



Sheepy Magna Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120158
Local Authority Leicestershire
Inspection number 291651
Inspection date 27 February 2007
Reporting inspector Jonathan Palk

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Main Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Sheepy Magna
Age range of pupils	4-11		Atherstone CV9 3QR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01827 880395
Number on roll (school)	88	Fax number	01827 880395
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Brian Greenfield
		Headteacher	Charlotte Ward Lewis
Date of previous school inspection	9 December 2002		

Age group 4-11	Inspection date 27 February 2007	Inspection number 291651
--------------------------	--	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Sheepy Magna is a small rural primary school situated in an advantaged area. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage, with a small number from minority ethnic groups. All speak English confidently. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is lower than in most schools. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly in line with expectations. In the last four years there have been many changes in teaching staff: four teachers have recently been appointed. The number on roll has risen recently and a third of the pupils in Year 6 have joined this academic year. The increase in numbers has allowed for four classes. All but Reception children are in mixed-age classes. There is flexibility across the school in the way that pupils are grouped for teaching specific subjects. The current headteacher, appointed in January of this year, was previously the assistant headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with good potential to get even better. Staff are committed to ensuring that all pupils achieve as well as they can. The pupils themselves are equally committed to their learning, as is evident when you observe the many small groups hard at work around the school. The warm relationships with pupils and parents make it great place to learn. As one parent commented, 'I feel I am working with the school as part of a team, which can only benefit my children and the school as a whole.' Standards are above average through the school and pupils achieve well. When children start school their skills are average, but effective teaching in the Reception Year helps them to make good progress. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 build quickly on their skills because teaching is good. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and are providing them with the support they need. The teachers make very good use of small-group teaching and materials to speed up pupils' progress. Teaching arrangements are flexible and very well organised to ensure pupils are appropriately challenged. Pupils and teachers alike measure the progress that is being made and celebrate this together. The personal development of pupils is good. They have extremely positive attitudes to learning and attendance is good. The good curriculum helps them to understand the importance of keeping healthy and safe. Plenty of interesting activities generate an enthusiasm for learning. However, there are not enough well-structured opportunities for pupils to acquire an understanding of multicultural Britain. Pupils are very confident and develop a strong loyalty to their school. However, they do not have much say in how it can become even better, by, for example, suggesting ideas through a school council. Care, guidance and support are good and make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. A very good range of activities at playtimes helps pupils keep fit, play harmoniously and learn to co-operate. The care for pupils who need some extra support or have learning difficulties or disabilities is excellent and ensures they make good progress. Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, staff and governors have a strong shared vision and work hard as a team to achieve it. Morale is high. The headteacher is very good at involving all the staff in checking on how well the school is doing and planning for improvement. The high quality of relationships ensures the school works quickly to improve and modify provision to meet the needs of the pupils.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend opportunities for pupils to be involved in planning for school improvement.
- Improve provision for pupils to develop an understanding of the diversity of modern British society.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The achievement of all groups of pupils is good. As a result, pupils reach standards that are above average by the end of Year 6. An analysis of the school's data and a

