

Sunshine Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104145
Local Authority	Walsall
Inspection number	323977
Inspection dates	19–20 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Marion Wallace

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)	168
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	Pauline Millward
Headteacher	Kathryn Marston
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Blakenall Lane Leamore Walsall WS3 1HF

Age group	3–7
Inspection dates	19–20 March 2009
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Telephone number
Fax number

01922 710174
01922 710174

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Sunshine Infant and Nursery School is a small school. Most pupils are White British. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average. Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery class followed by the Reception class. A well above average proportion of pupils are entitled to free school meals. The school has gained the Activemark, Leading Parent Partnership Award, Investors in People Award and Basic Skills Quality Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Sunshine is an outstanding school. Pupils of all abilities achieve extremely well. The school has improved rapidly over the last three years. Parents and pupils appreciate the high quality care and exciting learning opportunities. One parent summed up the views of the vast majority saying, 'Fantastic! Children make excellent progress because staff are dedicated and committed. All the teachers create a wonderful atmosphere for children to learn; they love coming to school.'

The success of the school is due to the effectiveness of the headteacher, governors and senior management team who provide extremely clear educational direction. They lead the school exceptionally well and this high quality is reflected in the very strong commitment from all staff to provide each pupil with the best possible education. The school's excellent organisation, strong, shared vision and impressive track record of improvement demonstrate its outstanding capacity to continue moving forward.

Pupils make excellent progress from very low starting points because the quality of teaching is outstanding. By the end of Year 2 pupils achieve standards that are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same progress as their peers. Preparation for pupils' future economic well-being is excellent. Pupils develop superb social skills and personal qualities and they make excellent progress in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy.

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Consistently good teaching helps children make a positive start in the Nursery and Reception. The school has recently developed the outdoor area for Reception children. Whilst staff are starting to use the outside area effectively, opportunities are sometimes missed to develop all areas of learning there.

The curriculum is outstanding. Pupils are extremely well cared for and there is an excellent focus on valuing and supporting all pupils. Older pupils also demonstrate mature responsibility and care, looking after a real egg for a week as part of the 'Pick up a Penguin' curriculum theme. Procedures to track academic progress are also exemplary and ensure there is extremely thorough guidance for pupils that results in full equality of opportunity. Because no pupil misses out on this first-class guidance, they all make excellent progress pupils during their time at Sunshine. Child protection, risk assessment and safeguarding procedures meet current statutory requirements.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, together with their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Pupils know extremely well how to stay safe and healthy. The 'Wake and Shake' sessions are fun and effectively challenge pupils' physical and mental ability. Attendance rates are broadly average and are improving but some parents do not yet fully support the school's drive for regular attendance. Pupils learn to make an excellent contribution to their school, local, national and global communities because the school's promotion of community cohesion is excellent. Links with schools in Bangladesh and Ghana, and exchange visits with two other primary schools that have a different cultural mix of pupils help them widen their awareness of other cultures, ethnicity and religions. Relationships are exceptionally strong and, consequently, attitudes are extremely positive and behaviour is excellent.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Excellent preparation, home visits and links with parents ensure that children settle extremely well into the Nursery and Reception classes. Most children enter Nursery and Reception with very low levels of skills and knowledge, especially personal, social and emotional and in language and literacy. Children make good progress in both the Nursery and Reception classes in all areas of learning although they are still below the expected standards when they enter Year 1. Children make outstanding progress in their personal development because relationships are extremely strong. Teachers encourage children to respond individually to questions and talk to each other; consequently they make good progress in their speaking and communication skills. Care and welfare are exemplary and this contributes to children's positive achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The quality of teaching and learning is good. High expectations and a good, well-planned curriculum that is well matched to the children's needs contribute to the good progress. Most activities are fun and challenging. Opportunities, however, to challenge children in all areas of learning outdoors are sometimes missed because the outdoor provision is relatively new and teachers do not always plan work that is sufficiently demanding. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the outdoor area for Reception children and ensure it is used to give opportunities for learning in all areas of development.
- Increase levels of attendance by working with parents to ensure all pupils attend regularly.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils achieve extremely well and the proportion of pupils on course to reach the expected and higher levels continues to rise. Standards improved significantly in the 2008 national test results and school data shows they are continuing to improve in 2009. Pupils make outstanding progress from extremely low starting points and reach standards that are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Mathematics is the strongest aspect.

This year there has been a strong focus on raising standards in writing; strategies to tackle this are proving effective and standards are improving. The new initiative to improve writing skills is proving to be extremely effective in raising achievement in writing. Year 1 pupils describe accurately characters from 'Star Wars' such as Hans Solo and Year 2 pupils write effectively about the plight of the polar bears in the Antarctic. Rigorous assessment and tracking, swiftly followed by successful improvements to teaching, have ensured standards are improving well. The number of pupils reaching the higher levels is increasing each year and is broadly average at present.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The smiling faces of the pupils as they skip their way into school each morning show how they love coming to their school. Their obvious enjoyment of lessons has a major influence on their learning. Pupils are very friendly, polite, considerate and work very well with each other. The overwhelming majority achieve the 'Good to be Green' status and proudly explain to visitors

how they achieved this award. Their care for the environment, both within the school grounds and the wider world, is outstanding. They are very aware of global warming and issues such as lack of water in some parts of Africa and the possibility that polar bears in the Antarctic could become extinct if hunters keep killing them. Pupils' understanding of how to stay safe is excellent; they are aware of dangers and risks outside of school especially in relation to road safety. They talk knowledgeably about the benefits of eating fruit, drinking water and the importance of activity. They show high levels of responsibility as playground pals and school councillors. Running their own profitable cake shop helps them develop confidence and financial awareness for later life.

