

# Shire Oak VC Primary School

Wood Lane, Headingley, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS6 2DT

**Inspection dates** 22–23 April 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- The dedicated headteacher has improved the quality of teaching, achievement and behaviour. All staff and governors share the headteacher's clear vision and have worked with determination to improve the school.
- Teaching is good with some that is outstanding. The positive climate for learning and well-planned activities capture the interests of pupils and help them to learn well.
- Specialist teachers and teaching assistants are highly skilled and support good learning of individuals and small groups of pupils inside and outside of the classroom.
- Children in the early years make good progress because the teaching they receive is good and often outstanding. They are well prepared for the step-up to learning in Year 1.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, especially in mathematics. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection report.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 has risen to be above the national average in all subjects.
- Achievement at the highest Level 6 in mathematics is outstanding with a quarter of pupils reaching standards well above those expected for their age.
- Behaviour in lessons is good. Attendance is good and punctuality is exemplary.
- Pupils are very polite and courteous. They feel safe and well cared for. Pupils enjoy the many responsibilities they hold within the school.
- The exciting curriculum with an emphasis on outdoor learning and developing philosophical thinking skills positively supports pupils' preparation for life in Britain today.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although improving, the progress made by pupils who join the school part way through their school career is not consistently as strong as that made by other pupils.
- The accuracy and confidence of pupils' spelling in Key Stage 2 is not yet as strong as that seen in Key Stage 1.
- Although good progress is made in Key Stage 1, not enough pupils make the rapid progress needed to attain the higher Level 3, especially in writing.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in all year groups and three were undertaken jointly with senior leaders of the school. Small group sessions led by teachers and teaching assistants, in and out of the classroom, were also observed.
- The inspectors met with governors, a representative of the local authority, senior and middle leaders.
- Discussions were held with pupils about their learning and their views on behaviour. Inspectors also listened to pupils reading and spoke with many pupils informally in the playground and dining hall.
- The inspectors observed the school at work. They scrutinized the school's improvement plan and a review of its own performance. Arrangements for safeguarding, systems for checking the quality of teaching and those for tracking pupil progress were also viewed.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in lessons and scrutinised the work they had completed over time.
- Account was taken of the 48 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the comments of parents at the school gate and 30 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Fiona Dixon, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Janet Keefe

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Shire Oak VC Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Early years provision is full time for children in the Reception class.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.
- Just under half the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, this is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is average.
- The proportion of pupils who enter or leave the school during their school career is well-above national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

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

- Further raise achievement at the end of Year 6 by:
  - closing any remaining gaps in progress made between pupils who attend the school from Reception and those who join later in their school career.
- To further improve the quality of teaching by:
  - fully establishing the teaching of accurate and confident spelling, as seen in Key Stage 1, across all Key Stage 2 classes
  - ensuring that pupils in Key Stage 1 are always appropriately challenged to enable more of them to accelerate their progress and attain the highest levels of attainment by the end of Year 2.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The highly dedicated headteacher along with the senior leaders, governors and staff share a common sense of purpose and commitment to sustained improvement. This clarity of vision has led to an improvement in the quality of teaching, behaviour and attainment across the school.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher know how successful the school can be and consistently model the high social and academic expectations that pervade all areas of school life. They have correctly identified the priorities for further development including the need to continue to close any remaining gaps in learning for pupils who arrive at the school later in their school career and to aim for the highest level of achievement in Key Stage 1. The high morale of the staff enables recent improvements to continue and move the school forward at a rapid pace.
- Since the previous inspection, improvements in the quality of teaching and systems to check pupils' progress have been used effectively to ensure pupils make at least good progress. For example, the additional support provided for any disadvantaged pupil, especially when progress has slowed, has had a strong impact on the progress they have made this year. Across the school disadvantaged pupils have made similar or better progress than non-disadvantaged pupils in all subjects.
- Highly motivated middle leaders monitor all aspects of work in their area of responsibility and are steadily raising the level of attainment across the school.
- Thorough and regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning have led to teaching being good with some that is outstanding. Leaders regularly watch teachers at work and check the quality of pupils' learning over time. Staff performance management targets are linked to pay progression. Targets are challenging, linked to the school's priorities and pupils' progress.
- The school's motto, 'Rooted in the community, growing for the future' reflects the school's exciting curriculum. The broad range of subjects and learning experiences, many of them taking place outdoors, encourages pupils to not only develop their spiritual, social, moral and cultural skills but also their academic, thinking, physical and communication skills. Pupils relish the many opportunities to share their learning with the local community, for example, during the 'Winter Festival of Fire', or caring for the community orchard.
- 'Leeds Philosophy Exchange Project' has particularly helped to develop the pupils' skills to understand and develop skills that reflect the school's commitment to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn how to look at everyday and complex issues in a variety of ways. This helps them to develop their ability to justify why they hold the views they do in relation to British values such as democracy, tolerance and liberty and respectfully challenge those whose views differ to their own.
- Parents are actively encouraged to be involved in the life of the school. They regularly visit to share learning experiences; for example, parents joined with their children to safely watch the solar eclipse. Parent View responses show that they are overwhelming happy with and support the school. These responses reflect a comment made at the school gate, 'The school takes time to know my children really well.'
- The primary school sports funding is used well and has increased participation in sports both for enjoyment and competitiveness. Pupils are eager to try the many different sports offered including scootering and yoga. Pupils talk confidently about the link between physical activity and healthy lifestyles. The majority of pupils enjoy taking part in at least one sport by the time they leave in Year 6.
- The local authority provides effective support for the school. Since the previous inspection they have supported the school to develop the provision in early years and improve the teaching of mathematics.
- The good progress of pupils from different backgrounds and of varying abilities shows the school's commitment to promoting good relations, ensuring all pupils have equality of opportunity and tackling all discrimination. The school is also committed to ensuring good progress for pupils who join the school during their school career.
- The school ensures that safeguarding procedures are in place, meet statutory requirements and are effective.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is a strength of the school. Governors know the school well, including the quality of teaching, through their regular formal and informal visits to the school. They share the vision of the headteacher to continually strive for improvement and scrutinise data on achievement to check whether all pupils are achieving as well as they can, compared to other schools. They regularly support improvements, for example, the use of teacher time to lead interventions and accelerate progress.
  - Governors attend training to improve their skills to provide both support and challenge to the school

