

Shirley Community Nursery and Primary School

Nuffield Road, Chesterton, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB4 1TF

Inspection dates 15–16 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Good teaching enables the pupils to achieve well from their starting points. Rates of progress are improving.
- Very good leadership is focused on improving attainment further. The effective oversight of teaching supports its good quality.
- Pupils from traveller families are well supported by committed staff and make good progress.
- The spacious environment supports the pupils' education effectively. Pupils respect the environment.
- Pupils' behaviour is good overall and they understand how to keep themselves safe.
- Planning for further development is clear. Team and subject leaders are knowledgeable about their responsibilities and undertake them well.
- The governing body is effective in its role. Members have good systems in place to fulfil their duties and are able to both support and challenge the school.
- Staff take very good care of the pupils and have the best interest of the pupils at heart.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' achievement in writing, particularly spelling, lags behind in reading.
- Staff do not always look deeply enough when they are identifying and tackling the most important causes of individual pupils' learning difficulties.

Information about this inspection

- Twenty-seven lessons or parts of lessons were observed, of which four were jointly observed with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Discussions took place with the headteacher, senior leadership team, various members of staff, a group of pupils, four governors including the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, and a local authority adviser.
- Inspectors observed the teaching of reading and listened to pupils read.
- Samples of work were studied and also information about pupils' progress.
- Documentation for safeguarding children and records of pupils' behaviour were examined.
- The inspectors looked at the 24 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View and the 254 responses to the school's recent questionnaire to parents.
- The views of staff were obtained and 67 responded to a staff written questionnaire.

Inspection team

Peter Sudworth, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Lynn Lowery	Additional Inspector
Terence Cook	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average two-form entry primary school with 14 classes together with a Nursery, which has 52 part-time places. Traditionally, about half the Nursery children transfer to the Reception classes.
- Children begin the Nursery in the September after their third birthday and, if places are still available, another group of children is admitted in the following January.
- About half the school's pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much higher than found nationally.
- One-fifth of the pupils are from the traveller community.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is broadly similar to the national average. Twenty-three different languages are spoken.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional government funding to be used for pupils who are looked after by the local authority, known to be eligible for free school meals or from families with a parent in the armed forces, is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The percentage of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the usual times is above average.
- The school meets government's floor target. This is the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A daily breakfast club and after school club are provided by the school. These were included in this inspection.
- A children's centre is part of the school's complex but it is managed separately and did not form part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' attainment and rates of progress in writing by:
 - ensuring that pupils learn words that they use frequently and spell wrongly, and alert them at frequent intervals about spelling rules
 - improving pupils' correct use of grammar by reminding them about it in all their learning
 - following up on the corrections and recommendations in teachers' marking to make sure that pupils learn from their mistakes
 - referring pupils more regularly to their writing targets so that they can make more rapid progress towards them.
- Look more deeply at what may be causing the learning difficulties for individual pupils who have a disability or special educational needs and consider all the evidence available to ensure that teachers are tackling the most important causes.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children's skills and experiences when they begin the Nursery and Reception classes are below that typical for their age. While making good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, attainment at the end of Reception is below average.
- Increasing rates of progress in Year 1 are shown by the greater proportion of children meeting the phonics (the sounds that letters make) national standard. In 2013, this percentage was higher than that found nationally.
- Although pupils work hard at building up basic skills and make good progress in Key Stage 1, attainment in reading, mathematics and writing is below average. Nevertheless, attainment has risen in writing in Key Stage 1 over the past three years. Overall, girls have tended to do better than the boys.
- Although below average, attainment has also been rising in Key Stage 2, with a very slight decline in 2013 due to a high percentage of pupils with low starting points. Pupils whose first language is other than English and pupils who receive all their education at the school make better progress than those who join partway through.
- Progress rates of pupils in Year 6 in 2013 were very close to those nationally, both for expected and better than expected progress. The gap between those pupils known to be entitled to support through the pupil premium grant and others has closed significantly by two terms overall and by one and a half years in reading.
- Pupils' attainment in writing is lower than reading and mathematics. Data indicates that the overall progress of current pupils of all ages is good, although pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs do not always make as much progress as other groups.
- Traveller pupils make good progress. This is because the school has good arrangements for their continuing education when travelling and for supporting them on their return. When they are not travelling, their regular attendance sustains their good progress. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those whose first language is other than English make similar rates of progress to other pupils.
- The proportion of more-able pupils reaching the higher levels in 2013 was similar overall to this group nationally. It was better in mathematics but it was lower in writing. Latest data indicates that the progress of pupils with disabilities or special educational needs has been slower than other groups in the school.
- It is difficult to assess the impact of the sports funding fully on pupils' achievement as it has only recently been received but more pupils are already attending after-school sports clubs.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good relationships between staff and pupils, well planned lessons and effective use of resources help to promote pupils' understanding and broaden their skills. Teaching is most often good and occasionally outstanding. The quality of the teaching seen during the inspection reflects that observed by the school's leaders over time.

