

Shobnall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	124037
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	380779
Inspection dates	10–11 January 2012
Lead inspector	Joanne Harvey HMI

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	257
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pat Taylor
Headteacher	Bernadette Roobottom
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2007
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Age group	3-11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Joanne Harvey

Her Majesty's Inspector

Nicholas Cunliffe

Additional inspector

Michael Wintle

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed seven teachers teaching 19 lessons of which four were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made short visits to a series of phonics (pupils learning letter patterns and the sounds they represent) and guided-reading sessions. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, parents and carers, governors, staff and leaders and managers at all levels. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at: the school development plan, assessment information, the school and local authority monitoring information, lesson plans and school policies. The team analysed 181 questionnaires from parents and carers together with questionnaires from staff and a representative sample of pupils.

Information about the school

This is an average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is slightly smaller than in most schools. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and, of the small proportions from minority ethnic groups none are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and pupils with disabilities is similar to that in most schools. The majority of the former are moderate learning or speech, language and communication needs. The school has been well-above government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment, for the last three years. The school has gained a number of awards including the International School Award, the Dyslexia Friendly award, an Artsmark Gold award and a Healthy School award.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This is an outstanding school. It was judged to be good with outstanding features at the time of the last inspection and has continued to go from strength to strength since then. Pupils and their parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive in their praise for this school where pupils attain standards in English and mathematics which are well-above those in most primary schools and they develop a range of exemplary personal skills.
- Teaching is outstanding and ensures that pupils make rapid progress. Expectations and enthusiasm are high from the start. From low starting points on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, children quickly catch up with children of a similar age nationally. All teachers have an excellent understanding of pupils' needs and challenge them to do as well as they can. High-quality support is provided for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs so that these pupils also excel.
- Strong and trusting relationships underpin pupils' exemplary behaviour, which makes a strong contribution to their learning and to the smooth running of the safe school environment. Pupils are given an exceptional opportunity for personal growth in preparation for the next stage of their education and future lives.
- Exemplary leadership at all levels drives rigorous systems to check on the school's work and improve it further. Consequently, the highest levels of achievement have been maintained over time. Staff, the governing body, parents, carers and pupils all work together to achieve their ambitious vision for pupils' continued success. They have transformed the school environment, where the curriculum provides enjoyable and stimulating experiences. The whole school is ambitious to ensure that experiences offered outdoors in the Early Years Foundation Stage are of the same high quality as those enjoyed indoors. They intend that older pupils take the lead in developing the potential of the outdoor environment for extending pupils' learning further, while at work

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and play.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the outdoor learning environment by:
 - providing experiences for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to freely explore, revisit and test their ideas and learning in a varied natural and man-made environment of the same high quality as those they enjoy inside
 - providing opportunities for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 to use their academic and personal skills to take the lead in planning and developing improvements outside, so they enhance their own outdoor learning and that of younger members of the school for use both during planned curriculum time and at playtimes.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Inspectors share the view astutely expressed by parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire that the achievement of pupils from all ethnic heritages is outstanding. For the last three years, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has been above that found in most schools by the time that pupils leave the school. This represents rapid and sustained progress given that children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of knowledge and skills considerably below age-related expectations. By the time they enter Year 1 they have almost caught up in all areas of learning and, importantly, they are prepared extremely well with the skills they need to make the most of their time in school. A rigorous start is made to developing an understanding of the sounds that letters make and other early reading and writing skills. These literacy skills are built on highly successfully so that, for example, pupils currently in Years 1 and 2 have already surpassed the levels expected for their age, as they have in mathematics.