leaders and effectively do so. Governors rigorously carry out their duties with regard to the performance management of the headteacher and all staff. They know what is done to reward good teaching and have eradicated underperformance.

- The governing body ensures that all statutory duties are fulfilled, including those for safeguarding and financial management.

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

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Behaviour has significantly improved since the previous inspection because the headteacher and all staff have high expectations. All staff expect good behaviour at all times and apply the behaviour policy consistently and fairly.
- Some pupils in several classes require adult support to help them maintain good behaviour especially when working in a small group; their ability to take a positive and active role is still developing.
- Around the school pupils are very polite, friendly and courteous. They use good manners to each other and adults. Pupils wear their uniform neatly and keep their school very tidy.
- Pupils play well together with older pupils acting as 'buddies' to younger children. They enjoy supporting the development of physical skills such as skipping or immersing themselves in an imaginary game of 'families'.
- Pupils have a strong 'voice' through the democratically elected school council. Recently they have worked with Headingley planning group to improve the local area for children and discussed the new food standard regulations with the catering staff to understand how this would change the lunch menus.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Parents and staff overwhelmingly feel that pupils are well cared for and are safe. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in the improving attendance, which is in line with national average, and exemplary punctuality.
- Pupils are actively taught how to keep themselves safe. Year 3 pupils write their own risk assessments for the activities they enjoy while learning in the local woodland. Pupils learn how to stay safe on the road through their regular use of public transport for school visits. The school 'fire pit', swimming lessons and residential activities give children experience of safe risk taking behaviours too. The school always ensures that all activities in and out of school are carefully planned and assessed to keep children safe.
- Pupils have a very clear understanding of different forms of bullying including name-calling, racism, homophobic and cyber-bullying. Both pupils and parents say that bullying is very rare and they can trust adults to effectively act upon any problems or concerns.
- Vulnerable pupils are well supported as the school works with external agencies to meet their needs.

## **The quality of teaching** is good

- Pupil progress, inspection evidence and work in pupils' books support the view of senior leaders that the quality of teaching is good over time.
- The teaching of reading is good. Teachers ensure that pupils read widely and often through daily guided reading. The excellent library and annual 'Reading Week' enthuse pupils to 'drop everything and read', often with reading role models from, for example, the Rugby League team. Throughout the year older pupils act as 'reading buddies' to younger pupils.
- Pupils are taught to write in many different styles. Teachers regularly use topic work to give different but relevant reasons to write, for example, in Year 6, pupils were planning an extended piece of explanatory writing on the importance of the river Nile in ancient Egypt. Pupils' confidence and accuracy in spelling is well developed in Key Stage 1 and the skills these teachers use are now being established in all Key Stage 2 classes to further improve confidence, accuracy and attainment across all classes.
- Pupils regularly use resources in their mathematics lessons to help them develop their skills. Daily mental mathematics practise is also giving pupils the confidence to be able to rise to the challenges faced in independent investigative study and enable them to effectively show their problem-solving and reasoning skills. Pupils are making good progress in mathematics and this is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
- Teachers know what their pupils can do and what they need to do next. For example, when Year 4 pupils

were exploring the qualities and personality of a character in their class reading book the work was set appropriately to challenge the learning of different groups of pupils and help them make good progress. In Key Stage 1, although teachers know what each pupil needs to learn next, especially in writing, higher and middle-attaining pupils are not consistently challenged to enable more of them to accelerate their progress and attain the highest Level 3 by the end of Year 2.