- The teaching of reading is good. Teaching assistants are used well with groups and individuals in need of additional help in all lessons, which supports pupils' progress.
- Pupils mostly benefit from well-structured and meaningful introductions to lessons so that they successfully focus their thinking by writing down answers or thoughts on small boards. Pupils talk to a partner about questions, which also keeps their minds active and helps to develop their speaking and listening skills. Teachers listen carefully to pupils' responses and adjust their questions accordingly. At times, more able pupils do not get on with more appropriately challenging work when they already understand what is being discussed.
- Use of large electronic screens successfully supports pupils' concentration. For example, in a Year 1 class, the pupils had watched a video of a toymaker as a stimulus for writing and they responded well.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The children have lots of interesting things to do to help them learn. Role-play areas, such as the café, help them take their first steps in writing and support their speaking skills.
- Teachers make good reference to subject-specific vocabulary and encourage pupils to use this consistently when giving answers or planning how to tackle a problem.
- Marking is up to date, making good reference to work done well and where improvements can be made. However, it does not always give sufficient attention to improvements needed in grammar. Teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils follow up marking comments.
- Insufficient attention is paid to reminding pupils about grammar and spelling, in all subjects. The current system for writing out words that are spelled incorrectly is not leading to enough improvement in spelling. Teachers do not make sufficiently regular references to spelling rules or to pupils' own writing targets.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils, including children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, is good and this is also indicated by past records of behaviour. The caring atmosphere, and concern and sensitivity to different individuals' needs help secure a harmonious learning environment. Most pupils' attitudes are consequently positive to learning. They want to do their best and try hard. In lessons, pupils almost always behave well and listen carefully. Parents are very positive about behaviour.
- Pupils are polite to adults and other pupils, and move around the school sensibly. They play happily together. Some pupils act as buddies to Reception children at a newly established school nearby. Year 6 pupils take responsibilities seriously and a group has just been trained to support other pupils who need help.
- Pupils' knowledge of keeping themselves safe is good. The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good and ensures that they understand the potential dangers of the internet and know the importance of safety on the roads. Pupils are clear what bullying is, and know what to do if it should happen.
- Pupils have a keen sense of justice and are keen to report the occasional bullying or racist incident. The school handles these well, as confirmed by parents and pupils alike. In assemblies pupils listen attentively and respond well to the themes, indicating a good awareness of moral

principles. They demonstrate good social skills at lunchtimes and at the breakfast and after-school clubs.

- Attendance for the non-traveller pupils is broadly average. The attendance of travellers has increased significantly over the last four years. Pupils enjoy school and see the advantages of regular education. One said, 'Teachers give us a chance.'

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is supported very well by the deputy headteachers. Together, their very strong leadership is moving the school steadily forward. A rigorous focus on improving attainment and teaching quality further is improving pupils' progress.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage leader, subject and team leaders know what is expected of them and they fulfil their roles effectively.
- Reviews of teaching and learning are organised well and help teachers to improve their teaching. This has supported an increase in the amount of good and better teaching. The support of the local authority has been beneficial, particularly in helping to judge the quality of teaching, and in supporting literacy and mathematics. Links with other schools result in joint training opportunities, which develop staff's expertise.
- Regular analyses of pupils' progress enable concerns about individual pupils to be addressed. The progress of individual more-able pupils is tracked well, but they are not always followed as a group. All the circumstances which might affect the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are not considered thoroughly enough to discover reasons for individual pupils' slower progress when it occurs.
- The arrangements for reviewing teachers' performance and setting targets linked to the Teachers' Standards are good. Targets are very clearly worded, as are the means to measure the amount of success. Similarly, school development and improvement plan objectives are very detailed. Consequently, it is easy to judge progress towards them.
- Pupil premium money has been spent effectively, for example on a teacher to assist pupils who find difficulty with reading, a teacher to work with pupils individually and extra teaching assistants to teach special programmes of work.
- The school's grant for sport has been used for a member of staff with good physical education qualifications to work alongside teachers, which has helped them develop their expertise. The range of out-of-school sporting activities has been widened and more pupils now take part.
- The school works hard to engage parents in helping their children. The school's recent parental survey shows that the vast majority think highly of the school and feel that their children are making good progress.
- The school provides pupils with a broad range of learning experiences and increases their skills in different subjects. Although writing is not yet developed well enough, there are good opportunities for pupils to practise their writing in different subjects. A wide range of extra-curricular activities is offered by staff and these are well supported by pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body engages well with staff and pupils, and members help and challenge the

school. Some governors have particular expertise in analysing data.

- Links with classes and different subject leaders support their knowledge of teaching quality. They understand the school's strengths and its areas for development. Governors know about the spending arrangements of the sport and pupil premium grants, and the positive results achieved. They understand performance arrangements and the link to the Teachers' Standards. They are familiar with the school's systems for rewarding good teaching and tackling underperformance.
- Arrangements to safeguard children are well considered and meet current government requirements. Pupils' care has a high profile and the governing body makes good arrangements to manage the breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The governor overseeing the achievements of traveller pupils gives important messages to the traveller community about the value of attending school regularly, with positive results.

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	110663
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	440355

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	444
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Iain Smith
Headteacher	Angela Leach
Date of previous school inspection	18 November 2010
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