



Shawlands Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106564
Local Authority Barnsley
Inspection number 287545
Inspection date 16 January 2007
Reporting inspector Elizabeth Charlesworth

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Shaw Street
School category	Community		Barnsley
Age range of pupils	3–11		South Yorkshire S70 6JL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01226 287177
Number on roll (school)	258	Fax number	01226 296365
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr P Politano
		Headteacher	Mr J Sawyer
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Shawlands is an average sized school close to Barnsley town centre. Most of the pupils live within walking distance in older terrace houses or on a newer private estate. Though below average, the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is rising. Most pupils are White British. A few are from other heritages and include refugees and asylum seekers, often with no knowledge of spoken English. There are more pupils with statements of special educational need than is found nationally, including three with physical disabilities, though the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, mainly moderate learning, and disabilities overall, is broadly average. The school has Investors in People award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

'Brilliant school: we look forward to every day because we always do something new.' This is how pupils sum up Shawlands. What makes this school so special is the way adults and pupils pull together to make sure everyone does their best. Staff and governors are models of excellent practice in how to work together. Pupils say one of the reasons they enjoy school so much is because they can see that their teachers enjoy it too.

The vast majority of pupils have good attendance and arrive promptly each morning ready and eager for a new day. However, attendance of a small minority give the school cause for concern. Staff work with outside agencies and parents to develop good habits for these pupils and emphasise to parents the importance of regular attendance so that their children get the best they deserve. The school council is also very keen that all pupils get the best out of school and they have a very special responsibility for being on hand to help sort out any playground incident. They say they are often not very busy because everyone gets on well together and staff support them in nipping in the bud any potential bullying or falling out. They are preparing to ask the headteacher to support them in getting a better balance between ball games and other activities in the playground. The school council also leads the way in fundraising, drawing up proposals to support local and international charities. Pupils have a very strong sense of their responsibility to help others: in their own words, 'we've got so much and some people don't have anything'.

Excellent teaching and a stimulating curriculum underpin the school's motto of 'high aspirations for all'. Staff extend their own interests and expertise, working with pupils to enliven the school year with many activities, including weekly aerobics, visits to museums and galleries, and outdoor pursuits. Staff and pupils make extensive use of the adjacent Shaw Lane sports club to foster their passion for various sports: the girls are enjoying particular success in hardball cricket. The arts are equally valued, with high quality displays of pupils' work gracing the walls, pupils singing and learning instruments and Year 5's 'play in a day' being regular features on the school calendar. As a result, pupils are growing into self-assured young people, confident in their ability to succeed and with a very strong sense of their own worth. The school is distinguished for its success in academic achievement: pupils make outstanding progress to reach above average standards by the time they leave Year 6.

Staff, skilfully led by a headteacher ambitious for the school, are a very enthusiastic team. Because they know each and every pupil individually, all staff draw together their knowledge of academic and personal development, setting targets that reflect their high aspirations for everyone to fulfil their promise. Personal knowledge of pupils is equally valuable when tracking progress, again done collectively, readily providing solutions and methods of intervention to keep pupils on track. Information shared between staff about pupils' progress from Foundation Stage to Year 6 enables them to review and adjust their own teaching for subsequent years. Meticulous records are kept, showing the effectiveness of support and how well particular needs are met.

Since the previous inspection, the school continues to strive for perfection in all aspects of its work. To support this, there has been considerable investment in information and communication technology (ICT). Accommodation for children in the Foundation Stage has been extended and improved to cater for an increase in the number of three-year-olds. New leadership in the Foundation Stage is focused on bringing consistency to how children are assessed and to teaching and learning. Membership of the governing body has almost completely changed and it is working through its training plan to equip all members with the skills and knowledge they need to support and challenge the school. Self-evaluation is restrained in assessing its remarkable success in achievement and in teaching and learning, because it constantly identifies areas that could improve even further in the light of the changing needs of pupils. However, in keeping with inspection evidence, the school recognises that overall it is an outstanding school, very well placed to maintain its position among the best in the country.

