

Sharlston Community School

Hammer Lane, Sharlston Common, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF4 1DH

Inspection dates 26–27 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- From their starting points, all groups of pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are above average by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6.
- Children settle well into the early years and make a good start to their school life. The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is particularly good in the Reception class and children make rapid progress.
- The school is well led and managed and there has been a strong focus on continuous improvement, raising standards and the quality of teaching throughout the school since the previous inspection. This good practice is now shared with other schools in the locality.
- The governing body knows the school well and is knowledgeable and experienced. Governors offer a good balance of challenge and support.
- Teaching is good overall. Pupils find learning interesting and benefit from challenging questions which deepen pupils' knowledge and enable staff to assess their understanding.
- Pupils behave well, have a good attitude to learning and feel safe and well cared for. They know how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet.
- The whole school environment is very well maintained and there are vibrant displays of high quality work throughout the school. Everyone takes a pride in their surroundings.
- The curriculum engages pupils well. It inspires them to learn and teaches them how to keep safe and also ensures that their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In mathematics, the checking of pupils' progress is not consistently effective and does not always lead to the necessary further challenge.
- Marking does not always tell pupils precisely enough how they can improve their work. Pupils do not consistently respond to teachers' marking so that they can learn from their errors.
- In the Nursery class, some activities are not sufficiently purposeful to support the best possible progress, particularly in early number and reading development.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 19 lessons or part-lessons. Two observations were undertaken jointly with the acting headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other teachers, pupils, two governors and a representative from the local authority. Informal meetings were held with parents as they arrived at the school with their children in the morning.
- Inspectors took account of the 30 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View,) of two emails that were received and of the 26 completed staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors looked at a range of school documents, including information about safeguarding, behaviour, pupils' attendance, the analysis and tracking of pupils' progress, school improvement plans and the school's view of its own performance.

Inspection team

Lindsay Hall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Doreen Davenport

