

# Shotley Bridge Infants' School

Benfieldside Road, Shotley Bridge, Consett, County Durham, DH8 0SQ

**Inspection dates** 24–25 March 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- This school is driven by leaders and managers who aspire to every pupil making the best of learning opportunities. The outcomes of this are clearly seen in the high attainment and excellent progress made by pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported extremely well to make the same outstanding progress as others in the school.
- This is a highly inclusive school where pupils' individual needs are recognised and met regardless of their ability. Staff have high expectations, which result in high quality teaching. Pupils recognise that all teaching staff expect them to work hard, and they do.
- The Reception class provides outstanding opportunities for children to learn. Children are confident and quickly become independent. They make considerable gains in their learning and become extremely articulate. However, there are not enough opportunities for children to develop their investigative skills in reading, writing and mathematics, be creative and solve problems.
- Pupils thrive because they feel safe in this school. They say that they love their school and recognise that all staff are ready and able to help them, whatever their concerns.
- Behaviour is excellent in class, at play and during lunch. Pupils are polite, well-mannered and friendly. They care for and look after each other exceptionally well.
- Leaders monitor the quality of teaching rigorously. High quality support ensures that teachers and teaching assistants perform at their highest levels. This impacts very successfully upon the exceptional progress made by all groups of pupils.
- An exciting curriculum enables pupils to access a wealth of activities in which they can use their developing skills in reading, writing and mathematics across a range of subjects.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is central to this school which makes every effort to enable pupils to reflect and consider their actions across a variety of different situations that they may encounter.
- Governors bring a range of expertise to the school. They regularly consider the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make. They hold leaders to account in order to gain the best outcomes for pupils.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are inspirational and form a formidable team, each with individual strengths that complement each other to lead learning through the excellent practice of middle managers.
- Leaders and managers share a vision for excellence within the school and its contribution to the local community.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 12 lessons and learning sessions, which included a number of short visits to the teaching of small groups and individuals. They also listened to pupils reading. The headteacher and deputy headteacher each took part in five joint observations with inspectors.
- Separate discussions were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. The opinions of 13 members of staff were also considered from their questionnaire responses.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at children's learning journals, staff planning journals, data on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation, and information relating to the welfare of children and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the 92 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the results of the school's most recent questionnaire to parents.
- Inspectors observed pupils during morning playtime and lunchtime, and attended a whole school assembly.

## Inspection team

Kate Pringle, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Paul Copping

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This infant school is smaller than the average primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium funding is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding allocated to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils looked after by the local authority.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British background.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of children who join or leave the school at other than the usual times is lower than average.
- The school runs a breakfast club each morning.
- From September 2015, Shotley Bridge Infant School will amalgamate with Shotley Bridge Junior School to form a new primary school.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop opportunities for children in the early years to be creative and use their skills in reading, writing and mathematics to investigate and solve problems in a range of different situations.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- The dedication of the headteacher, together with his deputy, to provide the highest levels of achievement for pupils has been relentless. Their shared vision is fully supported by all leaders, governors and staff who all play their individual parts as they constantly review how well the school provides for its pupils at every level. There is a high sense of teamwork in this school. All support each other in the uncompromising drive for excellence and the constant determination to bring about further improvement in the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- The monitoring of provision and outcomes for pupils is the key to success. Evaluation is honest and, where needs are identified, carefully selected training is put in place. The quality of teaching is strongly linked to performance management and staff targets are clearly set and reviewed to secure best improvement.
- Each pupil is recognised as an individual. This lies at the heart of ensuring that pupils receive the learning 'diet' best suited for them. Teachers use rigorous tracking and assessment of pupils' progress to plan future learning and set targets. Any pupil who falls behind is quickly identified and support put in place to ensure that they catch up quickly. This means that the needs of every pupil are very well addressed and the school's promotion of equal opportunities is outstanding.
- Over recent years, the roles of middle leaders have developed greatly. Senior leaders and managers recognise their wide-ranging expertise and the contribution they can make to develop further the curriculum and to extend pupils' skills and knowledge across subjects. This has had a very positive impact upon the delivery of their areas of responsibility and in raising pupils' achievement.
- An exciting curriculum includes regular visits out of school and visitors to the school, which add to pupils' experiences and understanding of the wider world. There are strong links within the local community. The school makes good use of early enterprise initiatives through the 'make and bake' scheme as pupils make and sell cakes to sell to their parents and the school community. Regular theme days enable all pupils to work together upon a range of projects from music to circus skills.
- Pupils learn British values of tolerance and respect for different points of view. They learn to celebrate differences in culture and religion, and to develop positive relationships with those from different backgrounds.
- Good use of the primary physical education and sport funding has increased participation in local competitions and festivals. The use of professional coaches to work alongside teachers has significantly improved the teaching of physical education and dance. There is a good range of after-school clubs to promote different sports.
- Pupil premium funding is used very successfully to support disadvantaged pupils. A range of measures, from the recruitment of specific staff to support interventions for pupils to the purchase of carefully selected resources, means that needs are very well met. As a result, disadvantaged pupils now achieve in line with others in school and nationally in writing and mathematics. In reading, the performance of disadvantaged pupils is above that of others in school and nationally.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective and fully meet statutory requirements.
- Parents have exceptionally good relationships with the school. There was a good response to Parent View and parents clearly hold the school in high esteem. They are kept exceptionally well informed of the work of the school and how well their children are doing.
- The local authority provides a light touch for this successful school. In recent months, at the proposal of the local authority, the headteacher has been acting headteacher for Shotley Bridge Junior School. In September he will become headteacher of the new primary school, which will replace the infant and junior schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors bring a wealth of expertise to their roles on the governing body. Between them they have an exceptional understanding of how well the school provides for its pupils and they relentlessly challenge senior and other leaders. Governors actively review evaluations of the school's work and fully understand its strengths and areas for improvement. They rigorously manage the performance of the headteacher and are fully involved in the pay progression of all other staff. They are unafraid to tackle underperformance.
  - Governors ensure that funding is allocated well and expect full analysis of the effectiveness and impact of any expenditure to provide best value. Pupil premium funding has had a positive impact upon learning and sports money has developed the quality of physical education on offer in the school. Governors are dedicated to achieving high outcomes for pupils. This demonstrates their strong

