

The Sherwood School

Abbots Road, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 1JP

Inspection dates 10–11 July 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. They make good progress to reach standards in English and mathematics that are above average by the end of Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates owing to the good support they receive.
- The quality of teaching has improved and is good. Teaching is typically lively because teachers plan imaginative lessons that capture pupils' interest.
- Pupils usually behave well. They feel safe in school because they know adults care for them. They get on well together regardless of background and say that most pupils are friendly and helpful.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start to reach levels of development that are at least in line with those expected for their age.
- The school looks after pupils very well. Pupils who find some aspects of school difficult are well cared for and take a full part in the school community.
- School leaders are ambitious and have high expectations for staff and pupils. They have brought about improvements since the previous inspection, showing they can improve further.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and provide good support and challenge to school leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching, to secure outstanding outcomes for all pupils.
- Curriculum planning does not always show how lessons build on previous learning, particularly in science.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons or parts of lessons, eight of which were jointly observed with senior leaders. Inspectors also looked at pupils' books and listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, three governors, groups of pupils and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including pupils' assessment and tracking information, school development planning, minutes from governors meetings and information relating to the safeguarding of pupils.
- The views of parents were taken into account by analysing the 28 responses to the online survey Parent View. Inspectors also spoke informally to parents at the start of the school day. The views of staff were taken into consideration through the 32 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Joy Considine, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Avtar Sherri

Additional Inspector

Colin Lower

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is broadly average. This is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those with a parent or carer in the armed forces. Currently there are no service family children in the school.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is higher than usual.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is lower than usual. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than that found in most schools.
- There is provision for children in the Early Years in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The headteacher joined the school in January 2012 and there have been significant changes to the team of teachers since the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so that a higher proportion is outstanding by:
 - ensuring that that all teachers make use of information about pupils' progress consistently to plan lessons, particularly in mathematics, that meet pupils' different learning needs
 - consistently informing pupils of what they need to do to improve their work and providing them with opportunities to correct and improve their work, in response to teachers' marking.
- Improve the quality of curriculum planning by ensuring that skills and knowledge build on previous learning in all subjects, especially in science.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, work hard and they make good progress. By the end of Year 6, their attainment in English and mathematics is above average. Their achievement in reading and mathematics is better than it is in writing. Pupils' progress in science is not as good as it should be because lessons do not build on what pupils have learned previously.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. This is because their needs are identified early and they receive additional help and support from skilled teaching assistants.
- Those pupils eligible for pupil premium funding achieve well and attain standards in both English and mathematics that are similar to those of other pupils. The school uses the funding effectively to provide a range of measures, including the employment of a learning mentor, to increase pupils' confidence and to improve their rates of progress.
- Children start school with skills that are lower than those expected for their age. They make good progress because staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage are skilled at observing their learning and development. Staff use this information to plan activities that build on what children can do and understand.
- Pupils enjoy reading and make good progress. By the end of Year 2, they read fluently and with good expression, although they do not all have a secure grasp of using letters and sounds to build new words for themselves. Instead, they seek assistance from an adult if they get stuck on a word. By the end of Year 6, pupils enjoy reading and comment on their favourite types of books. They read with good expression and talk about the effectiveness of the words and phrases chosen by the author.
- Pupils write regularly in literacy lessons as well as in other subjects. They understand the need to use imaginative vocabulary to interest the reader and when they are stimulated, they write exceptionally well. This was seen in a Year 3 lesson, where the teacher provided visual images of a haunted house coupled with 'scary' music to inspire pupils to write their own stories. The pupils were so engrossed in their work that they did not even want to stop for lunch.
- Although pupils make good progress in mathematics, they do not all achieve as well as they should across the school. This is because lessons are not always set at the right level for all pupils and so the work is too easy for some and too hard for others, in a few classes.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved and is good overall, with a small proportion that is outstanding. It is characterised by well-organised lessons, good relationships and the use of resources that stimulate and engage pupils effectively. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils used iPads to search for key words in preparation for their own writing about spiders.
- Most teachers plan lessons that meet the needs and interest of pupils. They provide effective support to enable pupils to make good progress. However, they do not all make use of information about pupils' progress consistently to plan lessons that meet the different learning needs of all pupils and this slows progress, particularly in mathematics, in a few lessons.
- Teaching is typically lively and engaging and this inspires pupils to want to do well. Consequently, pupils have positive attitudes to learning and they behave well in lessons. They are keen to respond to teachers' questions and to share their own ideas when discussions take place in class.
- Teachers check pupils' responses throughout the lesson and adjust their lessons according to pupils' needs. In a Year 2 lesson when pupils were investigating number puzzles, the teacher realised that they were struggling and provided them with additional help so that they were able to complete the task.

