

Shellingford Church of England Voluntary Aided School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	123222
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	395290
Inspection dates	2–3 May 2012
Lead inspector	Rodney Braithwaite

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	63
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Heidi Crook
Headteacher	Judith Terrell
Date of previous school inspection	21–22 November 2006
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Rodney Braithwaite

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed nine lessons or part lessons taught by four teachers. Meetings were held with pupils, the headteacher, teachers, representatives of the governing body, parents and carers, and a local authority school adviser. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at safeguarding arrangements as well as other information, including policies, procedures, external evaluations, a range of pupils' work and school development planning. A total of 53 responses to questionnaires and one letter from parents and carers were scrutinised, together with the responses to questionnaires received from staff and pupils.

Information about the school

Shellingford is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is similar to the national average. The proportion supported by school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is below average. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for academic performance. The school has an Early Years Foundation Stage, which is combined with Year 1. The other two classes also have mixed-age groups – Years 2, 3 and 4; and Years 5 and 6.

Among its awards, the school has an 'outstanding' award for Health and Safety compliance (2012) and an award for excellence for its Oxfordshire Work-Life Enhancement Programme (2012).

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Shellingford is a good school. The headteacher provides good leadership for teachers and other staff. She demonstrates quiet determination and continually encourages staff to improve their own, and the school's, performance. This has created excellent morale among the whole staff team and opportunities for teachers to become much more involved in management responsibilities. The school has a number of strengths, but is not outstanding because the rate of progress made by pupils, and their achievement, especially in writing, has not been wholly consistent. This reflects the teaching, which is nearly always good, but is only outstanding very occasionally, and does not always pay sufficient attention to detail.
- Nearly all pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress, so that over time most reach standards above those expected in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Most more-able pupils reach their potential, but the school's progress data indicate that there remain a minority who could reach higher levels if they were extended more in their learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is good in and out of school. Pupils have positive, enthusiastic attitudes to learning and a clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Their confident personal development reflects the effective provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, which also benefits from a carefully planned broad and lively curriculum, tailored to the needs of classes with wide age ranges. Pupils almost unanimously indicate that they have no problems with bullying of any kind, saying, 'We are all friends here.'
- A major strength of the school is its excellent provision for the care and welfare of pupils. This is much appreciated, not only by the pupils, but also by parents and carers. Many went out of their way to compliment the staff's commitment to care.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build upon recent improvements in writing, so that the attainment and achievement of pupils in writing are as good as in reading, by:
 - improving teachers' marking and guidance to pupils on how to improve their learning
 - encouraging pupils to take greater care in their writing and its presentation in all subjects of the curriculum.
- Ensure that the existing good quality of monitoring of teaching and learning results in more good teaching becoming outstanding by:
 - encouraging teachers to develop a higher level of attention to detail when planning for the needs of pupils' learning and its subsequent monitoring
 - using extension activities as soon as possible to ensure that all pupils are working at their full potential.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

After entering the school with the skills expected for their age, children make good progress and achieve well in all their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This effective learning was observed several times in the inspection in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1, when pupils were rapidly developing writing skills, and throwing and catching skills. Good progress continues in Years 1 and 2 so that pupils usually reach above average attainment in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Their attainment in writing has varied over time between average and above average. The signs are that the school is beginning to address this imbalance and create greater consistency. In Key Stage 2, there have been consistent attainment patterns for several years, with the exception of a 'blip' year in 2011, when attainment at the end of Year 6 was below average, except for a small number of high-attaining pupils. However, there were specific reasons for this fall and the school has ensured that, through increased interventions for individual needs, this is unlikely to reoccur. There is strong evidence through data, lesson observations and examination of pupils' work that pupils in all year groups are making good progress and achieving well. This includes those pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs.

Although some pupils reach above average standards, a few are not extended sufficiently quickly in their learning. Attainment in reading is a strength, most pupils reaching above average standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress, because they have regular opportunities to read independently and to adults and each other. They enjoy reading and have good resources. In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 class, children are taught effectively and consolidate their letter sounds and phonic understanding on a regular basis, which gives them a very firm foundation for their reading skills. A high

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proportion of parents and carers agree that their children make good progress, although a small minority do not think that the school meets the particular needs of their children.

Quality of teaching

Nearly all parents and carers indicate that teaching in the school is good. One parent commented, 'My children love school and have developed huge enthusiasm for learning, thanks to the teachers.' Inspection findings confirm this view, which is firmly endorsed by pupils. In discussion, they are forthright in their positive views of teaching, and are enthusiastic about their learning strategy of, 'Self, Neighbour, Others, Teacher', which most understand and use regularly. Children have a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage because teaching is consistently good. A strong feature is the detailed and extensive monitoring and assessment by all adults of all the children's activities. These are well organised, and the individual needs of children are carefully integrated into effective planning, leading to good achievement, progress and development of independence.

In the main school, teachers have good relationships with their pupils, and build successfully on their enthusiasm for learning. Generally, the mixed-age classes are managed effectively, although some pupils may be with the same teacher for three years or even longer. Due to careful planning of the curriculum, pupils report very little repetition of previous work in the same class. The school has improved planning and assessment procedures and teachers are using data more precisely to cater for the needs of all pupils. This was seen to good effect in the class for pupils in Years 5 and 6 when pupils had sufficiently varied tasks to work at several different levels on the properties of a range of two-dimensional shapes. However, teachers sometimes take too long to get their pupils involved in activities causing a fall in the concentration levels of some pupils.