commitment and dedication to the school, its staff, its pupils and parents.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. In classrooms and about the school, pupils work and play harmoniously. Excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins positive behaviour as pupils learn right from wrong and how to respect the feelings of others through showing tolerance and fairness. This has a highly successful impact upon how pupils interact with their friends and staff on a daily basis.
- Throughout the school, pupils have exceptional attitudes to learning. They apply themselves conscientiously to work and seek to please their teachers by meeting their high expectations.
- Pupils recognise the similarities and differences between themselves and those of other cultures. 'There's no real difference,' said one little girl in a discussion about types of bullying due to differences of appearance. Pupils are insistent that no bullying takes place and have appropriate understanding of the different forms that bullying might take.
- 'Mini-buddies' support friendships in the playground and these young pupil leaders take their duties very seriously to make sure that everyone plays together happily.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Excellent pastoral care means that any decline in behaviour is quickly recognised and addressed. Staff respond rapidly, making changes to the level and type of support needed in order to best meet the needs of individual pupils.
- Systems to keep pupils safe are embedded fully. Staff work successfully with pupils to identify risky situations and teach pupils how to deal with these through e-safety, stranger danger and other situations.
- Attendance levels continue to increase and are above average. There are low levels of persistent absence, but these are usually for medical reasons and the school monitors these very closely.
- The vast majority of parents believe that their children are happy and safe in school. They know that the headteacher and staff will ensure that any concerns are quickly and successfully addressed. Parents recognise that their children enjoy school and are confident learners in a warm and safe environment.

## **The quality of teaching** is outstanding

- The drive to sustain improvement to the quality of teaching by the headteacher and deputy headteacher has been relentless. The rigorous monitoring of teaching, coupled with highly focused support to develop individual skills, has developed a highly proficient team of staff who deliver high quality learning in the early years and Key Stage 1.
- Pupils have excellent relationships with all those who teach them and they find great enjoyment in learning. In discussion, one little girl identified 'learning' as one of the strengths of the school. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to use their skills in reading, writing and mathematics across a range of other subjects.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve are high. Pupils discuss enthusiastically, as shown in a Year 2 lesson, when they effectively used a range of punctuation to discriminate speech within a given sentence. After clear modelling of the task, the teacher and teaching assistant provided the correct level of challenge to support different ability groups to write imaginative sentences through tasks which were well matched to differing needs and abilities. Excellent levels of questioning promote thinking and considered answers. Pupils are very confident speakers and enjoy the opportunities to share their ideas.
- Teaching assistants are significant players in pupils' learning. They are highly trained and their close working relationships with teachers ensure that learning is always of the highest quality. Their work to support identified pupils, whatever their ability levels, in special learning groups is highly effective. Teachers have full trust in their assistants to teach successfully and take pupils' learning to the next level.
- Pupils display excellent attitudes to learning. They show concentration and perseverance as they endeavour to meet the demands of their teachers. They fully understand the marking system, which staff use consistently to celebrate successful learning and identify what needs to be learnt next. There are many opportunities to return to work to fix or improve errors or misunderstandings and these help pupils to learn from their mistakes.
- Reading is a tremendous strength of the school. Pupils enjoy books and the stories and information that