What the school should do to improve further

- The school knows itself very well and is already working on plans to bring all aspects of the school up to the highest standard possible.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children start in the Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge below what are expected for their age. Speaking and communication are particularly weak and it is a testimony to pupils' remarkable progress through the school that in national tests at the end of Year 6, English is the best subject, most notably in the very high proportion of pupils reaching the highest level. Results at the end of Key Stage 1 are consistently average and show how well pupils have consolidated and built on their good progress in the Foundation Stage. This is a springboard for reaching above average standards in Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science, supported by a high standard of work right across the curriculum, including ICT. The school is among the top 10% in the country for progress made from Year 3 to Year 6. Because pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language are helped in overcoming barriers, they too make outstanding progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are confident and caring and this is at the heart of their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They learn about the people of other nations through lessons and through first hand knowledge of pupils who have joined the school from other parts of the world. This leads them to find out more about their place in the wider world and to expand their cultural horizons. Pupils explained to the inspector why it is important to eat healthily and they certainly relish the many opportunities they have for physical education and sport. Through lessons and visitors

into school, pupils are fully aware of the importance of keeping safe and play their part in ensuring the safety of others. Living and learning together, excellent behaviour and attitudes to work and high aspirations are excellent preparation for their future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The school highlights high aspirations and a diversity of styles as strengths in teaching and learning. During the inspection, pupils were observed in many different learning activities, all of them carefully tailored to their needs. For those capable of writing independently there were stories to write; some worked on basic techniques in spelling or calculation; others worked on the finer detail of data analysis, speculating on what the information might be telling them. In Key Stages 1 and 2, innovative ways of involving pupils in the marking of their work mean they always see where they are doing well, what they need to do to improve further and work closely with staff to set targets for the next stage. The level of challenge for children in the Foundation Stage does not always match their ability, a focus high on the school's improvement agenda. The work of teaching assistants is superb in opening up opportunities for all pupils, especially those with physical disabilities, to take a full part in lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

While provision for the development of basic skills has always been at the centre of this excellent curriculum, it has never been at the expense of the breadth and enjoyment that comes from drama, physical education, geography and all the other subjects that make school interesting for pupils. Pupils explained what fun it was, for instance, to work with 'Crucial Crew' in learning about safety. The school demonstrates its commitment to every pupil through the individual programmes developed as a result of assessment. An outstanding example is the way they cater for the few pupils who arrive with no knowledge of English, enabling them to make the progress of which they are capable. Extra-curricular activities are many and varied, often reflecting a personal interest of staff.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

All staff work extremely well together and provide the best of all care that links support for personal development with academic guidance. Government guidelines are strictly followed in ensuring procedures for the health, safety and welfare of pupils are in place. Where a pupil's need is acute or beyond the scope of staff, there is excellent collaboration with other professionals so that pupils and families are given all possible assistance. All staff play a full part in setting targets and tracking the progress of pupils. Their interest in pupils goes well beyond Year 6 by maintaining contact with

past pupils and using their success in life and careers as an important indicator of the school's success in providing such outstanding care, support and guidance.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Parents, in response to the inspection survey, were overwhelming in their support for the school and how it is helping their children to grow and mature. All members of the school community are united in their praise of a headteacher who allows them to follow their dream and make a positive contribution to the development of the school. All leaders set an excellent example in living out the school's motto and reaching always for the highest standards. The Foundation Stage is well led, with a clear vision of what gives children the best start to school. Management is justifiably focused on maximising the improvements to facilities to accommodate an increase in younger children and in achieving consistency of provision across the two years. The school is especially proud of the way it eases successfully the induction of new children and the transition for pupils from one class to the next. This is at the heart of the partnership the school builds with families. Self-evaluation is thorough, analytical and accurate, and is the driving force of school improvement. The governing body is relatively new in its present composition and the chair is committed and determined to ensure that all members are furnished with the skills and knowledge to help them play an even greater part in the school's continuous improvement. All this adds up to leadership and management that are outstanding in the way it lives out the motto, 'high aspirations for all'.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I very much enjoyed talking to you and seeing you working so hard. I think your school is quite superb and I know that you, your teachers and parents think so too.

Those of you who came to talk to me at lunchtime told me how much you enjoy school and these are some of the things I found to be so special:

- the way you all get on so well together, look after one another and how you are growing into mature young people
- the great variety of things you do in school and on visits you told me every day is different
- the excellent teaching that means you always do your best and achieve such very good results
- the way your school is so very well led.

Your headteacher and the governors know what they have to do to make sure the school continues to do very well and so I have not asked them to do anything more than to carry on keeping up the good work.

Please make sure you older pupils tell the younger ones how much I enjoyed my day and that you can all help make this school the best by continuing to work hard and do your best.