- Teaching assistants make an effective contribution to learning by giving extra support, often to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, to help them to make progress similar to that of their classmates.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress. They enjoy a wide range of activities that are well planned to meet their needs. They select some of these themselves and use both the indoor and outdoor environments that are well equipped with good quality resources. Children also make good progress through teacher-led activities, for example in developing their knowledge of letters and sounds.
- Although teachers mark pupils' books regularly, they do not always provide enough information to pupils about what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work. Some of their comments are over-generous and do not challenge pupils to do better. There are too few occasions when pupils correct and improve their work in response to teachers' comments.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils typically behave well in lessons and around the school. They know the expectations for their behaviour because staff implement the school's policy for behaviour management consistently. Pupils work and play well together, although, where the pace of lessons slows, they become fidgety and start to chat among themselves.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school. They get on well together regardless of background and they are sensitive and caring towards each other. The school has worked hard with parents to improve pupils' attendance, which is broadly average.
- The school celebrates the diversity within the school and the wider community so that pupils gain a good understanding of other cultures and faiths represented in the school. This demonstrates the school's success in promoting fairness and equality of opportunity, fostering good relationships and tackling discrimination.
- As a result of the school's actions to keep pupils safe, pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying. They say there is very little bullying, but occasionally some name-calling or minor disagreements that are quickly sorted out by staff. Records kept by the school show very few reported incidents relating to poor behaviour.
- Pupils feel safe inside and outside school. They develop a good awareness of safety through lessons on e-safety and road and rail safety as well as the dangers associated with substance abuse relating to tobacco, alcohol and harmful drugs.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to the online Parent View survey agree that pupils' behaviour is good and that the school keeps their children safe. School staff are also in full agreement. Inspection evidence confirms these views are accurate.

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders are ambitious and set a clear direction with a strong commitment to continuing improvement within a supportive environment. Teaching is effective and pupils' achievement has improved, demonstrating the school's capacity to become even better.
- The school has a good understanding of its strengths and what it needs to do to build on its successes. The school development plans are set out clearly to ensure that key areas are tackled systematically. They have responded well to the medium level of support they have received from the local authority.
- There are good systems to check the work of teachers. A planned programme of professional development, including coaching, has helped teachers to improve their practice. Previously weak teaching has been addressed. Teachers understand that their progression on the salary scale is dependent on the quality of their work.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, with a strong focus on literacy and mathematics that prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. However, planning for other subjects,

particularly science, does not show how pupils will develop their skills, knowledge and understanding by building on previous learning.

- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively by providing enriching experiences for pupils. For example, older pupils visited a partner secondary school to take part in lessons such as cookery and design technology.
- School leaders ensure that all arrangements for safeguarding pupils, including child protection, are in place.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors know the school well. They visit frequently and they have regular reports from the headteacher so they know the quality of teaching is good. They understand performance information and so they know how well the school compares with that of other schools. They carefully monitor the school's finances, including the pupil premium and how it is spent. They know that some of this supports the role of the learning mentor who provides academic and emotional support for pupils who require this and that this has helped these pupils to catch up with the rest. All governors undertake regular training to keep up to date with new requirements and initiatives. They are fully involved in setting performance management targets for the headteacher and know that a similar process is in place for staff. Consequently, they understand that staff progression on the salary scale is linked closely to performance in the classroom.

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	102646
Local authority	Merton
Inspection number	404833

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	494
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Backler
Headteacher	Claire Majumdar
Date of previous school inspection	9 June 2011
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