

Shirland Primary School

Park Lane, Shirland, Alfreton, DE55 6BH

Inspection dates 27–28 February 2013

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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school is good because leaders, staff and governors have successfully improved teaching and learning.
- Reception children make a good start to their education, and pupils joining in Year 3 are helped to settle in quickly, so that they soon feel part of the school community.
- Pupils achieve well across the school and reach broadly average standards by Year 6. Attainment is above average in reading.
- Teachers plan interesting and enjoyable lessons. They keep a close check on pupils' progress and provide extra help for those who need it.
- Pupils are exceptionally keen and interested in their work and they behave impeccably. Attendance levels are above average.
- The school takes very good care of pupils, who say they feel very safe in school. They have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe when out of school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, teachers do not expect enough of the more-able pupils.
- Teachers do not always plan enough opportunities for pupils to use the skills they learn in mathematics in other subjects.
- Pupils do not always have enough time to think about and respond to teachers' marking.
- Leaders have not yet checked on the impact of new ideas to improve pupils' reading and writing still further.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited 10 lessons, all of which were observed together with the headteacher.
- He held discussions with pupils, the headteacher, staff, two governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector examined a range of documents, including a summary of the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, and policies aimed at keeping pupils safe.
- The views of 17 parents and carers were analysed through the Parent View website. The inspector also met with parents and carers to seek their views about the school.
- The views expressed by 21 staff who returned a questionnaire were considered.

Inspection team

Keith Williams, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is average. The proportion at school action plus, or who have a statement of special educational needs, is below average.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which is additional government funding for particular groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection, the school has moved into a new building, having previously been housed on two sites. Some pupils join the school in Year 3, having attended an infant school in another local village.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning further by:
 - always giving more-able pupils demanding work
 - planning more regular opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects
 - involving pupils more in responding to teachers' marking and feedback
 - checking that the actions taken to improve standards in reading and writing are working.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join Reception with a wide range of skills and abilities, but overall they are lower than typically found for their age. Whatever their starting points, children make good progress in all areas of learning. Good use is made of the classroom and outdoor area to capture children's imagination.
- Across the school, pupils make good progress in learning to read and write. Good teaching of early reading skills and a well-organised programme as pupils move through the school have helped to raise pupils' attainment in reading. Progress is accelerating in writing too, but pupils' attainment is not as high as it is in reading.
- New lessons have recently been introduced to help those falling behind in their reading to catch up, and to help pupils of all abilities to use their reading skills to improve their writing. Early signs are promising, but it is too soon for this work to have had its full effect. Steps taken to encourage pupils to write at length in English and other subjects are becoming more established, and this is contributing to pupils' good progress.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics, in particular the opportunities to solve mathematical problems. They are sometimes encouraged to use their mathematical skills in other subjects, such as science, but such opportunities are not widespread.
- The attainment of pupils who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is a little lower than that of other pupils in English and mathematics. Steps taken by the school, including regular access to a learning mentor and sessions in which they can catch up on homework, are ensuring that pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the very few children who are looked after make good progress and are helping to close this gap.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure they are able to play a full part in lessons and get extra help when they need it. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make good progress, although occasionally, too much direction by the teacher limits the progress made by the more-able pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- Better teaching has been an important feature in the school's improvement and has resulted in pupils of all abilities making good progress. Some teaching is outstanding. Successful staff training, some led by the staff themselves and some from outside organisations including the local authority, has contributed to the improvement.
- The staff have successfully met the challenges and possibilities presented by moving to a new building, and have created a supportive, attractive and vibrant environment in which pupils learn well. They harness pupils' interests skilfully to provide interesting and stimulating work, and usually have high expectations of what they can achieve. Occasionally, however, they over-organise more-able pupils, which limits their ability to develop independence by making choices and decisions for themselves.
- Teachers keep a close check on pupils' learning and progress, during lessons and over time. Misunderstandings are usually dealt with well during the lesson, and pupils in need of an extra

boost or at risk of underachieving are soon helped to catch up.

- Basic skills are taught well. Nevertheless, along with senior leaders, staff review their work regularly and identify what might be improved. For example, recognising that some older pupils, especially boys, needed extra help with learning letters and sounds (phonics), a new programme has been introduced. This is particularly helping to raise the attainment of pupils supported by pupil premium funding, but all those involved are already highly motivated by the new system and are beginning to catch up.
- Teachers provide good feedback to pupils that gives them a clear picture of what to do next to improve their work. Pupils are eager to learn, but are not always given enough time to reflect on teachers' comments and decide for themselves how to tackle the teacher's suggestions.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils are extremely proud of their school, and their outstanding attitudes and behaviour are an important reason why their learning has improved. They are invariably ready to learn, concentrate fully and work hard, and this helps lessons to run smoothly.
- Pupils are polite and respectful to adults and each other. They are grateful for the help they get from staff, including the learning mentor, when they find work or other situations difficult, and are also appreciative of the support they get from their classmates.
- Pupils who find it difficult to behave well are given plenty of support to help them improve. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions. There have been no exclusions in recent years, and this reflects the success of staff and pupils in managing behaviour.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school, and their parents and carers agree. They are exceptionally well prepared for dealing with potentially difficult situations, for example when using the internet or when out in the wider community.
- Pupils say that bullying is extremely rare and are confident that if it does happen, staff will listen and take swift and effective action. They understand that bullying can take many forms and know what to do should they witness it.
- Staff ensure that pupils of all backgrounds and abilities are welcomed and fully included in school life. This results in high levels of enjoyment, above-average attendance and equally good achievement for all groups of pupils.

The leadership and management are good

- The good leadership noted at the last inspection has enabled the school to continue to improve. Parents and carers support the school and are particularly pleased with the way that staff are available should they have a concern or a suggestion.
- Strong leadership from the headteacher, well supported by senior leaders and staff, has made sure that there is a constant drive to improve teaching and learning. They evaluate the school's work thoroughly and have an accurate view of what is working well and what needs to improve. The local authority has made a good contribution to improving teaching, learning and

governance.

- Leaders make good use of the information they gather about pupils' progress to identify and plug gaps in their knowledge and understanding, and to hold teachers accountable for pupils' performance. Although they usually keep a check on how well new initiatives are doing, this has not yet been the case with the new system of teaching phonics. Leaders rightly recognise the importance of doing so to make sure that standards continue to rise.
 - The school provides a broad range of interesting and enjoyable topics, firmly focused on improving pupils' skills, and this contributes to their high levels of enjoyment. Pupils have good opportunities to use their literacy skills in other subjects, but fewer opportunities to use their mathematical skills.
 - The school works well with parents and carers, and gives them good information about their children's progress. Staff make sure that those whose children are disabled or have special educational needs are fully involved in, and informed about, the provision for their children. Effective steps are taken to ensure that families who live in the neighbouring village are able to play a full part in school life.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has improved since the last inspection. The governors are now well placed to challenge leaders and hold the school to account. They have a good understanding of the information gathered about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching, and they are clear about the impact of the steps being taken to improve them. Good links are made between the performance of teachers, staff training and their salary. Governors oversee financial decisions well. They know, for example, that the extra funding put into staffing is enabling pupils who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding to close the gap between their attainment and that of other pupils. They make sure that the systems to keep pupils safe follow recommended good practice and meet national requirements.
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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	112620
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	405411

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	141
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rex Moakes
Headteacher	Kim Buxton
Date of previous school inspection	13 September 2010
Telephone number	01773 832426
Fax number	07113 834071
Email address	info@shirland.derbyshire.sch.uk

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