Attendance rates are broadly average and have improved over the past two years, especially in relation to the number of persistent absentees. However, not all parents fully support the school's work to promote regular attendance.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Strong relationships and excellent attitudes and behaviour contribute to a positive climate for learning. Pupils make outstanding gains in their work because excellent planning effectively takes account of pupils' different abilities. Teachers are superbly efficient at setting different levels of work for different pupils. For example, a gifted and talented pupil is challenged in mathematics with fractions and decimal problems. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their work, try hard and behave well. Teachers skilfully use a range of methods such as electronic whiteboards to reinforce, extend and involve pupils in their own learning. 'Talking partners' is used extremely well to help pupils to articulate and share their ideas. Year 2 pupils learnt how to interpret and give directions to others by walking to the local shops to spend 20p each. Standards of presentation are consistently high throughout the school because pupils are encouraged to take a pride in their work. Pupils with additional learning needs are extremely well supported by teaching assistants so they make excellent progress. Marking is exemplary; it greatly helps to guide and challenge pupils, and is extremely thorough.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The excellent curriculum has been created to match the needs of the pupils. It successfully provides pupils with interesting and exciting opportunities and ensures all pupils make excellent progression in all areas of their learning. The application of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology in all subjects is highly appropriate. The decision to provide more stimuli to engage boys and to widen opportunities for writing is already improving achievement. This has been led by an introduction of exciting themes such as 'In a galaxy far away' and 'Pick up a Penguin' which make learning fun and exciting. Pupils develop curiosity about space through their Star Wars project. This is enhanced by a constant use of initiatives such as 'Forest Schools' and 'Box Clever'. The school has developed a very thorough and effective approach to the development of pupils' personal, social and health education. The excellent range of extra-curricular activities, clubs, visitors and visits helps pupils develop confidence, self-esteem and develop new interests and skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The extremely caring ethos results in very happy pupils who thoroughly enjoy school life. Pupils' needs are central to the work of the school and the learning mentor effectively helps children and parents to get the best from learning. The school works extremely well with parents and external support agencies. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive excellent support. The support provided to help all pupils get the best out of their learning ensures vulnerable children achieve as well as the others. Excellent behaviour is promoted consistently by all members of staff. Attendance is monitored rigorously and good links are established with parents reminding them of the importance of regular and prompt attendance. The school's tracking and assessment procedures are excellent. High-quality academic guidance successfully ensures pupils know what to do to improve their work. Pupils know their targets and receive excellent guidance on how to improve their work. Transition arrangements for children entering and moving on to other schools are excellent.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher's superb efficiency, extremely high standards and skilful management have permeated the school, leading to continual and in some cases rapid improvement. There is a strong, enthusiastic commitment from all staff to provide each pupil with the best possible education. Leaders have a very thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The monitoring of pupils' progress throughout the school is exemplary and highlights any areas of weakness, leading to improvement, as shown by the effective raising of boys' achievement. The promotion of community cohesion is outstanding because pupils develop a thorough understanding of the communities in school, in the neighbourhood, elsewhere in Britain and across the world. The very-well-structured planning ensures that pupils' awareness of ethnic, religious and cultural diversity is excellent. Governors are extremely well organised and support and challenge the school effectively. A significant number of parents commented on the excellent school and outstanding progress achieved by dedicated and committed staff: 'Hats off to all the staff who make Sunshine a lovely school.'

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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?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
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?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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	1
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	3
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

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?	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

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

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sunshine Infant and Nursery School, Walsall, WS3 1HF

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed talking with you and your teachers. We will remember how extremely polite and considerate you all were and how beautifully you all behaved. We enjoyed your class assembly and were impressed by how carefully you cared for the penguin eggs. You and your parents told us that Sunshine is an excellent school and we agree.

These are the things we found that your school does well.

- You get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception and make excellent progress through the school. As a result, you reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 2 because teaching is excellent.
- You all enjoy learning immensely and your attendance continues to improve.
- You behave well and are extremely sensible and know how to keep safe.
- You greatly enjoy and benefit from the many fun activities, clubs, visits and visitors.
- Your school cares for you extremely well and teaches you a lot about how to be healthy and care for others. Many of you showed how carefully you looked after your eggs for a whole week.
- Your school council is well organised and is working very well with your teachers to make sure that your school continues to improve.
- Your headteacher, senior teachers and governors lead the school exceptionally well and all the staff work very effectively together to make sure that Sunshine is an exciting, fun place to learn. We have asked your school to develop the outdoor area for Reception children so that it is of the same quality as the rest of the school and we have asked the school to find even more ways to work with your parents to improve the level of attendance.

Thank you for a very enjoyable and memorable visit to your school and best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Marion Wallace

Lead inspector