they unfold. The highly active learning of letters and sounds means that pupils quickly learn to decode words. This prepares them well for learning to read words fluently and enables pupils to concentrate on the meaning of what they read. For instance, in one lesson children used their reading ability to identify the sound blend 'ee' and run to a relevant picture for that sound.

### **The achievement of pupils**

**is outstanding**

- Year 2 pupils have consistently attained at significantly high levels in reading, writing and mathematics over a number of years. Current pupils are well on course to reach similar standards with higher levels in writing than previous years. Boys' underachievement compared to girls in reading and writing last year has been rapidly addressed through changes to the curriculum and teaching. For this year, present assessments indicate that there is no difference between boys and girls in these subjects.
- From their exit from the Reception class, a high proportion of pupils make outstanding progress in all subjects. They are prepared exceptionally well for starting Key Stage 2.
- Standards reached in the test of phonics (sounds that letter make) are above average. Pupils build on the good levels of achievement in the early years and standards in reading are considerably above average by the end of Year 2.
- Year 1 pupils read with confidence and enjoyment. The most able confidently tackle books at higher levels than for their age, changing their voices for different characters. Pupils discuss stories and factual information, and are able to infer meaning from 'between the lines'. The less-able readers also read well using phonic skills to decode new words and recounting what has happened and what may happen next.
- Year 2 readers build upon these skills and the best of those heard to read was flawless, showing excellent understanding of the text. The less-able pupils confidently apply their phonic skills to sound out unfamiliar words. Parents frequently hear their children read at home, which aids the excellent progress made.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special learning needs make good and often outstanding progress, as do pupils who are disadvantaged. The quality of interventions to support these pupils is highly effective because teachers and assistants understand, in fine detail, what each child needs to progress well.
- The gap between disadvantaged pupils and others, in school and nationally, has reduced over recent years. Pupil premium funding has been successfully directed to provide the best possible support.
- The most-able pupils are challenged well and make consistently good or outstanding progress. This is because their progress is well monitored and teachers set tasks which are challenging enough.
- The vast majority of parents rightly believe that their children achieve well because of the high standard of teaching.

### **The early years provision**

**is outstanding**

- Children join the Reception classes with skills that are broadly typical for their age. All groups make exceptional progress, whatever their starting points, because high quality teaching ensures that lessons are highly challenging for all groups of pupils.
- Tracking of how well children do is central to securing the correct level of challenge for each child. By the end of the Reception Year the vast majority of children reach a good level of development and many exceed this. This means that children are well prepared for their move to Year 1.
- Children feel safe and secure, and their behaviour is excellent. They quickly become confident learners in this warm and caring environment. They show high levels of independence as they access resources and put on their coats for outside play. Routines are embedded well and children's learning thrives as they engage in tasks, both inside and outside. However, presently there are not enough opportunities for children to use their developing skills in reading, writing and mathematics to investigate, be creative and solve problems.
- Children acquire literacy and numeracy skills rapidly. Children happily make shape pictures and describe solid shapes using high levels of technical language: 'It's got a square base and... four triangles meeting at a point,' said one child describing a square-based pyramid. The children listening to the description were able to guess what the shape was. Others talked knowingly of octagons and pentagons. Using a computer, another child successfully sequenced eggs with numbers up to 99 on them.
- The teaching of phonics is strong and children have a love of books and reading. They happily demonstrate excellent early reading skills as they share well known stories and tales.
- Leadership of the early years is outstanding. The integrated team work by staff is critical to ensuring that excellent learning opportunities challenge children at the right level. Regular meetings provide for every

member of the early years staff to have a voice in the assessment of children and their next learning experiences. Learning journals are informative and record children's achievements, and what they need to learn next. Parents are highly supportive of the Reception class and its staff; they recognise the excellence of this highly positive start to their children's education.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114038
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	449744

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	154
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michael McBride
<b>Headteacher</b>	Martin Bell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 February 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01207 504847
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