

Shorne Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Cob Drive, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 3DU

Inspection dates 4–5 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school because

- Shorne School has effectively improved in all aspects of its work since its last inspection.
- Pupils make good progress throughout the school from their starting points in Reception, so that their attainment in the Key Stage 2 tests is above average.
- Teachers motivate pupils well, including the emphasis on encouraging pupils to work things out for themselves and the way in which pupils' writing skills are developed through topic work.
- Pupils' progress is checked regularly and well-targeted additional support effectively ensures that pupils of all abilities thrive.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Adults are consistent in their approach with pupils, and relationships are positive and friendly. Because pupils know that they are looked after well, they feel safe and secure.
- The good curriculum engages pupils effectively and their well-being is underpinned by good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The headteacher has successfully established a positive climate where initiative is fostered and teamwork is strong.
- Senior leaders and the governing body use performance management effectively to improve teaching so that there are now examples of outstanding learning to form the basis for further improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is good rather than outstanding. In a few lessons, pupils are not challenged to do more in the time available and they do not always follow up on the advice given in marking to enhance their learning.
- A few adults have not been fully trained in the teaching of reading so that there are some inconsistencies in the enunciation of sounds, mainly for less-confident older readers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 14 lessons involving all teachers teaching on the days of the inspection. They listened to pupils read and visited sessions teaching the links between letters and their sounds (phonics). A small number of lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff and a group of pupils.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, attended an assembly and scrutinised pupils' work, progress data, development and evaluation documents, safeguarding information, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and the governing body minutes.
- Inspectors took account of 42 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) as well as questionnaires completed by 21 staff.

Inspection team

Helen Hutchings, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Clive Reynolds

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Shorne School is an average-sized primary school, with more boys than girls.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds is in line with schools nationally, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To accelerate pupils' progress further, ensure that by January 2013, all teaching is consistently good or outstanding by:
 - raising the level of challenge, making sure that all groups of pupils are clear about how much work is expected of them in the time given for independent activities
 - checking that pupils have understood the written points made when teachers mark their work by setting time aside for pupils to respond to the additional tasks provided for them
 - ensuring that all teachers and teaching assistants have up-to-date knowledge of the school's approach to letters and their sounds.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well in lessons so that they acquire knowledge and understanding quickly across a broad curriculum. The progress pupils make over time has accelerated since the last inspection. Consequently, attainment in the Year 6 tests has improved steadily and pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is now above average, and pupils are prepared well for secondary education.
- In lessons, pupils work cooperatively, talking about their work together so that they develop their communication skills and ability to think things through for themselves. For example, in a mathematics lesson, Year 6 pupils worked together well in small groups applying their knowledge of areas and perimeters to work out the cost of materials to refurbish rooms.
- Reading is promoted well and pupils read widely across the curriculum, seen, for example, in the research undertaken independently by older pupils. In guided reading and individual reading sessions, pupils are positive about reading, and they read regularly at home and in school. The opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas supports the good progress pupils make in their writing.
- Problem solving and reasoning are used effectively to encourage pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge to practical situations, reinforcing pupils' basic numeracy skills.
- Pupils know how well they are doing because they are frequently involved in discussing the quality of their work with one another or their teacher.
- Pupils' progress is monitored closely so that any pupils who are not making the expected progress towards their targets are identified quickly and strategies put in place to help them to catch up.
- The individual needs of pupils are given careful attention, so that those who are disabled, have special educational needs or are known to be eligible for the pupil premium progress well. Focused one-to-one and small group interventions, in addition to input from other agencies, ensure that their achievement compares favourably with all pupils nationally.
- Pupils are positive about their learning, as are most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Most lessons are fun and interesting for pupils so that they make good progress. Teaching over time is good with some outstanding lessons. Weaker lessons do not consistently ensure that all pupils work to full capacity. Parents' and carers' positive views about teaching are supported by inspection evidence.
- Teachers make learning lively, and classrooms are made interesting with stimulating displays of pupils' own work. Because they are interested in their work, pupils talk positively about lessons and about the expectation of further learning at home which they know helps them to achieve well.
- Additional home learning is planned well, and parents and carers receive useful information about learning in school such as the approach to letters and their sounds in Reception. This approach is being extended further this year with the introduction of more workshops for parents and carers to further understand the school's methods of teaching, including reading and calculation.
- Perceptive and challenging questioning is used well to extend pupils' understanding and encourage pupils to think through problems for themselves. Pupils respond well to the use of 'named lollipop sticks' to target questions and pay close attention because they do not know who is going to be asked next.
- Pupils have a range of opportunities to work independently and in groups. Because pupils have

positive attitudes to their learning, group work is very effective in helping them to consolidate their thinking by talking about what they are doing. For example, in Year 4, pupils developed their understanding of how to comment on the senses when creating story settings. The composition of groups is changed frequently to ensure that pupils do not become reliant on the views of a small group.