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Sharlston Community School is an average-sized primary school. It has one class per year group from Nursery to Year 6. The Nursery admits children part time in the term after their third birthday. Reception children attend full time.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through additional funding known as the pupil premium is average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There has been significant staff turbulence since the previous inspection and the headteacher has recently had to take long-term absence. The deputy headteacher has stepped up to the role of acting headteacher. The early years coordinator was appointed in June 2013. The assistant headteacher and Key Stage 1 co-ordinator were appointed in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching and achievement by ensuring that:
 - all groups of pupils are challenged and moved on to harder work so they make rapid gains in their learning during mathematics lessons
 - marking always gives clear guidance about how pupils can improve their work and that pupils respond to this marking and thus learn from their mistakes
 - all activities in the Nursery class are sufficiently challenging and have a clear learning purpose, particularly to support early number and reading development.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The senior leadership team and governors have a clear vision for the school and have driven through significant improvements, taking decisive action to improve teaching and raise standards since the previous inspection. They know the school well and their understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development is accurate and used to inform the detailed school improvement plan.
- The acting headteacher, working closely with the assistant headteacher, staff and governors, form an effective, cohesive team with a clear focus on continuing to improve what they do. Their good practice is now shared with other schools in the locality to support improvement elsewhere.
- Performance management is used well to promote high quality teaching and to increase teachers' accountability for the progress pupils make in their class. Through a range of monitoring activities, the senior leadership team is quick to identify any aspects in need of improvement and provides coaching and support, where necessary.
- The school has a welcoming atmosphere and parents speak positively about the school. They say staff are approachable and if they have any concerns, these are dealt with straight away.
- Through the strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across the school, pupils are taught to value all people and know that discrimination is wrong. Daily assemblies and the weekly teaching of Religious Education is used well to broaden pupils' knowledge and understanding of world faiths and cultures, promoting tolerance and respect and preparing them for life in modern British society.
- Subject leaders are growing in confidence and their impact can be seen in many key areas. They now take part in monitoring activities across the school, checking the work in books and sharing their expertise with other teachers, developing their subject provision to a higher level. There is a vibrant, topic-based creative curriculum in line with the new National Curriculum, introduced in September 2014. It covers the full range of subjects and a new assessment system. Systems of assessment to replace levels are already in use and have been shared with parents. Pupils enjoy their learning and are keen to do independent research and practical homework tasks connected with their topics, as well as completing regular mathematics and literacy homework. There are colourful displays of high quality work in the corridors and classrooms, celebrating pupils' success and effort.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well and makes sure that no group of pupils achieve less well than others. All pupils, whatever their needs, are fully involved in the life of the school. A rigorous check is kept on each individual pupil's progress. Pupils at risk of falling behind are quickly picked up and support provided. As a result, progress has speeded up in reading, writing and mathematics for all groups of pupils since the previous inspection.
- Pupil premium funding is being used effectively to ensure equality of opportunity and to help disadvantaged pupils learn at a faster rate than they would otherwise. A variety of interventions are in place to support these pupils and the impact of these is reviewed regularly.
- The extra funding available to support physical education and sporting opportunities is used effectively. Pupils have been offered places at after-school clubs and enjoy taking part in inter-school sports events and competitions, swimming and additional activities, such as dodge ball and cheerleading.
- Safeguarding procedures meet requirements. Systems to record concerns and any actions taken are extremely robust and regularly reviewed by relevant members of staff. The school works closely with a range of outside agencies to support individual pupils and families.
- Since the previous inspection, all staff and governors have welcomed the excellent support and challenge from the local authority to improve teaching and pupils' progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a wide range of skills and experience to help support the school. Governors are fully involved and engage in regular dialogue with the school, making frequent visits to see for themselves how the school is doing. They also receive detailed information from the leadership and the local authority. They scrutinise data about pupils' achievements carefully and with understanding and ask leaders challenging questions to make sure the school is continuing to improve.
 - Governors check that performance management is used well to improve teaching and that teachers get sufficient support to help them improve their practice. Governors know how the pupil premium funding has been used to improve the attainment and achievement of those entitled to support through it and check that all the school's finances are spent effectively.
 - Governors regularly take part in training courses to make sure they are fully up to date with all their areas of responsibility. They ensure that their statutory obligations are met, including safeguarding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Most parents, staff and governors agree that pupils behave well and are kept safe in school. Pupils also share this view and clearly know the difference between right and wrong.
- Pupils are proud of their school and look smart in their uniforms. The school environment is well maintained and the absence of litter or graffiti reflects how well pupils respect their school.
- This is a happy, caring school and pupils are polite and friendly to adults and one another. They conduct themselves well in lessons and around school and enjoy each other's company at playtimes. The school has a behaviour management system that is fully understood by pupils and used consistently across the school. Pupils understand how good behaviour helps them learn.
- Attitudes to learning are good and pupils are keen to work hard and to challenge themselves to do even better. Work in books is neatly presented and pupils respond quickly to teachers' instructions. Occasionally, when teaching is not as effective as it mostly is, a few pupils lose concentration and become fidgety, not working as well as they should. During the inspection, no disruptive behaviour was seen in lessons interrupting the flow of learning and pupils insisted this was the norm.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Regular safety checks are carried out and staff receive appropriate training to ensure that pupils are safe.
- Through lessons and events such as anti-bullying week, pupils have a good understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They are adamant there is no bullying in school, but feel confident that if they had any friendship problems, an adult in school would help them sort it out.
- Attendance has improved in recent years and is now average. Rigorous checks on pupils' attendance and working partnerships with other professionals help to keep pupils safe. Pupils are punctual to school and lessons start promptly.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good across the school and improving. Performance management has been used effectively to raise standards in teaching. The school's own checks, work seen in books during the inspection and learning in lessons show that pupils in all classes make good progress during their time in school.
- Numeracy and literacy, including spelling, punctuation and grammar are taught well and pupils are given many opportunities to write at length for a range of purposes and in different styles. In mathematics, for example, there has been a focus on securing basic skills and pupils are encouraged to apply these to solve mathematical problems in different contexts across a range of subjects.
- Lesson activities are planned carefully to build on what pupils already know and to meet the needs of all pupils in the class. There are increasingly high expectations of pupils' achievement, which are reflected in the work set for them. However, the level of challenge is occasionally too low in mathematics when pupils' are not moved on to harder work soon enough. This affects rates of progress adversely.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge and skilfully explain and demonstrate what they expect of pupils. For example, older pupils enjoyed a quiz in mathematics, revising known facts about calculating and using angles. This was followed up by probing questions and further explanation, which really made pupils think, reinforcing their knowledge and understanding and sustaining their interest.
- Staff know the pupils well and good relationships are evident in the classrooms, creating a positive climate for learning. Teaching assistants are used well and they are effective in supporting pupils' learning because they have a good understanding of the individual needs of their pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress from their individual starting points, because their needs are understood and managed well. Teachers, teaching assistants and the learning mentor are skilled at giving appropriate challenge and support to ensure that they are able to learn effectively.
- The quality of marking is developing. Pupils' work is marked regularly. There is praise and some guidance about how pupils can improve their work, but this is not always precise enough and pupils do not consistently respond to the marking in order to learn from their mistakes.
- The teaching of reading is effective. Phonics are taught successfully and pupils use these skills to tackle new words. Teachers provide lots of opportunities for pupils to read and support and encourage parents to work in partnership with them in the teaching of reading.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The achievement of pupils is good and rising strongly, due to good teaching in a safe and supportive environment. By the end of Year 6 in 2014, attainment was significantly above average in English grammar, punctuation and spelling and above average in mathematics. The proportion reaching the expected level was also above average in reading and writing, but broadly in line with national averages at the higher Level 5. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.
- The most able pupils make consistently good progress across the school in reading, writing and mathematics. Occasionally, in some mathematics lessons they repeat too much of the same level of work, rather than move on to harder work. However, they are challenged well overall and a greater proportion than seen nationally makes more than expected progress by the end of Year 6.
- Pupils in Year 1 develop their skills in phonics well. In 2014, the proportion reaching the required level was above average in the Year 1 phonics check, which was an improvement on the previous year. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school is successful in developing pupils' reading skills. They read widely and are encouraged to read for pleasure. Pupils read books from a wide range of genres and authors.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make at least good progress from their different starting points. This is because the staff have a very clear awareness of the precise needs of these pupils and provide support that helps these pupils to achieve, especially in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The pupils who are eligible for support through additional funding are making good progress and their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, although broadly in line with national averages, was about a term and a half behind all pupils nationally and also their classmates in 2014. The attainment gap between pupils entitled for support through the pupil premium and others is narrowing.

