

# Shirley Junior School

Belle Moor Road, Shirley, Southampton, SO15 5XE

**Inspection dates** 21–22 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	N/A
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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

- The headteacher, together with senior leaders and governors, has created a climate of high expectations in which all pupils achieve well personally and academically.
- Pupils work hard and make good progress. From broadly average starting points, they reach standards in English and mathematics that are above average by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is consistently good, with strengths in the quality of teacher assessment. Lessons are well planned so that they meet the needs of all pupils.
- Teaching assistants are highly skilled and help disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs to make the same progress as their classmates.
- Pupils are polite and friendly, and they are proud of their school. They behave well in lessons and around the school. They feel safe in school because they know that adults care for them and will address any concerns they raise.
- The headteacher has created a strong team of teachers who work closely together to give pupils the best possible education.
- School leaders and governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and what needs to be improved further. They have brought about significant improvements to pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching over the past three years, demonstrating their capacity to improve further.
- The school makes good use of partner schools within the academy trust.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' achievement in writing is not as good as it is in reading or mathematics. A few pupils have poorly developed skills in handwriting, spelling and punctuation.
- Not all teachers make enough use of high-quality books and resources to demonstrate good models of written language.
- In a few lessons, objectives do not focus clearly enough on what pupils are expected to learn.
- Not all teachers show the same consistent high standards when marking pupils' work.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 27 lessons or parts of lessons, including several that were jointly observed with senior leaders. They listened to pupils read and they looked at work in their exercise books.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, governors, groups of pupils, middle leaders and a representative from the Academy Educational Trust.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including development plans, pupils’ assessment and tracking information, minutes from governors’ meetings, curriculum plans and documentation regarding the safeguarding of pupils.
- The views of parents were taken into account through the 68 responses to the online Parent View survey and informal discussions with parents at the start of the school day.
- Staff views were taken into consideration by looking at questionnaires completed by 18 members of staff.

## Inspection team

Joy Considine, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Richard Chalkley

Additional inspector

Tom Donohue

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Shirley Junior School is part of a multi-academy trust with three other local schools. It converted to become an academy school on 1 November 2012. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be satisfactory.
- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is lower than average. This is additional funding provided by the government to support pupils who are entitled to free school meals, pupils who are in local authority care and children of service families.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is lower than usual.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and who have special educational needs and are supported at school action is broadly average. The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- In the last three years, the school has experienced a number of changes to the staffing organisation, including teaching staff and the appointment of head of standards in each year group and the appointment of an assistant headteacher.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing by:
  - making better use of high-quality books to demonstrate to pupils how they can improve their own writing
  - ensuring that all pupils master basic skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation and that they are taught to present their work well
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to analyse and comment on the quality of writing they produce.
- Move the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
  - ensuring that learning intentions are clearly focused on what pupils are to learn rather than what they are to do
  - ensuring that all teachers mark pupils' work to the high standard of the best.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- All pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress across the school to reach standards that are above average by the end of Year 6. Test results over the last three years in the national assessments at the end of Year 6 indicate a pattern of attainment that is above average in English and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is, in part, because highly skilled teaching assistants provide extra help that ensures that they achieve as well as their peers. This support is provided in lessons as well as through the provision of special programmes of work to meet their learning needs.
- The average points scores (based on the outcomes of national tests) are lower for pupils eligible for pupil premium funding than for other pupils. However, assessment information shows that they make similar progress to their classmates and that the gap in attainment between these pupils and their peers is closing as a result of effective support to meet their personal and academic needs.
- Pupils enjoy reading both for pleasure and to find information. They are encouraged to read widely and often and there is an exceptionally well-resourced library, which they use regularly. Older pupils discuss their favourite authors and comment thoughtfully on why they like or dislike particular books.
- Standards are not as high in writing as they are in reading. This is because pupils do not see enough examples of quality writing to inspire their own work. A few pupils have poorly developed skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation, and the presentation of work in their books is untidy.
- Pupils across the school make good progress in mathematics. The early focus on teaching number skills means that pupils confidently apply their understanding of number to solving problems, and they clearly explain the methods by which they carry out their calculations.
- Parents who spoke to inspectors and the large majority who responded to the online parent survey agreed that their children make good progress. The pupils who met inspectors also expressed very positive views about their learning and progress.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Parents agree that teaching is typically good and leads to good progress made by pupils across a range of subjects. Pupils say lessons are usually lively, with an interesting range of activities for them to complete.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good and this makes a good contribution to the quality of lessons because pupils want to work hard. Pupils behave well and respond quickly to teachers' instructions so that little time is wasted.
- The best lessons are imaginatively planned and encourage an enthusiasm for learning. Most lessons build on previous learning so that pupils develop their skills systematically and make good progress. Independent learning activities are well matched to pupils' individual needs, with a good level of challenge for all pupils, including those who are more able.
- Most lessons are characterised by high-quality dialogue between adults and pupils. In mathematics lessons, teachers question pupils carefully to probe their understanding and to provide opportunities for pupils to explain the methods they selected to solve problems. Teachers have good subject knowledge, particularly in mathematics, and this helps them to explain and demonstrate what they want pupils to learn.
- Most teachers have high expectations and use assessment information very effectively to plan lessons. They check pupils' progress in lessons regularly through skilful questioning and adjust their lessons accordingly when misunderstandings arise.