- Teaching assistants share the school's high expectation for the progress of the pupils. Effective planning results in pupils' increased enjoyment of learning and progress; for example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson a group of pupils were effectively supported, through careful questioning and encouragement, to use the computer to transform shapes across the diagonal axis.
- Homework is set regularly for pupils across the school. Pupils say they enjoy the challenge of working on their key skills in spelling, reading and mathematics but reserved their greatest enthusiasm for the project work. Pupils are encouraged to explore an area of their current topic and share their research through their homework; for example, a Year 2 pupil researched the history of the high-chair and created one for a small toy in her topic on 'Inventors and inventions'.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- Pupils' progress has significantly improved since the previous inspection and inspection evidence shows that it is now good across the school.
- Pupils currently in Key Stage 1 are making good progress. In the 2014 phonics screening check, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was higher than that seen nationally. Standards at the end of Year 2, at the typically expected Level 2b, were in line with the national average for reading, writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that the proportion of pupils on track to reach the higher Level 3 is increasing in reading and mathematics. Fewer pupils are working at the higher level in writing and the school is aware of the need to enable more pupils to make rapid progress.
- Good progress continues in Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence, including lesson observations, work in pupils' books and information on progress made by each pupil shows that the present attainment of all year groups is at least in line, often better, than the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and English grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 rose in 2014 to be above average in reading, writing, mathematics and English grammar, punctuation and spelling. Inspection evidence shows that currently more pupils are producing work at the higher Level 5 and Level 6 in reading and mathematics than in previous years.
- The most able pupils throughout Key Stage 2 are challenged and supported to work towards the highest levels of attainment. In 2014, in comparison to similar pupils nationally, their attainment was higher in all subjects. In mathematics and English grammar, punctuation and spelling, achievement was excellent as the most able pupils achieved the highest Level 6, a standard well above that expected for their age.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups make similar good progress to their peers. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their individual starting points as the school uses specialist teaching that ensures that support is targeted to meet specific needs. Pupils who join the school during their school career, especially in Key Stage 2, have not consistently made as much progress as their peers. The school is working to ensure that the support they receive is individualised and closely monitored to enable them to make rapid progress and close any remaining gaps in their progress and attainment.
- Disadvantaged pupils presently in the school are making the same good progress as non-disadvantaged pupils. This is a significant improvement from the previous inspection and reflects improvements in teaching. In 2014, in Key Stage 1, there was no gap between the attainment of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils in writing or reading and only a half term gap in mathematics. Nevertheless, there was a significant historical gap in the progress made between disadvantaged and other non-disadvantaged pupils in Key Stage 2 that in 2014 could not be closed. In mathematics, disadvantaged pupils were two years behind and they were two terms behind in reading and writing. Compared to non-disadvantaged pupils nationally, the gap was one year and half-a-term behind in mathematics, two terms in reading and one and a half terms in writing.

### **The early years provision** is good

- Children enter Reception Year with knowledge and skills that, for about half of them, are below those typical for their age especially in communication, language and literacy. Leadership and the quality of

teaching are good and ensure that children leave Reception well prepared for learning in Year 1.

- The learning environment is highly stimulating and allows for exceptional levels of self-directed learning through purposeful play. The teacher and teaching assistants have a deep understanding of how children learn and so activities allow for children to make good progress; for example, after listening to the story of St George, on St George's day, a more able child recounted the story, writing in full sentences, confidently asking for help to accurately spell tricky words like George and subsequently went on to create a detailed model of the dragon with feathers in the tail.
- Assessment is frequent and effectively used to ensure that all children make good progress and to promptly support any child if progress slows. For example, a child who enjoys learning outdoors was observed being encouraged to develop their number skills and confidence while playing with sticks building a camp-fire. Children's individual progress is carefully recorded and shared with parents in 'learning journeys'.
- Teaching is good, often outstanding and so progress is good. In a phonics session, children were challenged to recall and use the sounds they had learnt during the week in a correctly formed sentence. This high expectation was met by the majority of children, with some of the most able children including a connective. Children who are disabled and those who have special educational needs are supported to make progress from their starting points; for example, to match initial letter sounds with pictures.
- Parents are encouraged to be actively involved with their children's learning through opportunities to 'stay and play', join children in 'sharing assemblies' and contribute to their 'learning journeys'.
- Children are safe and happy and all welfare requirements are met. Behaviour is good with children showing very positive attitudes to learning; for example, children cooperated well together and considered each other's feelings when trying to recreate a rock pool using natural materials.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is well developed. Reception children join the whole school for assembly, celebrate national and religious festivals and delight in finding out about the different backgrounds of the children in their own class.

## 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>	131570
<b>Local authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	462244

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	208
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Janie Percy-Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Astrid Devane
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 July 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	0113 275 5890
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