The early years provision is good

- Children make good progress across the early years from their very differing starting points. Children enter the Nursery with many skills that are broadly typical for their age, although language and personal and social skills are less well developed. Their attainment is broadly average by the time they enter Year 1, but higher in literacy development than in mathematical development.
- There is a calm, caring atmosphere to both the Nursery and Reception classes and children make a very settled start to their schooling. Rules and routines are well established and adults pay particular attention to their social development.
- Opportunities for developing early literacy skills are particularly well developed in the Reception class. Phonics, together with correct letter formation, are taught well, followed up by activities that enable pupils to build on what they have learnt. This is not consistently the case in other areas of learning in the Nursery class, where opportunities to extend learning are missed and do not always hold the children's attention. Some activities lack a clear learning purpose and do not challenge and build on previous learning, especially in early number and reading development.
- There are close links with parents who receive regular information about their children's progress and who also contribute to the understanding of this process by telling staff about what their children have achieved at home.
- The early years co-ordinator has been in post for just over a year and is developing her leadership role well. She has made improvements in what the school offers, both inside and outside, especially in the Reception class and has clear plans to strengthen number and reading development across the provision. The location of the Nursery, which is separate from the main school, limits the opportunities for Nursery and Reception children to play and learn together. Very recently, time has been set aside each week for joint planning with a view to ensuring purposeful learning at all times.

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	108156
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	442208

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	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lorraine Harrison
Acting Headteacher	Julie Dunderdale
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2013
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