- Teaching assistants are highly skilled and well trained to support teaching and learning. They work closely with teachers and are especially effective in supporting the learning of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- In a very few lessons, teachers do not always set out clearly enough what pupils are to learn and consequently pupils are unclear about the purpose of the lesson. Leaders are aware of this and a system of coaching is addressing the issue.
- Although teachers provide opportunities for pupils to read their work aloud in lessons, they do not always question or challenge pupils to develop and improve their work. Consequently, progress in writing is sometimes slower than it should be.
- Although most teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly, a very few are over-generous in their praise and pupils are not always well enough informed about what they need to do to improve their work.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils' behaviour throughout the inspection was good and occasionally outstanding. Pupils are friendly and polite to visitors, treating each other and adults with respect. There is a calm and welcoming atmosphere around the school and this inspires pupils to behave well. Staff manage pupils' behaviour consistently so that pupils are clear about what is expected.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and this is reflected in their attendance, which is above average. They say they feel safe in school because adults care for them. They understand different forms of bullying, such as name calling and cyber-bullying, but say there is very little and that adults are on hand to resolve the very few incidents that occasionally arise. Records kept by the school show a marked reduction in the number of reported incidents relating to behaviour and there are very few exclusions.
- Pupils get on well together regardless of background. They have a good understanding of right and wrong and they show respect towards the faiths and beliefs of others. This demonstrates effective promotion of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Equality of opportunity underpins all aspects of the school's work and discrimination on any grounds is not tolerated.
- Pupils say there are few occasions when lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour, although occasionally, pupils will chat about non-work matters when teaching slows. Parents and staff agree that pupils behave well.
- The curriculum provides good opportunities to teach pupils about how to stay safe. Pupils in Year 5 understand the need to have smoke alarms as a result of a visit by the Fire and Rescue Service. In Year 6, pupils discussed the dangers posed by social networking sites. Consequently, pupils across the school also have a good understanding of how to stay safe outside school.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The dedicated leadership of the headteacher promotes a clear direction for the school. The recently restructured leadership team has secured high standards and strengthened the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good across the school. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have created detailed plans for further development.
- Systems to check the quality of teaching are embedded in all aspects of the school's work. All staff have targets linked to pupils' performance and a comprehensive programme of professional development supports staff in achieving those targets. Previously weak teaching has been addressed through robust systems for performance management, and progression on the pay scale is dependent on the quality of teachers' work. Staff spoke enthusiastically about the training and support they have been given to help them to further improve their skills.

- The curriculum is well planned and enables pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills when learning other subjects. The wide range of visitors and educational visits to nearby places of interest and the range of extra-curricular activities help to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- A significant strength of the school is the partnerships it has with parents, external agencies and the schools within the academy. This has enabled them to draw on additional expertise such as extended mathematics activities for more able pupils in Year 6.
- School leaders actively seek support from advisers and have successfully used the academy's school improvement adviser to help to strengthen teaching and raise pupils' achievement.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governance of the school is good. Governors are well informed and regularly check on how the school's performance compares with that of other similar schools. They provide good challenge to school leaders by asking rigorous questions that inform them about the quality of teaching and the links between performance management and pay progression. They understand how pupil premium funding is spent to improve the academic and personal development of these pupils, for example, by extending home-reading resources and by paying for attendance at fee-paying clubs and activities. Recent training has equipped them to make informed spending decisions regarding staffing and resources. Safeguarding is given high priority by governors, who ensure that the school complies with all requirements.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138910
<b>Local authority</b>	Southampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	411620

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	479
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Julie Reynolds
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christine Bulmer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	023 8077 1434
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<b>Email address</b>	info@sj.jetrust.org



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