

Sherington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100141
Local Authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	376351
Inspection dates	12–13 October 2011
Reporting inspector	John Worgan

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	453
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ben Hillier
Headteacher	Diane Atkinson
Date of previous school inspection	3–4 July 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They saw 18 lessons taught by 18 staff. Inspectors spoke with pupils, parents and carers, staff and representatives of the governing body. They observed the school's work, and looked at planning and monitoring information, a range of policy documents and records, the governing body minutes and a range of pupils' work. They also analysed 168 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 47 from pupils and 26 from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas:

- How well the school supports pupils speaking English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The accuracy of leaders and managers in their monitoring of teaching and learning, and the effectiveness of initiatives to bring about improvement in order to raise attainment.
- The reasons for the dip in overall attainment in 2011 and examination of trends.

Information about the school

Sherington is a large primary school with a Nursery which serves a socially and culturally diverse community. About half the pupils are White British and the largest minority ethnic group is of Black African heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than average, with 23 different languages spoken. Almost a third of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals and the proportion of pupils who leave and join the school at different times is high. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is close to average but a higher proportion have a statement of special educational needs than is the case in most schools. The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of two Reception classes and a Nursery. The school includes a children's centre, managed by the governing body. It was inspected at the same time as the school, but the report is published separately. The school has achieved a Basic Skills Quality Mark and the International Schools Award. It is part of the Get Set Network and holds the Arts Mark Gold, Dyslexia Friendly Mark and the Healthy Schools Award. It has exemplar status for its work in information and communication technology (ICT)

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: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Sherington Primary, a good school at its previous inspection, has improved further and is now outstanding. Leaders, managers and staff share a common vision, evaluating performance rigorously and setting challenging yet realistic targets. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 has risen considerably, and is above average. It dipped in 2011, but was still a little above the national average and pupils' progress was good. The reasons for this dip were identified and leaders and managers have taken effective action to ensure that high standards are sustained. The current Year 6 is making good progress towards meeting challenging targets that are higher than those in 2011. Leaders and managers support staff exceptionally well in their professional development and recent changes have been managed effectively to ensure that pupils' progress and attainment reach the highest standards. Attendance has also improved significantly and is now above average. The outstanding curriculum has been maintained and is a key factor in promoting pupils' enjoyment and good achievement.

Pupils' experience is greatly enriched by the opportunities which they have to develop skills in music, the arts and information and communication technology. This is greatly appreciated by pupils and contributes significantly to their positive attitude to learning. This is underpinned by a highly successful focus throughout the school on improving literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils show a great sense of enjoyment of all aspects of school life and they behave well. In the return of parental questionnaires, every single one indicated that their child enjoyed school.

Children receive a good start in the Nursery. Through the Early Years Foundation Stage progress is good because priority is given to developing children's literacy and numeracy skills. Across the school as a whole, the quality of teaching is consistently good with some examples of outstanding practice. Stimulating real-life activities help to engage and motivate pupils, and often provide a practical context for learning. Ambitious targets are set for pupils and their progress towards these is very carefully tracked. Marking is regular and detailed, although individual written comments to pupils on how they can further improve their work are less frequent.

Pupils throughout the school receive excellent pastoral care and academic support, which is recognised by parents and carers. One commented that the school 'gives children the time to discuss any issue that they feel will make their targets achievable'. Pupils say that they feel extremely safe and secure. The school makes sure that pupils of all abilities and from all backgrounds are valued and supported so that all achieve well. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those

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with specific learning difficulties are well supported and so make the same good progress as their peers. Pupils' personal development is given high priority and they are encouraged to develop and articulate their own views and to respect those of others. Many pupils demonstrated confident speaking and listening skills in lessons and in other activities.

The highly effective headteacher is supported by a strong senior team, which has recently been strengthened, helping the school to cope well with recent staff changes and to integrate new teachers effectively. The school's self-evaluation is thorough and accurate, and the staff share a common focus, working together to further improve teaching and learning. The school is recognised as a leader of good practice and the headteacher and other staff have developed productive partnerships with other local schools. The capacity of the school to improve is outstanding. It has carefully analysed areas for development and implemented focused improvement strategies which have had a very positive impact on teaching and learning, and on pupils' attainment and attendance. The governing body supports the school strongly, and has been instrumental in improving the school environment and in holding the school to account in its self-evaluation and performance management.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of written feedback in marking by identifying more clearly the steps which pupils need to take to reach the next level.
- Use the expertise of good and outstanding teachers to raise standards of teaching and learning by sharing excellent practice.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children start school with skills below those expected for their age. They make good progress and achieve well by the end of Year 6. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated strong knowledge and skills and a positive attitude, supporting each others' learning. The school caters well for all its pupils, with all significant groups achieving well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and are not always reliant on additional support because they have regular opportunities to work independently or collaboratively without direction from an adult which helps them to develop confidence in their own abilities.

