

Shafton Primary Academy

High Street, Shafton, South Yorkshire, S72 8QA

Inspection dates

3–4 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires Improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires Improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires Improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires Improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an academy that requires improvement. It is not good because

- There are not enough pupils from all groups making the expected amount of progress. Currently it is not as good in Key Stage 2 as it is in Key Stage 1.
- The quality of teaching requires improvement to be good because throughout the academy it is inconsistent particularly at Key Stage 2. This is because teachers do not always plan lessons to make sure pupils are given work that gets the best out of them. Not enough lessons move at an appropriate pace so that all pupils are engaged in learning.
- Pupils practise individual literacy and numeracy skills regularly but do not learn how to link them together and use this knowledge in different contexts.
- Marking is inconsistent. The teachers' comments do not always show pupils how they can improve their work and respond appropriately.
- Some teaching assistants are not always effective in supporting pupils' learning.
- Leadership, management and governance require improvement and are not having a sufficiently effective impact on teaching and pupils' achievement. Not all leaders and managers, especially those new to post, evaluate the monitoring activities they undertake so that they can identify clearly the next steps they need to take in order to raise pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching rapidly.
- Pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain in the 21st century is underdeveloped.
- The effectiveness of the support provided by the sponsor is limited.

The academy has the following strengths

- Children get off to a good start in the reception class, make secure progress and are well-prepared when they start Year 1.
- Pupils enjoy the afternoon topic lessons and the out-of-school activities provided for them.
- The newly formed parents' group is helping pupils to fund-raise and learn about people who are less fortunate than themselves.
- Senior leaders and governors have a clear understanding of what needs to be improved and how this will happen.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 27 part-lessons taught by all teachers; the majority of these observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher and the head of school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, the Chair and two members of the governing body and the Regional Director of the Academies Enterprise Trust (AET) who are the sponsors of the academy.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their work in lessons, looked at their books, heard pupils read and met with groups of pupils.
- Prior to the inspection, there were insufficient responses to view on the on-line survey (Parent View); 21 responses were received during the inspection and these, together with a recent parental survey, were considered by inspectors.
- Inspectors also took account of the 27 questionnaires returned by members of the academy staff.
- Inspectors observed the work of the academy, looked at progress data, performance management information, records relating to behaviour and safety as well as documents concerning safeguarding.

Inspection team

Marianne Young, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Nina Heron

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this academy

- Shafton Primary Academy opened in December 2012 and is sponsored by AET following the closure of the predecessor school, Shafton Primary School. The headteacher was the headteacher at the predecessor school. She now divides her time equally between Shafton Primary Academy and another local academy also sponsored by AET. The head of school is responsible for the day-to-day organisation and management of the academy during the headteacher's absence. Some staff were at the predecessor school; three members of staff in Key Stage 2 took up their posts in September 2013.
- This is an average-sized primary academy.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is average. The pupil premium funding is additional government funding provided for children in local authority care, those from armed service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational need is average.
- The first set of data for the academy has not been published.

What does the academy need to do to improve further?

- Rapidly increase the amount of good and better teaching in all subjects so that standards of achievement and the rate of progress improves by:
 - making sure that teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve is appropriately high enough
 - ensuring that lessons move at a brisk pace and no learning time is wasted
 - reducing teachers' formulaic approach to teaching literacy and numeracy skills so that pupils can use their imagination and creativity skills
 - ensuring that teachers' marking in all subjects is thorough, helpful to all pupils so that they can understand how to improve their work
 - making sure that teaching assistants have the necessary skills so that they can support pupils effectively.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels and accelerate the pace of improvement by:
 - ensuring that all monitoring and training activities have a clear purpose and are evaluated thoroughly
 - providing additional support for those leaders so that their enthusiasm is harnessed and that they have the skills necessary for them to do their job effectively
 - monitoring carefully the headteacher's current commitments.
- Provide appropriate teaching for all pupils so that their understanding of how to live in 21st century Britain is enhanced.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children enter the Reception class with skills expected for their age. Their understanding of the world and being imaginative are weaker skills but their use of language and ability to use sounds to work out unfamiliar words is strong.
- The progress pupils make as they move into Key Stage 1 classes is secured due to a joined-up approach between teachers which ensures that activities are carefully planned to meet individual needs. As a result, by the end of Year 2, academy data and inspectors' observations suggests that the majority of pupils, including the more-able, make good progress and reach above average standards.
- Attainment across the academy is rising but is not yet securely average because of previous weaknesses in teaching that had led to inadequate achievement. Lesson observations, academy data and analysis of pupils' books indicate there is variability in pupils' attainment between classes as pupils move through Key Stage 2.
- Pupils from all ability groups are making progress but their rate of progress is inconsistent in different classes and between reading, writing and mathematics. Consequently, some groups of pupils, including the more-able, need to accelerate the progress they make in order to reach nationally expected levels and the targets set by the academy.
- There is an improving picture between the performance of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and others, but it is not yet consistent in all year groups.
- The progress made by pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is similar to that of others in the academy and varies from class to class and between subjects.
- The pupil premium fund is used in a variety of ways, for example to provide specialist programmes for pupils and to provide small-group activities or one-to-one support. In addition it helps to fund enrichment days and educational visits. This work clearly supports leaders' commitment to equal opportunities and to eradicate discrimination.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Inspectors saw, and leaders agree that the quality of teaching is better in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 compared to teaching in Key Stage 2. This is because in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, the pace of lessons, the challenge for all pupils and the support given by teaching assistants combine to ensure all pupils make good progress. However, even within this positive picture, there are pockets of weaker performance where pupils' progress is less effective.
- During Key Stage 2, lesson observations, academy records and work in pupils' books confirm a formulaic approach to teaching literacy and numeracy in particular. Pupils are taught specific skills regularly but are unclear how they link together. This approach restricts pupils' creativity and enjoyment of these subjects and thus they make limited progress.
- Marking is done regularly with teachers posing some useful questions. Pupils do respond but not consistently and too often they are asked to repeat particular skills, for example re-do a mathematical calculation or include a range of connectives in their literacy book, without being given clear examples of what to do. Inaccuracies in spelling and basic sentence construction are overlooked when teachers mark books. Consequently these important skills are not developed systematically.
- In too many lessons, teachers' expectations of pupils' capabilities are not finely tuned enough so that all ability groups, particularly the more-able, are not stretched sufficiently. Although less-able pupils are often given help by teachers and teaching assistants, too often they are told the answers and helped to finish a task which restricts their independence and understanding.
- Pupils are encouraged to support each other in lessons and they do this willingly which develops

