

Shepton Mallet Community Infants' School and Nursery

Waterloo Road, Shepton Mallet, BA4 5HE

Inspection dates 12–13 November 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.

- The school has improved significantly since the last inspection as a result of the good leadership of the headteacher, other senior staff and subject leaders.
- Staff morale is high. There is a strong team commitment to ongoing school improvement. The school is in a good position to improve further.
- Typically, teaching is good and some is outstanding. Action taken to improve the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make), reading and writing has been particularly successful.
- Pupils make good progress to reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. All groups of pupils achieve well.
- The governing body is well informed and successfully holds senior leaders to account for the school's performance.
- The well-planned range of subjects and activities motivates pupils to learn. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- The school's caring approach fosters pupils' good behaviour in lessons and around the school. Pupils enjoy being at school. They feel safe, respect each other and take pride in their school.
- The school works well with outside agencies to provide effective support and guidance for pupils and their families.
- Parents express their confidence in the school to teach their children well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils have too few opportunities to use and develop their mathematics skills in other subjects.
- The attendance of some pupils is not good enough.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in eight lessons. Three of these were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils of the school council and other pupils during break-times and lessons. Some pupils in Year 1 read to the inspector.
- Account was taken of the 18 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and of additional information from the school's own parent survey. The school's work was observed and 25 staff questionnaires were analysed.
- The test and assessment results for the last three years were looked at carefully, as well as the school's own assessment information about pupils' learning. A number of school policies, including those relating to safeguarding and equalities, and the curriculum were considered, as was information about school self-evaluation and improvement planning, and records of governing body meetings.
- The inspector met staff, representatives of the governing body including the Chair, and a telephone discussion was conducted with a representative of the local authority.

Inspection team

Alison Cogher, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Shepton Mallet Community Infants' School and Nursery is smaller than the average sized school.
- Approximately three quarters of pupils are of White British heritage. The remaining quarter represents a range of ethnic backgrounds with the largest being Other White backgrounds. Nearly three in ten pupils speak English as an additional language with the largest proportion of these speaking Polish, Portuguese, Lithuanian or Latvian as their first language. This proportion is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is additional government funding, is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average.
- The proportions of pupils supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs are below average.
- A before- and after-school club is operated by the separately registered on-site nursery and childcare provision. There is a separate children's centre on the school's site.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so pupils achieve even better by ensuring that:
 - planning identifies more opportunities for pupils to use and develop their mathematics skills in other subjects.
- Work with parents to ensure that pupils' attendance is always as good as it can be.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils of all ages, of differing abilities and from all backgrounds make good progress and achieve well. An improving trend has been established.
- Children start in the school's Nursery or Reception classes with skills and knowledge that are often lower than that typically seen. A significant number of children speak no English when they start school. They make rapid progress in learning the language because they are well supported by adults and experience a wide range of stimulating activities.
- In 2013 more children in the Reception class reached or exceeded the level of development for their age than was found nationally. Increasing the number of adults deployed into the Reception classes over the last two years has effectively supported the youngest members of the school, including those supported by the pupil premium, to settle quickly and learn very well. They start in Year 1 well prepared for learning in the next key stage.
- Pupils continue to do well in Years 1 and 2 and make good progress overall. Their rate of progress increases when learning is planned through overarching themes or is based on pupils' own experiences. For example, pupils in Years 2 enjoyed writing poems linked to the Shepton Mallet Carnival.
- Improved teaching of phonics, reading and writing has ensured that pupils' skills in these areas are very secure and they use them confidently in other subjects.
- Practical activities in mathematics lessons help pupils to make good progress. However, they are not always helped to understand the relevance of what they have learned, as they have few opportunities to use mathematics to support their learning in other subjects.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium attain as well as, and sometimes better than, other pupils at the school in reading, writing and mathematics. They outperform similar pupils nationally by a significant amount.
- Pupils learning English as an additional language make good progress because they are supported well. Those that have been at the school since Nursery or Reception typically perform as well as other pupils by the end of Year 2.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because their needs are assessed accurately and they receive well-targeted additional support.
- Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are included fully in lessons, demonstrating the school's strong commitment to and promotion of equality of opportunity.
- The school's spending of the primary sports funding on sports coaches and equipment has led to increased pupil activity during playtimes, greater participation in after-school sport, and improved learning in physical education lessons.

The quality of teaching is good

- The school's unrelenting focus on improving the quality of teaching has made sure that teaching is typically good, and an increasing proportion is outstanding. Parents who completed Parent View or the school survey agree that teaching is good.
- Teachers' marking is good. It tells pupils how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Pupils are able to respond promptly to this feedback and to make their work better quickly.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. They provide good support for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Relationships are warm and supportive, but there is also a clear expectation that pupils will work hard and try to do their best at all times. The vast majority of pupils respond well to these expectations and develop positive attitudes to learning.
- The accuracy and use of assessment information has improved markedly since the school was last inspected. Lesson planning is mostly good, with tasks set at the right level of difficulty for all

pupils, including the most able. However, planning does not identify enough opportunities across different subjects for pupils to practise and enhance their mathematical skills.