Although a few pupils require additional guidance from adults to keep on track, they respond quickly to this and behave well. The school deals effectively with the small number of pupils with significant behaviour problems through a well-led and skilled behaviour management team. Pupils are respectful and polite to each other and to others. Behaviour in lessons is good and pupils support each others' learning, although very occasionally standards of behaviour slip in the few lessons where pace

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and challenge are lacking.

Participation in local events and fund-raising activities broaden pupils' sense of community beyond the school. Pupils mix and work well together, both in and out of the classroom. Respectful of others' needs, pupils are reflective about the world around them. They engage enthusiastically in cultural opportunities, especially benefiting from the opportunities to learn to play musical instruments and to participate in dance and drama. The school places a strong emphasis on the spiritual aspects of pupils' development and acts as a resource centre for religious education in the area. Pupils have a good understanding of factors affecting their health and respond well to the school's health promotion strategies. Pupils' successful application of their basic skills and good personal qualities prepare them well for the next stage of their education and life beyond. Attendance has improved from below to above average since the previous inspection and the school has effective strategies for reducing levels of persistent absence.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Generally, the pace of learning is brisk, pupils are challenged by a variety of stimulating activities, and they are actively involved in learning. In a mathematics lesson, for example, the teacher organised the class into groups which were calculating the perimeters of shapes with a range of levels of challenge. A group of less-able pupils were applying what they had learned in the classroom to measure the school playground, using a variety of methods. The lesson was very successful

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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because activities were very well matched to children’s interests and abilities. Thorough planning showed strong evidence of sensitive response to children’s needs. In lessons which were less successful, pace was slower, pupils spent considerable time listening to the teacher and opportunities for independent learning were limited. Pupils’ work is marked regularly and thoroughly, but teachers often missed opportunities to use marking to guide pupils on the steps which they need to take in order to improve their work.

The strong focus on developing pupils' skills and ensuring that, wherever possible, learning has a real-life context or purpose motivates pupils very successfully. The curriculum is built around pupils’ experiences and the local community. Although the range of after-school activities is more limited, opportunities to develop skills and interests within the curriculum are excellent. All pupils have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument and standards in music are high. The school has excellent ICT facilities and pupils demonstrate a high level of computer skills. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils had prepared news scripts from the Tudor period, and presented them confidently to camera with strong speaking skills. Year 6 pupils were able to edit video and to change the mood of their work by embedding music clips. The pupils’ performing skills were highlighted through a dance project captured on an impressive DVD produced by the school. Effective partnerships with local secondary schools in science and the arts are established and the school has a strong link with a local college with an ICT specialism. Staff development is given a high priority and new teachers are very well supported. Joint planning produced lessons of a consistently high standard.

Highly effective care and guidance systems underpin the positive and caring ethos of the school, and pupils speak warmly about adults. An outstanding commitment to inclusion, enhanced by good links with other professionals and agencies, protects pupils whose circumstances may make them potentially vulnerable, significantly improving their well-being. Staff have high expectations of all pupils, and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those speaking English as an additional language are well supported so that they make good progress. Good tracking data help teachers to plan work for them, enabling them to reach ambitious targets, and to ensure that they maintain and improve their levels of independence.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

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How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher’s leadership is widely respected, as the very positive responses in parents’ and staff questionnaires confirm. She has a strong presence in the school. Recent staff turnover has been managed carefully, minimising the impact on pupils’ progress. The headteacher has a clear long-term vision, focused on raising attainment and improving provision, and has been very successful in achieving this. She is very well supported by leaders at all levels, including the addition of a new assistant headteacher, who is making a considerable impact on improving the quality of teaching.

A strong governing body with a wide range of skills provides leaders with a good balance of support and challenge. The governors have played a significant role in improving the environment of the school; the building is bright and welcoming, and outside areas are planned attractively. They play an active part in the school’s self-evaluation, balancing challenge and support. There is effective distribution of responsibility to leaders at different levels. The middle management team is strong, and planning and monitoring are thorough.