Evidence in lessons and in pupils' work confirms that pupils continue to make exceptional progress in Key Stage 2. For example, in a lesson in Year 6 typical of other lessons seen, pupils made rapid progress in their understanding of how to solve multi-step problems using decimals. The teacher planned the lesson to challenge pupils of all abilities, based on a close understanding of every pupil's needs. He supplemented this with carefully targeted questions to individuals to test their understanding and challenge them further. Pupils showed their excellent ability to explain their strategies and apply their learning to complex problems in a range of relevant contexts. The atmosphere was highly charged with pupils' high levels of engagement and enjoyment and their determination to solve problems for

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themselves. Learning support assistants were fully engaged in promoting pupils' learning throughout the lesson and ensured that pupils who required additional support or those with a disability were fully included and also excelled. Close monitoring and additional well-targeted interventions also ensure that all groups perform equally well and no one gets left behind. For example, the gap between boys and girls evident when they start school is closed successfully, as is that for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.

Pupils develop excellent communication skills and high levels of confidence that they can be successful. They are always keen to do their best. They apply their basic skills to reach high standards across all subjects, as for example, in history and geography. High-quality work was also seen in information and communication technology and in the visual arts. Importantly, the school quickly turns pupils into eager learners, excited to come to school and experience what the day has in store. As they were keen to report to inspectors, they know it is equipping them well for the future.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is outstanding, has many consistently strong features and results in almost all pupils making rapid progress. It is based on accurate and regular assessments which are constantly monitored so that should progress be seen to slow, plans can be modified and additional support put in place immediately so that it accelerates once again. Questions are used skilfully throughout lessons to make sure everyone is on track or to further step up the challenge. Relationships are strong and trusting. Expectations are high and are made extremely clear so that pupils know exactly what they have to do to succeed. These features impact profoundly on pupils' attitudes and achievement. Pupils develop high expectations of themselves of just what they can achieve, and they rise to them. Parents and pupils are keen to express their views that teaching is of high quality and their views were fully endorsed by the inspection. Parents consider they are well supported to help their children learn, through reading guidance, other homework, presentations and a wealth of other helpful information that teachers share with them.

There are well-embedded systems for marking and feedback to pupils. Pupils can barely wait to open their books and see the affirming comments along with what they need to do to achieve the next level. Lessons involve pupils being active and highly engaged so that they soon develop the skills to lead their own learning. For example, pupils in Year 1 made exceptional progress in their ability to explore the features of a character in a story. There were squeals of delight as they took the journey along with The Gingerbread Man. At the same time, they discussed their ideas maturely with their learning partners and checked their answers against the clear success criteria. They were having so much fun they did not realise how hard they were working. The curriculum is broad, well enriched and often involves studying exciting topics. It supports pupils' rapid progress and the development of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. The outdoor environment is not fully developed and exploited to use and extend these aspects further.

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Additional adults and plentiful resources are used extremely well. Teaching strategies are often exceptional in meeting the individual needs of pupils. It is part of the school ethos to 'go the extra mile' to ensure that barriers to learning are removed, and that pupils and their families feel included in all that the school has to offer. Therefore, with the help of a range of other agencies, staff ensure that, for example, the most potentially vulnerable, due to their circumstances, do exceptionally well.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour in and around school is typically exemplary and contributes strongly to highly effective learning over time. This view is echoed in the responses of pupils, parents and carers and staff to the inspection questionnaire and in discussions with inspectors. It is immediately evident to visitors that the school is a happy and harmonious community where all work together within a culture of tolerance and respect. Pupils recognise their role in keeping it so and are proud to go to the school and to carry out any jobs that help it to run smoothly. They work together supportively in lessons with learning partners and in groups, valuing each other's varied talents for mutual benefit. They are courteous and helpful at all times and their manners are exemplary. The school's logs to monitor behaviour or racist incidents, for example, demonstrate that these are exceptionally rare and if they do occur they are dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

Pupils talk maturely about bullying in all its forms and state that it is not tolerated at Shobnall School. They, along with their parents and carers, are confident that they are safe at school. They are highly motivated by the consistently applied reward system and clear about sanctions which might be imposed – although they say that these are rarely necessary. Curriculum programmes and extra-curricular activities ensure that pupils are confident about many ways to help keep themselves safe, such as from the dangers of roads, fire, water and drugs. They are also adamant that should they have any worries or concerns there is someone available to help them.

