

Shiphay School and Orchard Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113239
Local Authority	Torbay
Inspection number	311170
Inspection dates	31 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Lorna Brackstone

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 on roll	
School	454
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gary Hotine
Headteacher	Elaine Gill
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2004
School address	Exe Hill Shiphay Torquay Devon TQ2 7NF
Telephone number	01803 613556
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Age group	4-11
Inspection date(s)	31 October 2007
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: current standards, the achievement of pupils who move into the school other than at the usual times, the quality of teaching and learning, and the way in which the school checks its own performance. Evidence was gathered through classroom observations, work sampling and discussions with pupils, staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This large school serves a mixture of local authority and private housing. Almost all pupils are of White British backgrounds and use English as their first language. The number of pupils who have learning difficulties is slightly above average. The Nursery has opened since the last inspection. There is an above average movement of pupils in and out of the school other than at the usual times of joining or leaving. There are more boys than girls, particularly in the Nursery. The school has recently achieved a number of national awards. It provides extended services from 7.45 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Shiphay provides an excellent quality of education for all its pupils. From standards that are well below the expected levels for their age when they enter the Nursery, pupils reach standards that are significantly above the national average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. They attain exceptionally high standards in information and communication technology (ICT), French, humanities and the performing arts. The meticulous tracking of each individual's progress ensures that all pupils achieve exceptionally well. Teachers keep a careful check on each pupil's progress and target individuals with extra help where needed. This means that those pupils who find learning more difficult than others and individuals who have moved into the school partway through their primary education achieve as well as their peers. Very interesting programmes, such as the 'Bright Sparks' project for pupils who have excellent ICT skills and exciting activities planned with local secondary schools, ensure that the more able are fully challenged in their learning.

Much of the success of this school is down to the vision and direction of the headteacher who, aided by the excellent work of the senior leadership team, has ensured that pupils receive only the very best quality of education. The senior leaders set very challenging targets to raise standards. They achieve this because they invest in an enriched curriculum and carefully target resources to ensure that the needs of all the pupils are met. The way in which governors steered and supported the establishment of the Nursery illustrates their excellent involvement and commitment to the school. The school has an extremely accurate view of its own strengths and areas requiring development.

Teachers are skilled at making learning very interesting. The careful choice of stimulating topics enables the pupils to make links in their learning across the curriculum. For example, Year 6 work on the Second World War includes a geographical study of Slapton Sands where pupils are involved in physical training activities similar to those undertaken by the troops during the war. A whole-school project on Africa has heightened the pupils' awareness of Fair Trade. After designing and making a wide range of goods, the pupils priced each item. They then sold them at a public sale and sent the profits to a charity supporting world poverty. This project enabled them to gain a good understanding of the value of money and the importance of Fair Trade purchases. This prepared them extremely well for their future economic well-being.

Literacy and numeracy skills are taught very well and illustrations of their use in everyday life are often given to help the pupils understand the concepts. The successful enhancement of learning through memory games, and through visitors such as artists and filmmakers, ensures that pupils develop these skills but also enjoy learning. Teachers have exceptionally high expectations, as illustrated by the 'no hands up' policy. This means that teachers randomly select individuals to answer questions. Consequently, pupils are required to be attentive at all times. Teachers ensure that they maintain the interest of boys and carefully craft lessons to ensure that they achieve as well as the girls. Most of the pupils' work is clearly marked and individual targets support improvements well. However, systems to guide the pupils towards the next step in their learning are not consistent from class to class. Consequently, this does not support smooth transition through the school.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding because they receive the highest quality pastoral care, guidance and support. They keep fit because they know the importance of regular exercise. Planning the menu for school lunches with the cook also ensures that they understand the principles of eating healthily. Pupils explain that there are always adults they can go to for help and that their teachers and support staff 'always look out for them'. Pupils use the 'ideas box' to share suggestions for school improvement and their views are always taken into consideration. For example, the school council is proud that the designs pupils have created for improving the toilet facilities have been adopted. Younger pupils are well looked after by the older pupils who take their responsibilities as peer mentors and playground buddies very seriously. The pupils' excellent attitudes towards learning are reflected in their regular attendance. They grow into confident and sensible young people who value their education and know that they must, as one of their songs they regularly sing in school suggests 'give it all you've got, 'cause you've really got a lot to give'.

Most parents are happy with the school and their views are echoed by one who explained that 'Shiphay is a great platform for the next generation of children'. Whilst a small minority of parents are unhappy about communication between home and school, inspection findings confirm that 'teachers are very approachable and friendly'.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The success of the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) is down to the exceptional skills of the teaching and support staff. They fully understand how these young children learn and they provide an excellent quality of provision. Every activity planned has a teaching purpose and this ensures that the children build firm foundations in their learning. For example, 'Café Time' enables these youngsters to learn about eating healthily but also about sharing, taking turns and socialising with each other. The very stimulating indoor and outdoor learning areas provide very high quality opportunities for boys and girls to choose to be active learners or take time for more reflective learning. Creative role-play areas are used successfully to develop speaking and listening skills. For example, at the 'Shiphay Seaside', when pretending to play in the water and sand, the children widen their vocabulary and experiment with new sounds. The identification of key personnel for each child ensures that the transition between home and school is seamless.

What the school should do to improve further

- Adopt consistent systems in all classes that will help all the pupils know what the next step in their learning will be.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of boarding provision	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well 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	1

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

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 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 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	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



31 October 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Shiphay School and Orchard Nursery, Torquay TQ2 7NF

A big thank you for making me feel so welcome at your school. I enjoyed spending time with you and finding out about Shiphay School and Orchard Nursery. I would like to say a special thank-you to those pupils who talked with me about your school.

Your school provides you with an excellent education. Your work is of an exceptionally high standard and your achievement throughout the school is outstanding. I was very impressed with the way you use your literacy and numeracy skills across all your subjects. The films you make when you study different topics, such as South Africa, Zimbabwe and the Aztecs, are very interesting. This is because you use your exceptional ICT skills and your high quality music and dance performances to make your films exciting and illustrate what you have learnt. Your teachers have excellent skills and make sure that you are always engaged in your learning.

It is very clear that you take a full part in the life of the school and really enjoy coming to school. The teachers plan extremely interesting activities for you that are meaningful to you. I enjoyed hearing about the trips you go on and was very interested to hear about how you are responsible for the improvements that are being made to your toilet facilities. You have a very good knowledge of how to keep fit and healthy. You feel safe because the school looks after you well and you told me there is always someone you can talk to about a problem.

Your headteacher and the other adults involved in leading and managing your school do an excellent job. They make sure that you receive the best possible education. I have asked your teachers to make sure that you all know what the next step in your learning will be.

Once again, thank you for your help. Keep doing your best and working with the adults in school to make sure that Shiphay School and Orchard Nursery gets even better.

Best wishes

Lorna Brackstone
Lead Inspector