The school does not tolerate discrimination of any kind and incidents of racist behaviour are extremely rare. Thorough tracking ensures that equality of opportunity is promoted extremely successfully and that there are no gaps in performance between different groups. The monitoring of, and consequent support given to, potentially vulnerable pupils is a strength of the school and considerable resources are devoted to making sure that these pupils make the best possible progress. Staff have a very clear understanding of the school’s comprehensive and effective policies to safeguard and protect pupils. There are well-established and thorough systems to protect children, and staff regularly receive good-quality safeguarding training relevant to their role. Parents and carers and pupils report that the school is a safe, secure environment. Systems are evaluated and updated regularly, and pupils have a thorough understanding of the dangers and benefits of internet use.

Relationships with parents and carers are positive and the school is a strongly cohesive community. The school’s reports to parents and carers are thorough and detailed. A clear analysis and understanding of the school’s context and contribution to community cohesion has ensured pupils have opportunities to engage with those from other communities. The school has completed an audit of community cohesion and has received the International Schools Award. In addition to strong links with local primary and secondary schools, links with a school in France and with another school in the United Kingdom have been established.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and

1

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driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Nursery and in the Reception classes enjoy their activities and progress well in their learning through effective planning and good use of a range of resources. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities; consequently, children develop independence from an early stage. Children in Reception get on well and respect each other, although in the Nursery some children are less aware of each other as they enter with a low level of social development. Teaching is generally good, although there is some inconsistency in standards between classes. Children are made aware of safe procedures and are secure and happy in their surroundings.

Adults place strong emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills, and provide good models for the children to follow. Planning is comprehensive and allows for flexibility in learning opportunities. Staff make appropriate assessments of the stage children have reached in their learning. However, this information is not used consistently as a basis for future planning for the individual child. Observational assessments are regularly carried out, but these do not always contain pointers to guide staff on the next steps which children need to take in order to progress. The outdoor area is well designed and is used effectively

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led, with the deputy headteacher taking a key role, with a thorough knowledge of the children’s needs based on secure evidence and data analysis. Welfare requirements are robustly met and safety is ensured through comprehensive risk assessments. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are strong and the leader is well aware of areas of strength and weakness, and consequent need for training and support. Workshops are provided to aid parents’ and carers’ understanding of the work undertaken, although some parents and carers felt that aspects of communication could be improved.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

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Views of parents and carers

Those parents and carers that answered each question agreed strongly with the view that the school keeps their children safe, is led and managed effectively, that teaching is good and that their children are making enough progress. The overwhelming majority expressed positive views about most aspects of the school's provision. Written comments were mostly positive, echoed by parents and carers who spoke with inspectors during the inspection. A few do not feel that the school communicates effectively with them and some written comments referred to the difficulty which some children have in accessing after-school activities. Inspectors discussed the very few areas of concern or suggestions for improvement with school leaders during the inspection. They found that the annual reports to parents and carers were very detailed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sherington Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 168 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 453 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	113	67	54	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	104	62	61	36	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child’s progress	70	42	79	47	12	7	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	76	45	77	46	8	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	88	52	74	44	2	1	1	1
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	75	45	78	46	9	5	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	80	48	77	46	4	2	2	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	62	37	75	45	8	5	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	75	45	73	43	8	5	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	81	48	68	40	4	2	6	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	55	33	85	51	13	8	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	78	46	72	43	5	3	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	86	51	72	43	6	4	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



16 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sherington Primary School, Charlton, SE7 7JP

Thank you the warm welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and took careful note of the positive comments which you and your parents and carers made about the school. We were very impressed by your good behaviour, and by how well you respect and care for one another, and the ways in which you help each other to learn and to succeed.

Your school is outstanding because:

- The headteacher and the staff care about you and help all of you to make good progress and reach well above-average standards.
- There are lots of opportunities for you to develop your interests and skills, especially in music, dance and drama, and information and communication technology. Many of you have reached very high standards in these areas.
- Teachers plan varied and interesting lessons and give you enjoyable and exciting things to do.
- Your school is a very pleasant, and exceptionally safe and happy place.

To help your school to be even better, we have asked the headteacher and her staff to challenge all of you, and especially those of you who find some of your work easy, by giving you more detailed advice in your books on how to improve your work. We have also asked them to share their ideas so that your lessons become even better.

We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

John Worgan
Lead inspector

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