



Shocklach Oviatt CE Primary School

Inspection report

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 111283
 LEA Cheshire

Inspection number 278644
 Inspection dates 8 March 2006
 Reporting inspector Mr R P Bamber

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

Type of School	Primary	School address	Shocklach
School category	Voluntary Controlled		Malpas
Age range of pupils	4-11		Cheshire
			SY 14 7BN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01829 250285
Number on roll	49	Fax number	01829 250673
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs H Arthan
Date of previous inspection	June 2000	Headteacher	Mrs J Cottam-Marshall

Age group 4-11	Published March 2006	Reference no. 278644
-------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

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 School Inspections Act 1996, 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 one additional inspector.

Description of the school

This very small rural school has 49 children on roll, all from white British, relatively advantaged backgrounds. The proportion of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is relatively low and no child is in receipt of a free school meal. All children are taught in mixed age classes. The school is part of a an informal federation of small rural schools in the area and has Investors in People (IIP) status, Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark, the Gold Artsmark and Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

This is an outstanding school that offers excellent value for money. Children throughout the school achieve very well, having a fine start in the Foundation Stage where quality and provision are very good. Standards are consistently above or well above average, especially in the basic skills of reading and writing. The quality of teaching and assessment is consistently high. Teaching is very well enhanced through the use of specialists in a range of subjects. The curriculum is outstanding. Personal development and well-being are outstanding. Children behave very well and have extremely positive attitudes to learning. In this small school, the quality of relationships between children of all ages is excellent. Attendance is very good and children are punctual. The care children receive is outstanding and they are guided very well in the next steps in their education. There are excellent partnerships which contribute significantly to the high quality of children's personal development and well-being and to their curriculum. The headteacher's leadership is exceptional, exemplified by a drive to improve upon already high academic standards and to provide the best possible opportunities for all children. She is ably supported by her well qualified staff and very effective governors. The school's self evaluation is rigorous, albeit somewhat modest in some aspects. The school has improved well since the last inspection and has a good capacity to improve even further.

Grade: 1

What the school should do to improve further

In order to make the school even more effective, the school should:

- make the mathematical achievements of some children in Key Stage 2 match those of other subjects.

Achievement and standards

Because this is such a small school with so few children in each year group, reliance on year-to-year test data to determine achievement and standards is unwise. However, trends over time show that the achievement of all children is consistently very good. Overall, the inspection confirmed that children's achievements are higher than the school asserts. Children enter the school with above expected skills in communication and in their personal skills. They make rapid progress in the Reception class and in Key Stage 1 as a result of high quality teaching and support. They achieve well to reach consistently high standards in reading, writing and mathematics by Year 2. In Key Stage 2, all children continue to make very good progress in reading, writing and science

often attaining very high standards in English and science. Another outstanding feature of children's achievement is their command of a rich vocabulary. In mathematics, a few children do not make such consistently rapid progress as they do in other subjects. The school is taking appropriate steps to promote all children's investigative skills and help them to better apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems.

Children's achievements in music, physical education, the humanities and in modern foreign languages are outstanding and greatly enhanced by specialist teaching. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are gifted and talented - a greater proportion than in most schools - achieve very well. There is early diagnosis of their needs and very effective support and opportunities are provided to enable them to flourish. Very challenging targets for children's performance in national assessments are set annually and generally met. The current Year 2 and Year 6 are on course to achieve those targets set for them this year.

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being

Children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Children behave very maturely and are extremely confident in expressing their views, ideas and feelings. They have excellent attitudes to learning and to the very enriching opportunities provided for them. The school systematically emphasises the importance of healthy lifestyles. Pupils know how to be safe, being aware of the potentially negative effects of the misuse of drugs and of the need to develop positive relationships. Children's attendance is very good and they are punctual. They confidently contribute to decision making in the school, influencing provision in the playground and in the quality of their school lunches. Older children relate extremely well to younger ones, helping them with their work and play and serving at 'family' tables at lunchtime. Children's contribution to the community is considerable and their involvement with the church and the wider community add exceptionally to their spiritual, moral and cultural development. Children's good mastery of basic skills and their understanding of how aspects of trade are carried out means that they are well prepared to take their place in the wider world.