Although teachers offer some comments to pupils on how to improve, both verbally and through marking, these are not always followed up rigorously enough. Consequently, for example, the presentation of work, especially writing, is sometimes indifferent and fails to improve. Teachers sometimes pay insufficient attention to detail in their encouragement of pupils' improvement, for example, by not stressing the need for accurate punctuation and spelling in all subjects, not just English. This prevents outcomes for some pupils being as high as they could be, and is the reason why teaching, although mostly good, is not outstanding very often. Teaching assistants make effective contributions to learning, particularly in their well-planned interventions with disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

The school's evaluation and monitoring of teaching by the headteacher and, increasingly, other school subject leaders, are related closely to the needs of the school and professional development, and are rigorous and accurate. Importantly, development points are followed up quickly by the headteacher to check improvement.

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

Almost every pupil in discussion or questionnaires indicated that they feel safe all the time when they are in school. They also reflected that all pupils nearly always behave well in classes and in the playground, and that that seen during the inspection was typical. One said, 'We only have little squabbles, and probably only one fight a year.' In particular, older pupils appreciate the headteacher's suggestions for 'peaceful problem solving' which they say 'works really well'. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly into school and soon learn what is expected of them. As a result, their behaviour is good and sometimes excellent. In the rest of the school, behaviour during the inspection was often outstanding, with only very infrequent examples of pupils becoming disengaged during learning activities. When asked about the most likely time for behavioural standards to fall, a pupil commented 'when we have to spend too long on the carpet'. Pupils are hard put to recall any incidents of bullying of any sort, including cyber-bullying or name-calling, but are confident that it would be dealt with should it occur.

Many pupils, especially younger ones, benefit in their personal development from regularly working with older pupils. Harmonious relationships are apparent throughout the school, and staff act as good role models. Effective links with external agencies meet the needs of those pupils whose circumstances make them the most vulnerable or potentially disruptive. Nearly all parents and carers indicated that their children are kept safe and that the behaviour of pupils in the school is good; a typical comment being, 'The ethos of the school is evident in the children's enthusiasm and the respect and friendship they show one another across the age groups.'

Attendance is consistently above the national average, and the punctuality of pupils is excellent.

Leadership and management

School leaders, led sensitively and calmly by the headteacher, share her high expectations for improvement in pupils' achievement, and especially for providing a caring and happy family ethos in which pupils can develop. Likewise, the whole staff share leaders' ambitions and all express pride in being a member of the school community. The leadership capacity is constantly evolving and improving as a result of the wider sharing of management responsibilities and associated accountability, and links to professional development. Leaders have widened opportunities for pupils to enjoy a creative and challenging curriculum which maintains their interest and desire to learn. One pupil illustrated this by saying, 'I absolutely adored studying space, and found out so much about it.' The school strongly promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural education with daily acts of worship being particularly effective in sharing a sense of community and caring for others.

School leaders are accurate in their evaluation of the school's performance and have detailed knowledge of the needs of every pupil. The governing body, school leaders and staff promote equal opportunities well, and the school is fully inclusive, with no

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evidence of discrimination. The school's recent track record of improvement, especially in its development of wider leadership and raising pupils' achievement in all year groups, indicates a good capacity for further improvement.

The governing body shares leaders' determination that the school must strive for continuous improvement. There is a healthy level of challenge and debate within the governing body, which is nevertheless entirely supportive of the school's aims, even when there may be differences as to how goals can be reached. Members of the governing body have an excellent knowledge of the school, with some members visiting classes and reporting on their findings. They carry out their safeguarding duties effectively and oversee the school budget rigorously.

There is good engagement with parents and carers who are actively involved in the life of the school through, for example, FOSS (Friends of Shellingford School), which has raised substantial funds to purchase resources such as the new raised beds in the school grounds. A very high proportion of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire, and a large majority expressed very positive views of the school, praising many aspects. A small number of parents and carers expressed concerns about different aspects of their children's education; nevertheless, almost all indicated that they would recommend the school to another parent or carer, confirming the inspection conclusion that the school offers a good quality of education.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



4 May 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Shellingford Church of England Voluntary Aided School,
Faringdon SN7 7QA**

I very much enjoyed my recent visit to your school, particularly when you talked to me about the many activities you enjoy doing in school. You were very polite, nearly always smiling, and talked very interestingly about how well you all get on together, and your tips for learning. It was really pleasing to see how well the older ones among you looked after and helped the younger ones in classes and in your lovely outdoor areas.

I am pleased to say that you go to a good school where you achieve well and often reach standards which are above the average for your age when you leave, especially in reading and mathematics. You are very well looked after and cared for, and you know how to keep yourselves safe. You behave well, and it is good to hear that members of the public comment on this when you are on educational trips. Your attendance is good, and you were certainly very punctual during my visit. Your teachers and teaching assistants, and your headteacher, are doing a good job in looking after you and providing you with a good start to your education.

There are still things that can be even better, though. I would like you all to carry on improving your writing. I have asked your teachers to make sure that you all take time and care in order to make your writing as good as possible in all subjects, and that you present it neatly and tidily. They can help you by using their marking more and talking to you about how to improve. In this way, I also think that your teachers can make their teaching even better than good, which it is most of the time. I want to be sure that you all reach the levels that you are capable of reaching. All of you can help by telling your teachers quickly when you are ready to move on to harder work, or if you find some work too easy. I wish you all well in the future, and hope you all continue to enjoy school and each other's friendship as much as you do now.

Yours sincerely

Rodney Braithwaite
Lead inspector

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