their own confidence well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- Around the academy pupils speak politely to inspectors and other adults and they respond quickly to instructions or when told to behave sensibly. Inspectors observed some boisterous behaviour at break or lunchtime; however, pupils know not to overstep the agreed standards of behaviour.
- Pupils' attitudes in lessons are mixed because the quality of teaching, in Key Stage 2 particularly, sometimes fails to capture their attention or because the tasks they are given do not challenge them well enough. Consequently, a few pupils can become restless or mischievous and the progress they make is limited.
- Attendance is currently broadly average and exclusions this term are very low which supports the mostly positive attitudes pupils have to the academy. There are a number of systems in place to improve attendance further; however these are yet to have a noticeable impact on some families who continue to take holidays in term time.
- Pupils told inspectors they feel safe, welcome 'Behaviour Watch' and understand the sanctions and reward systems in place. Records show that any misdemeanour, especially bullying is investigated thoroughly and detailed records kept. Pupils understand that poor behaviour, such as name-calling and fighting is unacceptable. However their understanding of and implications in society when using homophobic or racial language is underdeveloped.
- About half the parents who responded to Parent View and a similar proportion of staff who completed the Ofsted questionnaire had concerns about behaviour and bullying. Inspectors undertook a range of activities to investigate these issues and could find no evidence to substantiate their views.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- During this term, senior leaders and governors have implemented systems and provided training designed to secure improvements in teaching and a consistent approach to moving the academy forward. It is however, too early to evaluate the impact of this work.
- The headteacher is well-supported by the head of school and other middle leaders are starting to take responsibility for their subject areas. Those responsible for developing the thematic curriculum, (topic work), are enthusiastic and work well as a team. Nevertheless, it is early days and changes to the curriculum for everyone are recent developments. As a result there is no measurable evidence that the changes, although welcomed by both pupils and teachers, is making a difference to pupils' understanding of a range of subjects. Strong links are being made between the topic work and external visits. Pupils in Key Stage 1, for example, were remembering and using information from their visit to Clumber Park as they made their collages. This approach is helping to improve pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The quality of teaching is monitored regularly. However, information from this work is not used to inform appropriate training sessions for all teachers. To date, the emphasis has been on delivering generic and corporate activities. Nevertheless during joint observations, senior leaders clearly identified strengths in lessons.
- Performance management targets have been set for staff and are assessed against the teacher standards. It is, however, too soon to evaluate whether they are making a difference to teachers' performance.
- The academy improvement plan identifies priorities for improvement with an emphasis on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy, the latter identified as particularly important. Although milestones and measurable indicators are included regularly, some initiatives, for example, improving mental mathematics and the impact that additional funding makes on pupil progress, are not identified clearly.

- Links with the community are improving significantly because of the recently formed Friends of Shafton Primary Academy (FOSPA). Pupils and their families are taking part in fund-raising events for national and local causes which are contributing well to pupils' understanding of and participation in charity.
- The regional director from AET keeps regular contact with the academy. The Trust has provided consultants to support leadership and mathematics and is working to ensure that its work is appropriate and bespoke to address the needs of Shafton Academy. However, it is unclear whether this work will continue and there is an urgent need to clarify the situation.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well-organised, pro-active in monitoring the time the headteacher spends supporting another academy and ensuring that the sponsor provides appropriate support. Their rhetoric is backed up with clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching and the progress made by different groups of pupils. They receive helpful documents from various sources which they use to determine how best to challenge and hold leaders to account. However, they recognise that some initiatives and actions do not have clear measurable indicators. Governors are aware of the additional funding that the academy receives, for example the pupil premium and sports monies and how this is used to support pupils. They ensure that the performance management of the headteacher and all safeguarding arrangements meet current 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

Unique reference number	139004
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	433612

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Will Howlett
Headteacher	Ruth Lyons
Date of previous school inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01226 710386
Fax number	01226 781770
Email address	contactus@shaftonprimaryacademy.org

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