- Planning through topics helps pupils to see the relevance of their learning, particularly in reading and writing. Pupils are enthusiastic about the 'home challenge', a homework project linked to the topic that allows them to complete activities with their parents and siblings.
- Teachers make good use of questioning to check pupils' understanding and to help pupils to think for themselves. Pupils' responses are valued so they gain confidence and a willingness to 'have a go'. Pupils say they learn a lot in lessons and are helped to improve.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes, good use is made of the indoor and outdoor areas. Teachers and support staff are successful in helping children to develop their personal, and communication and language skills which gives them a solid foundation on which to build as they move through the school.
- Resources are used well to stimulate pupils' interest. For example, after watching a film clip of the Shepton Mallet carnival procession, Year 1 pupils were able to think of many expressive words to describe the 'floats' in the procession.
- Teaching assistants, other staff and volunteers are well briefed and provide well-focused support and encouragement for pupils, regardless of background or ability, which helps them all to learn well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are polite, friendly, well mannered and proud of their school. They demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and work together well.
- Pupils enjoy each other's company. They are active at break and lunchtime and are very keen to use the wide variety of equipment available. Pupils express how included they feel at school and how friendly other pupils are.
- Pupils feel safe at school. They are confident that if they have a problem an adult will help them to resolve it. They understand the importance of e-safety, and say that unacceptable behaviour, including instances of bullying, are rare and dealt with well by adults.
- Pupils understand how their work is marked and say that the marking and feedback they are given help them to improve. They are very confident that when they find something hard an adult will support them to get over any difficulty they are having.
- Pupils have noted that behaviour has improved over the recent past. This is because adults are more consistent in the way they deal with unacceptable behaviour, and lessons are more engaging. There is some minor disruption in lessons that slows the pace of learning, but the vast majority of pupils behave consistently well in lessons and when moving around school.
- Pupils like being at school, and the attendance of most is at least average. School evidence shows that a small minority of pupils are taken on holiday during term time or are not always brought to school even though they are well enough to attend.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, senior, subject and aspect leaders with the support of governors pursue a strategic vision for the school's ongoing improvement. This is clearly articulated and shared by all staff who work as a very cohesive team. The school has improved strongly since the last inspection; the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are now good.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is led well and successfully responds to the changing needs of children. Leadership of the provision for disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs, and for those pupils learning English as an additional language, is also effective.
- Comprehensive, but easily understood systems ensure that safeguarding practices meet statutory requirements. The school works well with a wide range of outside agencies to provide pupils and their families with good levels of care, support and guidance. The use made of

translators to support parents who do not speak English is effective and helps the school to engage positively with them. The school acknowledges that its work with a small minority of parents is not effective enough in improving their children's attendance.

- Relationships throughout the school are strong and reinforce the high expectations for pupils' behaviour and achievement. Equality of opportunity for all is promoted strongly to ensure that there is no discrimination in school.
- Monitoring of teaching is increasingly effective and informs a comprehensive programme of staff training. Improving pupils' phonic skills has helped to make their reading and writing better and the introduction of a whole-school calculation policy has improved pupils' skills in this aspect of mathematics.
- Revising curriculum planning has made sure that pupils develop their knowledge and skills in a systematic way. Pupils' interests are taken into account so that their learning has relevance, and the school grounds, visits and visitors are used to good effect to enrich pupils' experiences. However, curriculum planning and, consequently, teachers' lesson planning do not identify enough opportunities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- The pupil premium funding has been used well to improve the attainment of pupils eligible to receive support. There is a clear expectation for a strong impact of the spending of the sports funding.
- Accurate school self-evaluation together with the management of teachers' performance informs the school improvement plan. There is an unstinting focus on improving teaching so that pupils are helped to achieve as well as they can.
- The local authority provides light touch support to this good school. The school works constructively with other schools. It has actively sought external evaluation of the quality of its work and responded to the areas identified for improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are fully involved in the school improvement process. Through their own monitoring procedures and by working closely with senior leaders and other staff they make sure they are well informed and able to contribute to school self-evaluation. They have a clear understanding of performance data and of the school's strengths and weaknesses, including in the quality of teaching. Senior leaders are held to account for the school's performance. Governors provide a balance of challenge and support that has supported the school to make good progress since the last inspection. Governors know the difference that the spending of the pupil premium funding has made to pupils' progress and achievement. They are clear about how the sports funding has been spent and what difference it is expected to make. Performance management procedures, including the link to salary increases, tackling underperformance and the professional development of staff, are well understood.

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	123660
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	426759
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	146
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kate Lovell
Headteacher	Honorina Thompson
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 December 2011
Telephone number	01749 342322
Fax number	01749 346060
Email address	office@sheptonmallet.somerset.sch.uk

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