regular training in the protection of children. The site is secure but the school does not routinely assess the risks associated with the extensive grounds.

Parents and carers appreciate the regular information they receive about the progress of their children. Opportunities to visit classes every Friday are also well-received. The school seeks the views of parents and carers but do not routinely use

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them to formulate school policy and practice.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Reception class offers a welcoming, well organised and calm environment. Children play and work happily and they are well cared for. Relationships are good and children are developing their social skills well. This can be seen when children co-operate with each other in their play. For example, three children were happily working on a computer game together. They were developing their language well when giving instructions to one another. The outdoor environment is used well to extend learning. Children were enjoying playing in water and completing large-scale paintings during the inspection. They have opportunities to make choices about where they play and work however some adult-led activities limit children’s choice. Some of these activities slow learning when they do not flow naturally from children’s play. Topics are chosen to meet children’s needs and interests such as the topic planned to build on the girls’ interest in princesses. Adults make and record regular assessments of children’s achievements. Learning journals are an attractive record of children’s work. Parents and carers are invited to contribute to these ongoing assessments by recording milestones at home but these opportunities are not routinely taken.

Daily opportunities to learn the sounds that letters make are effective. Most pupils know these sounds and can identify the sounds in their own names and those of their friends. From starting points which are now broadly in line with expectations children make satisfactory progress in the Reception class. Teachers and leaders correctly identified slower progress in creative development last year and have adapted the provision to ensure that children have greater opportunities in this area

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of learning. Some of the established routines have not been evaluated in terms of their impact on children’s learning. For instance children’s play and work time is interrupted by whole-school playtime.

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 questionnaire responses indicate a high level of support and confidence in the school. Some parents and carers made additional comments praising the improvements made to the school. A small number of parents and carers were concerned that the school does not deal appropriately with unacceptable behaviour. The inspection found that the school deals with rare incidents of unacceptable behaviour appropriately but that the whole school community is not clear about the processes the school uses and their impact. This area is explored further in other parts of the report.

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 32 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 81 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	53	12	38	0	0	1	3
The school keeps my child safe	20	63	11	34	1	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	19	59	13	41	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	41	17	53	1	3	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	14	44	16	50	2	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	16	50	15	47	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	44	17	53	1	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)	11	34	15	47	4	13	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	12	38	15	47	4	13	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	6	19	18	56	2	6	6	19
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	31	18	56	3	9	1	3
The school is led and managed effectively	10	31	16	50	2	6	2	6
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	14	44	13	41	4	13	1	3

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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.



10 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shelley Primary School, Ongar, CM5 0FF

Thank you for making us so welcome when I visited your school recently with my colleague. Thank you also for talking to us about your work and the things you enjoy. We know that adults take good care of you. Many of you told us that you enjoy school and that attendance is improving. You enjoy your lessons especially when they are hands-on and practical.

You go to a satisfactory school. We can see that your school is improving but it still has further to go in making sure that all of you make as much progress as you can. Overall you are making satisfactory progress.

We have asked the headteacher and staff to improve the school further by:

- making sure that all lessons are good and that work is always hard enough for you
- making sure that all of the marking in your books helps you to improve your work and that all of you know and understand how your targets can help you to improve
- making sure that everybody knows how your teachers expect you to behave and what happens when a very small number of pupils behave badly
- making sure you have more opportunities to learn about a range of cultures in this country and the wider world.

I hope you will play your part by continuing to work hard and do your best.

I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Winter
Her Majesty's Inspector

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