Grade: 1

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is never less than good and often outstanding. Children learn very well because they are effectively challenged, provided with a wide range of stimulating tasks and successfully encouraged to work independently and cooperatively. They are taught the basic skills of reading and writing extremely effectively. This enables them to achieve well in all subjects. Their achievements in humanities, physical education, modern foreign languages and in music are all considerably enhanced by specialist teaching. This is especially effective for the gifted or talented children in those subjects. Teaching and support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very effective; their needs are identified early and accurately. Knowledgeable and sensitive provision helps most children to overcome their difficulties. Parents comment very positively about the quality of teaching, especially the positive relationships that prevail in classrooms and how well their children progress. The school is effectively addressing the small amount of relative underachievement in mathematics in Key Stage 2. Assessment is effective and children comment that teachers help them improve their work through clear explanations and the comments made in their books.

Grade: 1

Curriculum and other activities

The curriculum is outstanding and is the lynchpin of the school's excellence. As a result of the dynamic leadership by the headteacher and very effective links with a wide range of partners, the children have a most enriching education. In addition to meeting all external requirements well and providing children with very effective basic skills for life, the curriculum promotes children's health and their personal, aesthetic and physical development outstandingly. Children have exciting opportunities to learn from visitors and visits out of school, especially in arts, spiritually and culturally. All children go on trips to London and Liverpool, for example, and this brings home to them how differently people live, work and play. For older children, residential visits to activity centres enable them to develop independence, to take on and meet challenges and to work effectively in teams. The arts are a strong feature of the curriculum and the award of the Gold Artsmark is testimony to the richness of children's experiences.

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support

Children are exceptionally well cared for. In such a small school staff know all the children and their families well and respond very effectively to their needs. Procedures for child protection, for assessing risk and for health and safety are rigorous. The school liaises very closely with external agencies to seek specialist advice to support individual children. The exceptional care provided ensures children's very good health, safety and well-being, especially the more vulnerable. There are very effective procedures in place to ensure good attendance and behaviour. The school tracks children's academic progress closely, ensuring that effective support is provided to those who are at risk of falling a little behind. Information gained from analyses of test data and other assessments informs the individual targets set for children's next steps in their learning.

Grade: 1

Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding. This is better than the school's own judgement. The headteacher's leadership is outstanding, exemplified by the desire and the ability to provide children with the best possible, well rounded education. Academic standards and the development of basic skills are not compromised by the pursuit of enjoyment. The headteacher, her competent staff and the very effective governing body work successfully and tirelessly to access extra funding to provide children with specialist teaching and other exciting opportunities. These both widen and deepen their knowledge and understanding across the whole curriculum. The school's award of IIP status demonstrates a deep commitment to the continued professional and personal development of staff. Successful pursuit of a Healthy Schools Award and the Gold Artsmark, also reflect the leadership's determination to establish excellence. The very productive partnerships established with parents, a local informal federation of small schools, with colleges and with the local and wider community, all contribute significantly to children's high levels of achievements, excellent personal development and an outstanding curriculum. Governance is excellent. As well as a very clear understanding of the school's provision, with several governors playing an active role in children's learning, there is widespread expertise amongst governors to enable them to support and challenge the school very effectively. The school demonstrates excellent capacity to improve even further and offers excellent value for money.

Grade: 1

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

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.</i>	School Overall	16-19
---	----------------	-------

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	
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	
The <i>standards</i> ¹ reached by learners	1	
How well learners make <i>progress</i> , 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 behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which adopt healthy lifestyles	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; 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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	
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 are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in Key Stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Suite 22 West Lancs T 01695 566930
Investment Centre F 01695 729320
Maple View www.ofsted.gov.uk
Skelmersdale WN8 9TG



Shocklach Oviatt CE School
Shocklach
Malpas
Cheshire
SY 14 7BN

10 March 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for making me so welcome during the day I spent in your school. I really appreciated the open and frank way in which you chatted to me and let me know so many interesting things about your school. I would like to share with you those things I thought were really good about your school and what I felt it could do a little bit better.

What I liked most about your school:

- you do very well in your lessons
- you behave so sensibly, are very confident and have such a positive attitude to school
- the many exciting things school organises for you to enjoy, especially clubs, visits and the visitors who come into school
- you are taught very well and so well cared for and supported
- you have such a good headteacher who does so much to give you a super education.

Although I think your school is excellent, there is one thing that I feel would make it even better:

- to help children in the junior class to do even better in mathematics.

Thank you for helping me with the inspection of your school. I hope that you continue to really enjoy school and do very well with your work and carry on trying really hard.

Yours sincerely

Mr P Bamber