

Shaw Hill Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 103157 |
| Local Authority | Birmingham |
| Inspection number | 286576 |
| Inspection dates | 22–23 May 2007 |
| Reporting inspector | Gerald Griffin |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 470 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Frank Bruce |
| Headteacher | Margaret Barnfield |
| Date of previous school inspection | 24 February 2003 |
| School address | Anthony Road Alum Rock Birmingham B8 3AN |
| Telephone number | 0121 4642131 |
| Fax number | 0121 4643439 |

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|--------------------------|----------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Most children enter the school with skills and experiences that are well below the levels expected for their age. Nearly all pupils are of Pakistani background and most who start school are at the very early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is average. The school serves an area of some economic hardship. It has gained a Healthy Schools award.

Key for inspection grades

| | |
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| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Shaw Hill is a good school. Standards are rising and are now broadly average by the end of Year 6. This represents good achievement over pupils' low starting points. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English make outstanding progress in their language skills because of the specialist support they receive. As a result, their academic achievement is also good. Parents appreciate the good education the school provides and one parent summarises their views writing, 'My children are given the incentive, confidence and encouragement to achieve the highest standards.' The school's good leadership and management underpin the school's success. The staff share the headteacher's strong drive and clear focus on raising standards. The regular checking of the school's performance provides an accurate picture of its strengths and weaknesses and development plans have the correct priorities. The recent record of good achievement, rising standards and the gains made since the last inspection show the school is well placed to improve further.

Parents report that children settle happily and quickly in the Nursery. Children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage although few reach the expected goals for learning by the time they start Year 1, largely because their language skills are still developing. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. However, responsibilities are shared between staff and the checking of standards and planning for improvements are not as effective or robust in the Nursery and Reception classes as they are in other areas of the school. This is why children's progress is satisfactory rather than good.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and they thrive in the school's friendly and supportive atmosphere. Pupils are polite to each other and to adults and they behave well. Pupils enjoy all aspects of school and one said, 'Teachers make lessons fun learning!' Teaching is good; lessons are managed well, work is both challenging and engaging, and relationships are positive. As a result pupils are keen to learn, concentrate well and work hard. The good curriculum is promoting pupils' enjoyment of school. They keenly participate in the many clubs on offer, and the frequent visits to places of interest raise pupils' aspirations and broaden their horizons. The curriculum places the correct emphasis on developing pupils' language skills and this is making a significant contribution to their good achievement in all subjects.

Pupils feel safe and well looked after in school and care, guidance and support are good overall. Sensitive care and support are provided for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities so they can participate fully in all school activities and make good progress. The school's procedures to check the progress of pupils in Years 3 to 6 are good and the help provided for those who fall behind with their work is effective. These procedures for younger pupils are satisfactory rather than good because any slowing of progress is not always detected quickly, which means remedial action is sometimes delayed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve leadership and management of the Foundation Stage to ensure standards are effectively checked and to make improvement plans robust.
- Sharpen the use of data in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 to ensure that any slowing of pupils' progress is quickly identified so that it can be rapidly remedied.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards in Year 6 are broadly average and have improved since the national test results in 2006, especially in mathematics. This represents good achievement. Standards have risen markedly since the last inspection because teaching has improved. In Years 3 to 6, girls' standards are rising and are now the same as the boys. Standards are also improving in Years 1 and 2, although they are below average and are affected by pupils' developing language skills. Boys' standards in reading are below those of the girls in Year 2 because the school has been slow to recognise this difference and put in place appropriate support for the boys at an early age.

Progress in science is outstanding. This is the result of an exciting curriculum that provides many opportunities for practical experiments and research. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities has improved and is now good. Children's progress in the Nursery and Reception classes is satisfactory. Although many make good gains in acquiring English, few children reach the expected standards for their age.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils treat property and the environment with respect. A clear moral code is the basis for their good behaviour. Occasionally, pupils get restless and chatter towards the end of lessons. Pupils are proud of their culture and are also keen to celebrate and share the festivals and customs of others. Children in the Foundation Stage have positive attitudes towards their work, play together and behave well. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example on the Internet. Pupils' enjoyment of school is evident in their eager participation in lessons and their enthusiastic singing in assemblies! Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They readily join in physical activities and they do their best to eat a healthy diet. Pupils take responsibility well and many act as class monitors and as play leaders at break and lunchtime. They learn to make responsible decisions through the school council and pupils talk with pride about their participation in choosing equipment to improve the play area. Pupils show concern for the wider world through fund-raising for local and national charities. Average standards in the basic skills and opportunities to run a mini-enterprise and manage the allotment provide sound preparation for secondary school and future employment.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers show real enthusiasm for their subject and provide pupils with highly engaging activities. Teachers' high expectations for the quality of pupils' work are made clear at the start of lessons. As a result, pupils are well motivated and try hard. Teachers use resources well, such as the new whiteboards and educational games, to make work appealing. Planning is generally good, but occasionally higher attaining pupils are given work that is too easy and their progress slows. Teaching assistants are used very effectively to support pupils with learning difficulties and those at the early stage of learning English.

