

Sholing Infant School

Heath Road, Sholing, Southampton, SO19 2QF

Inspection dates 29 – 30 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The achievement of pupils at Sholing Infant School is outstanding. They make rapid progress in their learning and their attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is well above the national average.
- Teaching is exciting and engaging and lessons are well planned by all staff. This enables pupils of all abilities to learn very effectively.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage receive an excellent start to school because teaching and standards of care are outstanding and children make exceptional progress.
- The school is led by an ambitious headteacher who is relentless in her commitment to improvements for pupils. Her passion and inspirational leadership have been key factors in developing Sholing as an outstanding learning environment.
- All leaders and managers, including governors, share the high ambitions and commitment of the headteacher and work effectively as a team to maintain the highest levels of achievement and personal development for all pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are outstanding. They enjoy learning, particularly the extra challenges that are built in to lessons. They are proud of their school and take good care of each other.
- Pupils feel safe in school and trust the adults to help them at any time.
- There is a wide variety of subjects and activities which engage pupils very well in their learning. Pupils are well prepared for junior school.
- With outstanding school leadership and a committed staff team, Sholing Infant School has the capacity to continue to provide exceptionally high quality education for all its pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons. Six of these were undertaken jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, curriculum coordinators, the school council, members of the governing body, the emotional literacy support assistant and the teacher and teaching assistant responsible for supporting children who receive additional government funding. In addition, a telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors analysed the 42 responses from Parent View (the online survey on the Ofsted website). Inspectors also considered responses to the annual school surveys for parents from the last two years. Twenty staff questionnaires were also analysed.
- Inspectors talked to parents on the playground before and after school.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of the school’s work and consulted the self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, records of pupils’ progress, pupils’ work, minutes of governing body meetings, records of attendance and a number of documents related to pupils’ behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Sarah Varnom, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Beddard

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Sholing is a smaller-than average sized infant school but is expanding to become a three-form entry throughout the school starting in September 2014.
- The majority of pupils are from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funds to support pupils in care, children from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is slightly below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop the coaching skills of staff so that they are able to help each other and those in other local schools in providing consistently outstanding teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- The majority of children entering the Early Years Foundation Stage have skills that are typically below those expected for their age. Skills are particularly low in reading and writing. The children make outstanding progress in all areas of learning as they receive exceptional support from adults in a stimulating learning environment and are well prepared for Key Stage 1.
- Positive attitudes to learning ensure pupils make rapid and sustained progress across all subjects. By the end of Key Stage 1 attainment is well above average in all subjects. This has been the case for most of the past five years.
- Pupils love reading and this is a particular strength of the school. The attractive library is well used by pupils and their parents and there is a good selection of books. The 'Readathon' is very popular and pupils enjoy collecting stamps on their cards for every book they read. By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils are reading fluently.
- Pupils receiving pupil premium funding achieve at least as well as other pupils in school. The excellent teaching that the pupils receive in class and the interventions led by exceptionally skilled support staff ensure that these pupils make outstanding progress and attain at a similar level to others.
- Achievement of the most able pupils is well above average and the proportions of pupils attaining above national expectations has increased year on year over the last three years. They benefit from challenging extension activities which support them in their learning.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making rapid progress and their achievement is outstanding. They receive appropriate support and work in class is well matched to their needs.
- The small numbers of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make outstanding progress. Like all other pupils, they benefit from the high expectations of staff and a positive attitude to learning.
- Regular and rigorous checking of achievement in reading, writing and mathematics ensures every pupil can make outstanding progress.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching over time is never less than consistently good with much being outstanding. Some teachers have benefited from high quality coaching from the deputy headteacher. This has given them opportunities to reflect on their work and continually improve on their practice.
- Teachers promote learning through their inspirational teaching and enthusiasm. They have high expectations of all pupils and work hard to give every pupil the best chance of success for the next stage in their learning. No time is wasted in lessons and the pace of learning contributes to positive outcomes.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school to learn because they are clear about what they need to learn next to improve and really want to succeed. They enjoy challenge in lessons and are confident to try things out, often working on their own and in small groups.
- The school has a well-planned and structured approach to developing pupils' skills as they move through the school. This is seen in a variety of subjects which leads to highly effective learning.
- Teachers provide excellent opportunities for learning across subjects. For example, pupils learning about animals in the Savannah were learning to use their collective notes to write an information text that would capture the imagination. One pupil described the scene and used the phrase, 'the salmon pink Savannah sky'.
- Outstanding teaching effectively engages and challenges all pupils, including the most able pupils, and as a result their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is well above national averages.