scrutiny of work from Years 5 and 6 show some outstanding progress made by the group of older pupils newly arrived at the school. Children in the Reception class make good progress because the adults keep a good check on how well they are doing in all areas of learning. The focus on personal development is very strong and this has a positive impact on their learning. A strong platform in early reading and writing skills is built on well in Year 1 and 2 and pupils reach above-average standards at the end of Year 2. Progress in mathematics has been less secure until recently. However, there are now more good opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills. Rigorous checks help to identify where pupils are still unsure and activities are adjusted accordingly. The most recent national test results for Year 6 indicated satisfactory progress for all pupils, with a significant minority of more able pupils not reaching their potential in writing and mathematics. There is less disruption, this year, to the learning of pupils caused by alterations to teaching arrangements. Thorough analysis of pupils' attainment has identified where they could be doing better and the information has been used well to ensure the right level of intervention. Consequently, pupils are now making good progress through Years 3 to 6 and standards are rising quickly.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The behaviour of pupils is good. In lessons it is exemplary. However, a small minority misbehaves at playtimes and pupils themselves are concerned about this. The school has implemented good systems to encourage better behaviour at playtimes and pupils consider these to be working. Pupils generally feel safe in school and most have a good awareness of safe practices. The pupils' enthusiasm for school and the pride they have in it are evident in the way they respond to visitors. Pupils have good attitudes and are keen and eager to learn. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Relationships are very positive, reflecting the pupils' good social development and the high quality care they receive. Pupils' awareness of their own and others' faiths is good, but not enough is done to ensure they develop a deeper understanding of multicultural Britain. Good achievement in basic skills and the ability to work well in teams enhance pupils' preparation for later life. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community through fund raising and investing time in helping others at playtimes. Responsibilities towards the environment are taken seriously; the eco-club has great respect in the school. Pupils are capable of taking on more responsibility for developing the school community. They told inspectors that they would like to be more involved in expressing their ideas through a school council.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Staff work very well as a team and provide a high level of consistency in their expectations. The well-matched work meets the needs of all pupils and ensures that they progress well and really enjoy their lessons. Teachers are good at asking questions that encourage pupils to think about learning. They are skilful in using the interactive whiteboards to explain key teaching points and revisit parts of the lesson where necessary. However, not enough use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning in the Year 4, 5 and 6 class. Good attention is paid to marking, with frequent reference to how well pupils have achieved against their targets. This is because teachers use assessment information well, picking up on any gaps in pupils' learning. The small-group teaching is very effective. Teaching assistants are skilful in ensuring that activities consolidate and extend pupils' learning in reading, writing and mathematics. They work closely with teachers to plan their work and keep track of pupils' progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils and helps to raise their expectations of what they can achieve. A particular strength is the enrichment of pupils' experiences at school. Good provision for French, dance, environmental science and specialist physical education (PE) teaching ensure that learning is exciting. Pupils' involvement in many clubs most nights of the week helps play a significant part in their sense of community and well-being. The flexible arrangement for teaching pupils of similar abilities, but different ages, ensures the right level of challenge. An encouraging start has been made on adjusting the curriculum for more-able and talented pupils, although the school recognises that there is more work to do in this area. In the Reception class a strong emphasis is placed on developing early writing experiences through imaginative play, writing areas and in the newly developed outdoor area. A rich range of opportunities is provided for pupils throughout the school to extend their skills in writing and mathematics that has helped to improve achievement.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Child protection and health and safety procedures are well understood and pupils who are at risk are identified quickly and supported very effectively. The strategies for managing the behaviour of a small minority are beginning to have a positive impact. Support for those with learning difficulties or disabilities is excellent. The school has developed good procedures that enable it to track pupils' progress carefully. This is undertaken regularly and the information gained is used to adjust challenging targets

and personal education plans. The information is being used well to stretch pupils and this is a key factor that has improved the rate of progress, particularly in Years 3 to 6.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has taken strong and determined action to check the underachievement of more able pupils in the school and boost the achievement of less-able pupils. Staff are clear about the potential achievement of individual pupils, based on good analysis of performance data. Teachers are developing their leadership roles well. They understand the importance of regular monitoring, although this is still at an early stage. Well-considered judgements have been made on the choice of resources to support teaching and learning. Good adjustments have been made to the curriculum, for example, to improve provision for writing and to ensure the more able are challenged. A strong bond has been forged with parents through regularly sharing information on how their children are getting on. This has had a positive impact on pupils' academic and personal development. The governors provide the headteacher with very good support. Two governors meet regularly with the headteacher and assistant headteacher as part of the strategic management team. This has effectively streamlined decision-making and allowed the school to push ahead quickly with the planned improvements. Success is evident in the way that parents' confidence in the school has grown and in the rapid rise in the number of pupils on roll.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

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	2
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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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

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	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

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.

Leadership and management

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	2
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

I am writing to tell you about the things my colleague and I discovered when we visited your school. The first thing to tell you is that we really enjoyed our visit. We were very impressed with how hard you worked in your lessons and the enthusiasm you have for sharing all the wonderful things you do in school. You all behave extremely well in lessons but we know from talking to you that a few children are not always well behaved in the playground. The school is working hard to sort this out and we know that you feel that things are getting better. It was very clear that all the adults and parents are working well together to make sure you get a good education. All the staff know you well and take good care of you and this is helping you all make good progress. It was good to see that the work you are given is well matched to your abilities and that you are challenged to reach good standards. Many of you commented that work has got a bit harder recently but, as one of you said, 'hard work is fun'. We know that your parents like your school because they wrote to us telling us. They particularly like the fact they know how well you are getting on. This helps them support you in your work. You are really fortunate to have such a good headteacher and caring governors to make sure the school becomes an even better place to be. They have done a lot in a short space of time. We have asked that they find a way to help you to learn about the lives of people who live in Britain, particularly those who have settled here from other countries around the world. Finally, we think you all have such a lot to contribute to the future of your school and so we have asked that you have more of a voice in planning this. Thank you for helping us. Good luck in all you do.