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Teachers plan activities that quickly develop children's language skills but these plans do not provide enough opportunities for imaginative play to accelerate the children's learning of social skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum gives the correct emphasis to the development of basic skills. There are many opportunities for pupils to talk and listen to each other in class and in small groups, thus accelerating pupils' understanding of English and broadening their vocabulary. This is having a positive effect on pupils' work and progress in all subjects, especially in science and in mathematics where pupils confidently use a wide range of technical vocabulary. Lessons in health education, physical education and swimming support pupils' personal development well. The school has a successful programme to help pupils explore a wide range of religions and cultures. Revision and booster classes accelerate the progress of pupils who slip behind with their work.

The Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-led activity. Access to outdoor learning is good in the Nursery but the Reception children have too few opportunities to work outside to develop their independence.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff care for pupils very well. Pupils say they can readily turn to an adult in school if they have a concern, knowing their problems will be sensitively dealt with. Pupils report that the very rare incidences of bullying are quickly and effectively resolved. Health and safety and child protection arrangements are robust. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities receive good support in lessons from adults who have a detailed understanding of the needs of each pupil. Pupils who are at the early stage of learning English make outstanding progress in acquiring language skills because many adults speak their home language. The school works very hard to improve attendance, which is average, by providing pupils with rewards. It has been particularly successful in working with parents to reduce absence caused by prolonged holidays taken during term-time. The school uses its strong links with agencies and other schools well to support pupils' learning. For example, expert help from the hearing support service ensures profoundly deaf pupils have effective support so that they can take full part in school life. The school sets pupils challenging targets and they are given good advice on how to meet them. The procedures to check the progress of pupils in Years 3 to 6 are well established. The recently introduced procedures for younger pupils do not consistently identify early enough those pupils whose progress is too slow.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Rigorous procedures for checking the school's performance by the senior leadership team have resulted in significant improvements in the quality of teaching and the curriculum. As a result, standards are rising. Recent appointments have strengthened the leadership and management team. The new subject leaders are already having a significant impact on raising standards. For example, they have introduced a range of successful measures to ensure girls take an active

part in their learning and gain higher marks in tests. Staff are used well to keep teaching groups small so that pupils get more individual teaching. This has been particularly effective in raising standards in mathematics in Years 3 to 6.

The Foundation Stage lacks a designated person to check standards and drive developments and this is why children's progress is not better. The school has plans to remedy this situation.

Governors provide good support for the school and carry out their duties well. They provide a very good link with the local community. They monitor the work of the school conscientiously and challenge its results. For example, they correctly identified the need to focus the school's attention more sharply on the girls' learning in Years 3 to 6.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | School Overall |
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Overall effectiveness

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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 2 |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 2 |
| The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes |

Achievement and standards

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| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 2 |

Personal development and well-being

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|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 2 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 3 |

The quality of provision

| | |
|---|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 2 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 2 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 2 |

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 2 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3 |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets | 2 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 2 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements? | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures? | No |
| Does this school require a notice to improve? | No |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

24 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shaw Hill Primary School, Birmingham, B8 3AN

We enjoyed our visit to your school. You were very polite and friendly and you made us feel most welcome. We enjoyed the discussions we had with you about the work and activities you do at school. You clearly get on with each other and the adults in school very well and you are very proud of the school's happy atmosphere. We decided Shaw Hill is a good school. Here are some of our findings:

- You make good progress in your lessons in Years 1 to 6 and satisfactory progress in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The good teaching helps you to reach average standards in English, mathematics and science.
- You enjoy school, feel safe and accept responsibility well.
- You behave well.
- You have good relationships with your teachers and you work hard for them.
- The curriculum helps you understand why it is important to be healthy and develops your interest in science.
- Adults in the school look after you very well.
- The headteacher leads the school well and teachers are working hard to make sure the school gets better.

We have asked the school to do two things to help it improve further.

- Improve the leadership of the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Make sure that any slow progress made by younger children is quickly spotted and dealt with.

We wish you all success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Gerald Griffin Lead Inspector