

Shatterlocks Infant & Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118396
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	312919
Inspection dates	28–29 January 2009
Reporting inspector	David Curtis

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	171
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Peel
Headteacher	Denyse Simmons
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Heathfield Avenue Dover CT16 2PB
Telephone number	01304 204264

Age group	3–7
Inspection dates	28–29 January 2009
Inspection number	312919

Fax number

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Shatterlocks is a smaller than average sized nursery and infant school. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision is for children attending the Nursery either for the morning or afternoon, and two Reception classes. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average, most of whom have speech, language and communication difficulties. A small proportion of pupils have English as an additional language. A higher than average number of pupils join or leave the school other than at the usual times.

The school is part of the Dover Federation for the Arts under the leadership of a chief executive. It manages a breakfast club and an after-school club at the infant school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. It is a thriving community full of happy, excited and motivated young learners. Throughout the school, there is a genuine celebration of pupils' learning, as is evident in the excellent displays of pupils' work, including a very high focus on promoting a love of reading and writing. The key factor in the school's success is the outstanding leadership and management. The chief executive, the federation consultant headteacher and the senior leadership team set very high expectations, and this, in turn, filters down to all staff in the school who are united in a common purpose to provide pupils with the best possible start to their schooling. The impact of leadership and management is most noticeable in the rapid improvement in pupils' achievement and standards in the last two years.

Children start school with standards that are well below expectations, especially in speech and language. As a result of outstanding provision in the EYFS, children make excellent progress in the Nursery. This continues into Reception where children reach average levels in all areas of learning by the time they start Year 1. Outstanding achievement continues in Years 1 and 2, with the result that pupils reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave. This shows the progress the school is making, because two years ago, standards were exceptionally low. This also indicates the excellent progress that pupils are making, as this group of pupils had below average attainment at the end of Reception. Inspection evidence is consistent with standards continuing to improve because the school meets its challenging targets which are revised and amended annually.

Outstanding teaching and learning, together with a vibrant curriculum, are major contributory factors to the significant improvement of achievement and standards. Teachers' planning is excellent. They share the learning intention of each lesson with pupils and make it very clear to them what they need to do in order to be successful learners. Marking is of high quality and tells pupils whether they meet the learning intention and gives them the next steps to improve their learning. Teaching assistants and specialist support teachers play a significant role in securing the excellent progress of all learners. There are significant strengths in the teaching of letters and sounds and the successful way in which teachers include boys in the process of early writing skills. The curriculum is exciting and stimulating. There are strengths in the way pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) to support their learning in other subjects. Curriculum enrichment, especially in art and design, is a major benefit of the school being in the Federation.

Pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being are underpinned by excellent care, guidance and support. Parents are very appreciative of the way in which the school welcomes new children: as one wrote, 'Since starting in Reception, my son has developed in leaps and bounds. The school has given my son confidence too.' Pupils enjoy being at school and are very keen to share their work with visitors. They have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils' relationships with each other and adults are excellent. At present, their understanding of the ethnic diversity of the wider UK community is underdeveloped. The quality of pastoral care is excellent, with the school making effective use of the Extended Schools Partnership to support pupils and parents. Academic guidance and support is outstanding, with a significant strength in pupils knowing and explaining their individual targets in literacy and numeracy.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children settle quickly into the Nursery and become happy and confident learners. Through encouraging children to plan their own learning, and with high quality adult questioning and support, children get off to a flying start in all six areas of learning. Children benefit from an excellent outdoor learning environment. Parents value the quality of induction to the Nursery and see that their children make very good progress.

Excellent leadership and management of the EYFS and the very effective liaison between the Nursery and Reception classes ensure a seamless transition for children. Through high quality teaching and learning, children make excellent progress and by the time they start Year 1, they reach expected standards in all areas of learning. This represents a significant improvement over previous years. Through successful intervention programmes, particularly targeted at boys, they now achieve as well as girls. The successful teaching of letters and sounds, together with guided reading, is the key factor in children's excellent progress in communication, language and literacy.

Children's welfare is paramount to all staff who work in very effective partnership with a wide range of agencies to support children's personal and academic development. All staff work exceptionally hard to engage parents as partners in their children's learning. Monitoring of teaching and learning, together with the tracking of children's progress, is excellent. Children identified with specific needs, including speech and language, receive immediate and effective intervention programmes. Staff have embraced totally the requirements of the new EYFS framework, including those for children who attend the breakfast and after-school clubs. Both clubs successfully promote children's welfare and their learning and development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' awareness of life in a multicultural Britain.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Through very effective teaching of letters and sounds and the successful implementation of individual pupils' targets, standards in reading and writing have improved from exceptionally low to average in the space of two years. Standards in mathematics have improved by the same measure, with high quality teaching and individual pupils' targets having the greatest impact. By the end of Year 2, standards in ICT and in art and design exceed national expectations. Pupils benefit enormously from the College for the Arts. For example pupils in Year 1 visit the college for lessons in ceramics. Those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make excellent progress because of very effective support from teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve as well as their peers because of the high quality support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