- Teachers' marking helps pupils to improve their work, as well as appropriately rewarding success. This high quality oral and written feedback helps pupils to make rapid progress in all subjects. On arrival in the morning a Year 2 class sat down immediately to look at the previous day's feedback from their teacher and respond to the 'Even Better If' comments he had written.
- Appropriate homework is set to support learning. Photographs of 'homework heroes' with their homemade igloos show the high level of engagement and enjoyment from pupils and parents alike.
- Support from additional adults for individuals and groups is highly effective in contributing to outstanding pupil progress. They help to ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of what they are doing well and how to improve their work in future lessons.
- Pupils keep their 'target tigers' up to date and teachers use these to assess progress and plan next learning steps. This means that learning is ongoing and relevant to pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Their very positive attitudes to work have a significant impact on the high standards achieved across the school. Pupils are very proud of their work and are keen to share it with visitors.
- Pupils behave extremely well in and outside classrooms. For example, at lunchtime the halls are full of children eating with impeccable manners. There is an acceptable level of conversation and nobody needs to raise their voice.
- Pupils are extremely polite, courteous and respectful to everyone in school and trust one another and the adults around them. If they have a worry they know that somebody will listen to them and help them.
- Pupils respect their school and look after it extremely well. There is no litter and the environment is well cared for. This is down to the headteacher's high expectations of staff and pupils. She is clear about the school needing to be clean, welcoming and well resourced and all respond well to this.
- Pupils are not concerned about bullying but say that if anyone is ever unkind or naughty they will have to see a teacher and it will be put right.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The school has robust systems in place by which they monitor pupils' behaviour. Any cases are rigorously followed up and communicated to parents.
- All staff are appropriately trained to levels in line with their responsibilities regarding pupils' safety. The school works effectively with outside agencies where they feel that pupils' safety may be at risk.
- All parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire and those interviewed believe that the school looks after their child and that their child feels safe.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and know how to stay safe when they are not in school. They are very clear about staying safe on the internet and the school has taught them simple steps to follow which they clearly understand.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher of Sholing is inspirational and absolutely committed to ensuring all pupils get the very best education and care. With the support of a strong team and ambitious governing body she has led the school from good to outstanding.
- The school is a very positive place and there is a culture which supports learning and excellent behaviour. There are robust procedures in place for checking on the quality of the school's work and the high quality leadership team has worked very successfully on raising standards through a focus on the quality of teaching. As a direct result of this work, outcomes for pupils continue to

be above national expectations.

- Leaders recognise the potential to further develop the coaching skills of staff so that they can support each other and those in local schools in providing very high quality teaching.
- In conjunction with the governing body leaders have developed a clear school improvement plan which is regularly reviewed. They have made very good financial decisions which support the delivery of this plan. For example, the appointment of key staff to support the development of reading for pupils in receipt of the pupil premium has seen their standards in reading rise dramatically.
- Some of the additional government sports funding has been invested in a specialist coach from the nearby technology college who works alongside staff to develop their skills and knowledge in a number of activities. By engaging staff in this way the school is building capacity for the future and pupils are developing healthier lifestyles and increased levels of fitness. Funds are also directed to ensure that those in receipt of pupil premium funding have access to high quality sporting opportunities. Demand presently exceeds the supply and the school is looking to develop further opportunities for all pupils.
- All teachers and teaching assistants have challenging targets that link to Teachers' Standards and pupil performance. Salary progression is appropriately linked to the outcomes from staff appraisals.
- Leaders with responsibility for developing English and mathematics in school are actively working with staff to develop their new curriculum. They have a very accurate understanding of the data available for their subject and make good use of this to develop good quality action plans to ensure standards remain high.
- The school has developed a broad curriculum that appeals to the pupils. There is clear evidence of opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across different subjects. Lessons often begin with a question to capture pupils' imagination and, supported by strong teaching, learning moves on rapidly.
- There is a lot of evidence of social, moral, spiritual and cultural education across the school. For example, pupils have been making outstanding progress in music lessons resulting in a performance which uses a variety of instruments and rhythms.
- The school has very good relationships with parents and the local community. For example, in conjunction with the City College in Southampton they offer family numeracy and literacy support groups. Parents who in the past have been reluctant to engage with school now do so with confidence and are able to learn alongside their children.
- The local authority has provided light-touch support for this outstanding school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors work very effectively to support the school's development. They have a clear understanding about pupils' progress and how it relates to that of other pupils nationally. As a result of this they ask challenging questions to hold leaders to account. They speak confidently and accurately about the school's performance and the impact that teaching has on pupil outcomes. Governors have not been afraid to tackle underperformance and have established a revised performance management policy to address this alongside rewarding outstanding performance. The budget is well managed and spending decisions are based on improving outcomes for pupils. Governors keep themselves up to date by attending relevant training. They work as a team and new governors are made welcome and receive good induction.

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	116108
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	431437

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 – 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Teresa Diggle
Headteacher	Mrs Lisa Houghton
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2009
Telephone number	02380447447
Fax number	02380442177
Email address	head@sholinginfantschool.org.uk

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