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and the quality of their work. In a few lessons when pupils' level of activity slows down, this is largely because teachers do not set a high level of challenge by making clear how much is expected of each group in the time given.
- The teaching of reading is effective, enabling pupils to use a range of strategies to read unfamiliar words. The school has changed its approach to the teaching of phonics and not all staff, including some who have recently joined the school, are trained fully. Currently, the enunciation of sounds by a few adults is inconsistent, particularly for those pupils in Key Stage 2 still requiring additional support for their reading in lessons, and this hinders progress.
- Marking and feedback is good, pupils being given praise for their achievements and helpful pointers for improvement. Consequently, pupils are clear about their next steps in learning. Teachers are increasingly setting small follow-up tasks to check pupils' understanding about the suggestions for improvement but these are not consistently completed, reducing the impact of teachers' marking.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' consistently good behaviour and attitudes have a very positive impact on the school's warm, family atmosphere. Pupils interact positively with one another and with staff.
- Pupils are keen to take on responsibility, for example as 'young leaders', helping to ensure that younger pupils have friends to play with and are active in the playground.
- Of those parents or carers who responded to the questionnaire, a very small minority have concerns about behaviour. Scrutiny of behaviour records shows that there are few incidents of unacceptable behaviour and that behaviour is managed consistently by adults. Pupils are fully aware of, and subscribe to, the school's 'Golden Rules'.
- Pupils understand the impact of their actions on others and the differences between falling out with a friend and bullying, including name-calling. Consequently, incidents of bullying are rare and, when they do occur, are dealt with well.
- Pupils are confident to share their concerns because they know that they are listened to. They feel safe in school and know who to turn to if they are worried about anything. They are aware of the action needed to keep themselves safe when using the internet.
- Overall attendance levels are above average. While the proportion of pupils being taken out of school for holidays during term time has reduced in response to the school's robust challenge, this form of absence remains relatively high, which has an impact on the continuity of learning for those pupils affected.

The leadership and management are good

- The capable and uncompromising leadership by the headteacher has been key to the school's improvement. Together with other senior leaders and the governing body, she has built a strong staff team with a clear and shared view about how to bring about further development.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and the school's systems to check progress robust. Any identified weaknesses are addressed quickly because staff are open to sharing their expertise. The school has used local authority consultancy well to address the issues identified in the last report. The local authority has a light touch approach to this school, recognising its improvement.
- Performance management is robust and the information from appraisal used to guide professional development at a whole-school and individual level. For example, visits have been

arranged for some staff to observe outstanding practice elsewhere.

- The school works well with parents and carers, providing information on the school website and through other electronic means, and responding to parental views gained through surveys.
- The curriculum is planned carefully to ensure progressive coverage across the National Curriculum. Topics such as 'pirates' and 'endangered animals', which interest pupils, are used effectively to promote basic literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is addressed well within the curriculum, and through additional activities such as the 'Dino Snores' overnight visit to the Natural History Museum and the Year 6 adventurous activity residential visit.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - governors are experienced and have a shrewd understanding of the school's work, largely because they visit the school regularly, which keeps them informed for when they discuss policy and evaluation
 - all safeguarding requirements, including those relating to child protection, are met and the governing body works closely with senior leaders to ensure all pupils have equality of opportunity and that there is no discrimination
 - financial management is carefully monitored to ensure that the school remains financially viable; the use of the pupil premium is audited and shows some innovative practice, for example to enable those eligible to have access to electronic learning as part of their home study.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	118594
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	406768

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bill Johnson
Headteacher	Caroline Conroy
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 December 2009
Telephone number	01474 822312
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Email address	headteacher@shorne.kent.sch.uk

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