From the very start, pupils quickly form excellent relationships because of the school's strong emphasis on their social, emotional and personal development. Their enjoyment of school is clearly evident in lessons and in the very popular breakfast and after-school clubs. The school

works closely with external agencies and the families of the few whose attendance is a concern and this has resulted in improved attendance. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the local and wider communities. They participate in inter-school football and multi-skills tournaments and are keen eco-warriors. The personal, social, health and citizenship education and well-being of learners are outstanding. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy and safe and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils proudly talked about their roles as school councillors and trained playground mediators. These mediators play a central role in maintaining the exemplary behaviour.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teachers plan exciting and fun lessons. For example, when learning about the Chinese New Year, children in the EYFS ordered food from a 'restaurant' and tasted stir-fried vegetables. Activities are carefully planned to meet pupils' different learning needs and teachers make sure all are clear about what they are to learn. Relationships are excellent. As a result, pupils are keen to participate in lessons and confidently talk about what they are doing. Teachers and teaching assistants share their expertise and have welcomed the excellent training opportunities that being part of the Federation have brought. Their highly developed teaching skills in blending letters and sounds have had a significant impact on improving pupils' reading and writing skills. Strengths are evident in the effective way teachers check pupils' progress. Feedback on pupils' work is primarily oral, but marking is helpful, with comments focused on the next steps. Pupils know their targets, which are displayed in the classroom, and readily evaluate their own work. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the more able are exceptionally well supported so that their achievement is outstanding.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Pupils respond positively to the very strong focus on learning through first-hand experiences, including role play, which enhances their personal development. All pupils, and especially younger boys, benefit from this. For example in history, they learn about the Great Fire of London through being 'bakers' in the 'Pudding Lane Bakery'. Effective use is made of multi-media stories to enrich learning. Topics, special themed weeks and visits to the local area, including the Castle and Environmental Centre, enhance their learning. Specialist teachers from the Federation teach art and ceramics and some high quality work is displayed and celebrated. Science and ICT have a very high profile within the school's curriculum. This supports pupils' excellent skills in using programmable toys and undertaking scientific investigations. They enjoy numerous after-school activities from multi-sports, dance and gardening to tai chi. The school has achieved the Silver Flair award for the teaching of French. Opportunities, such as setting up and running craft stalls at Christmas and summer fairs enhance considerably pupils' future skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Exceptionally close working relationships with the extended services support learners and their family's well-being extremely well. Literacy and mathematics courses, an activity weekend for

dads and children, and sessions to help manage inappropriate behaviour are just some of the ways the school has involved parents more in their children's learning and strengthened the relationship between home and school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified effectively and because of high quality intervention their needs are met successfully. Support for pupils' academic guidance is outstanding. Pupils know their targets and understand what they need to do to improve. New tracking systems have raised teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and the information is used most effectively to plan future learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Significant strengths in the leadership team of the Federation have a major impact on school improvement and the outstanding capacity for further improvement. There is a non-negotiable acceptance amongst all staff that 'children only have one chance' and arising from this is an absolute commitment to ensuring that pupils achieve to the best of their ability. All staff recognise that the provision of high quality education begins in the EYFS. Leaders at all levels have a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, through very effective monitoring of teaching and learning. Where necessary, immediate and effective actions are put in place to secure improvement. Governors are fully prepared to challenge such actions in relation to their intended impact on pupils' learning.

Through the Federation, the school has excellent links within the diverse local community and has a very high focus on engaging parents to support their children's learning. It has strong links with the international community, including Siberia and the USA. Currently, it has not developed links sufficiently with the wider ethnic diversity of communities in the UK. However, the cultures of those few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds are celebrated and they are fully integrated. All within the school are valued as individuals and have equal opportunities.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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	1
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

1 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shatterlocks Infant School, Dover, CT16 2PB

Thank you very much for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school. Mrs Browning and I were delighted to talk to so many of you, including the school council. I am delighted to tell you that you go to an outstanding school. There are very many really exciting things happening in your school and these are the ones that really stand out.

- You make excellent progress in your learning, especially in reading, writing, maths and ICT.
- You all get on really well with each other and your behaviour is excellent.
- Teachers make lessons fun and exciting and make you want to learn.
- There are lots of exciting things that help you learn, including the chance to have French lessons.
- All the adults in the school look after you really well and make sure that you are happy and safe in school.
- All the people in the Federation who lead and manage the work of your school want to give you the very best education they can.

There is one thing that we have asked all of the adults in the Federation to do in order to make Shatterlocks even better.

- Make sure you learn about how people who are from different cultures live in the United Kingdom.

I know that you will continue to enjoy school and work hard. It was great fun meeting you all.

Yours faithfully

David Curtis

Lead inspector