Pupils say they are very happy to come to school and demonstrate this through their above-average levels of attendance. They are punctual and happily come straight into school on arrival and before the bell goes and get on with their learning activities until registration.

Leadership and management

Parents and carers quite rightly have the utmost confidence in the leadership team at Shobnall Primary School. The headteacher has provided outstanding leadership to a highly committed staff team. Working with the governing body, pupils and parents and carers, leaders have ensured that the issues raised at the last inspection have been addressed successfully. For example, the school building has been transformed to provide a positive and stimulating learning environment in which the potential of every space is maximised for learning and pupils' safety is ensured.

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Success is underpinned by extremely rigorous procedures in which everyone plays a full part for checking on the effectiveness of all aspects of the school's work. Self-evaluation is exemplary as is the quality and clarity of information shared with the governing body and other stakeholders. The system for tracking pupils' progress is exhaustive at individual-, group- and whole-school levels. Improvement planning is meticulous and monitored closely for success. There is great clarity and attention to detail in all things. Therefore, all are clear about their role and how to carry it out to the highest standard. Staff are given the professional development, support and resources they need to succeed. Leadership is successfully devolved and all staff are held accountable for their part in improving outcomes for pupils. Leaders are particularly effective in ensuring high-quality teaching. New staff are quickly but carefully inducted into the school's high expectations and rigorous systems. They are mentored by exceptional, leading practitioners who clearly model effective practice. All teachers are reflective and constantly strive to find ways to improve, observing each other and sharing best practice regularly. Outstanding leadership practice and the school's exemplary track record since its last inspection fully endorse its capacity to improve further.

The successful promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is woven through the broad and balanced curriculum and throughout all aspects of school life. Consequently, pupils are able to reflect on and discuss maturely issues that concern them. They have a well-developed sense of right and wrong and get on extremely well together. They are well prepared for life in a multicultural, multi-faith society. There is a well developed and meaningful partnership with a school in Uganda which has helped to enhance pupils' global understanding. Leaders are aware that the curriculum outdoors, across all phases of the school, is not as well developed as that pursued indoors.

Governors are extremely knowledgeable about the school's work. They offer practical support and a high degree of challenge to school leaders as they share their ambition for the school's continued success. They ensure that statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding and child protection, are well met. There is a strong commitment to promoting equality of opportunity, as can clearly be seen in the equally high achievement of all groups, often well above that of their peers nationally. Indeed, at the heart of the school's work lies the commitment to removing barriers to learning for all pupils. Under the excellent direction of the special educational needs coordinator, provision is made for care and welfare which goes well beyond that normally seen. Excellent practice makes sure that – whatever the need – every pupil and family members are able to take full advantage of school life. One parent expressed the view, representative of many of the unusually high proportion of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire, 'Fantastic school, fantastic teachers! It's just like an extension of the family, with an emphasis on education, respect and friendship.'

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



12 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Shobnall Primary School, Burton-on-Trent, DE14 2BB

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. I am writing to tell you what we found out about your school.

We think Shobnall Primary School is an outstanding school. Your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and to plan exciting activities for you to do. As a result, you make excellent progress in your learning and your attainment is higher than that of pupils in most schools. The youngest children settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress. Those of you who find work more difficult or need other practical help in the classroom to access the curriculum get excellent support so that you can do extremely well too.

You told us that your school is a very happy place. You also said that teachers look after you very well so that there is always someone there for you if you have worries or concerns. We were very impressed with how excellently you behave and get on with each other. You concentrate really well on your work and try hard to do your very best.

One key thing that makes your school exceptional is that your headteacher, staff and governing body are always checking how well it is doing. They want the best for all of you and set very challenging targets for improvement. They are always looking for ways to make school even better. That is why we have asked them to make the outdoor learning and play area in the Early Years Foundation Stage even more exciting. We have also asked them to get you all to use your ideas and skills to plan how you can make the outdoor environment of your school as good as the indoors. With these improvements, we want to see you all use your learning and personal skills outdoors as well as indoors, in lesson times and at playtimes.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Harvey
Her Majesty's Inspector

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