

Sherwood Park Primary School

Sherwood Park Avenue, Sidcup, Kent DA15 9JQ

Inspection dates

15–16 September 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since joining the school in 2015, the new headteacher has taken robust and effective action to tackle weak teaching and develop strong leadership. Recently appointed leaders have a clear understanding of what the school needs to do to improve.
- Children in the early years benefit from carefully planned provision and good teaching. Children enter the Reception classes with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age. Outcomes by the end of the Reception Year in 2015 were broadly average.
- Pupils leaving key stage 1 achieve above-average standards. Pupils' overall attainment by the time they leave the school is above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check was well above average in 2014 and 2015.
- Leaders have worked hard to improve attendance. Despite their efforts, attendance remains just below average. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils has improved over the past year.
- As a result of good teaching, pupils in the designated special provision for those diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder make good progress.
- Leaders have identified appropriate priorities for improvement. Plans to address these priorities are appropriately focused but at an early stage of development.
- Pupils behave well. They are safe and happy at school. They have positive attitudes to learning and respond well to their teachers who motivate them with slogans such as, 'never, ever, ever give up!' Pupils benefit from a broad and interesting curriculum.
- Teachers have successfully implemented a new planning and assessment system. This has led to improved teaching which has had a positive impact on pupils' progress.
- The governing body is in the process of recruiting new members to broaden its collective skills and develop further the level of challenge that it offers to leaders. Governors have not been rigorous in challenging leaders about the impact of the spending of the pupil premium funding.
- Pupils sometimes are allowed to choose tasks which are too easy for them in writing and mathematics lessons. In reading lessons teachers occasionally choose texts which do not challenge the most able readers sufficiently.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership by ensuring that:
 - plans for improvement, including pupil premium spending plans, have measurable targets, which are regularly evaluated and based on the current achievements of pupils in the school
 - actions taken to improve overall attendance, and in particular the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, are regularly evaluated to ensure that they have swift and sustained impact
 - the governing body recruits skilled governors to support it in challenging as well as supporting the work of the school effectively.
- Strengthen teaching across the school in order to speed up the learning of all pupils, including the most able pupils, the disadvantaged and the most able disadvantaged pupils, by ensuring that:
 - teachers prompt pupils to attempt the writing and mathematics activities which challenge them most
 - teachers select texts which challenge the most able readers to make more than expected progress
 - teachers and teaching assistants have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve during lessons.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- From September 2015, the headteacher, supported by leaders and governors, has brought about rapid improvements to teaching, learning and assessment. The leadership team has benefited from the advice and support of the two headteachers from the Penhill Trust.
- The headteacher and governors have eradicated weak teaching through sharply focused performance management. Planning and assessment systems have been implemented and have been key to improving the progress that pupils make across the school.
- Leaders have created a strong culture for learning in the school. As a result, staff have high expectations of pupils. Pupils have a positive attitude to learning.
- Pupils enjoy the interesting curriculum on offer and can talk at length about the art and history topics that engage them. Leaders ensure that there are opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills across other subjects and they link subjects well in a creative way. For example, pupils in Year 2 were enjoying creating penguins that were going to advise them on e-safety. A good range of after-school clubs enhances the curriculum. Pupils also have the opportunity to join the choir and the orchestra.
- The school's values reflect British values and are taught during assemblies and events such as the school council elections. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins the broad curriculum on offer. Visits to local hospitals and charity events also provide opportunities for pupils to develop tolerance, understanding and respect for others.
- Leaders ensure that the designated provision for pupils diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder meets their needs. Pupils benefit from good teaching and high-quality care. They are integrated well into mainstream classes for much of the day.
- Staff receive appropriate training in line with the school's priorities for improvement. Newly qualified teachers say that they are supported well to improve their teaching skills. Despite the large turnover of staff over the past year, most of the current teaching staff are proud to work at the school and are supportive of the actions leaders take to improve the school further.
- Parents are happy with the work of the school and say that the new headteacher has changed the school for the better.
- Leaders have ensured that the sport premium funding has been spent effectively to improve resources, increase the range of activities on offer and improve the quality of teaching. For example, pupils enjoy lunchtime clubs run by sports coaches which help them to appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.
- Leaders have identified appropriate priorities for improvement. Plans are not yet rigorous enough to allow leaders to measure the impact of their actions effectively. Leaders have made effective use of pupil premium funding. Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are making progress which is similar to that of their classmates. Any differences between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and that of others are diminishing. However, action plans do not give sufficient detail of the spending or indicate how leaders have evaluated the impact of the spending. At the time of the

inspection, the lack of this documentation and other key documents on the website meant that the school did not comply with government guidance on what should be published online. Leaders took swift action to address this issue during the inspection.

- Actions taken by leaders to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils across the school have led to some early signs of impact. However, overall attendance remains just below average. Leaders have secured further support from the educational welfare officer to offer them guidance.

Governance of the school

- Governors are highly committed to improving the school. They have supported the headteacher in holding teachers to account for pupils' outcomes. They have an accurate view of the school's past, and they share the headteacher's vision for its future. The governing body has recently lost some of its members. Governors are proactive in their efforts to recruit more governors to continue the support and increase the challenge offered to the school.
- Governors seek appropriate training to improve their skills.
- Governors monitor spending and receive regular updates from the headteacher. They recognise that the checks that they make on the impact of the pupil premium funding spending need to be more thorough.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff and governors are well trained in all aspects of safeguarding and they carry out their responsibilities rigorously and effectively. Pupils' well-being is at the heart of the school's work. Staff are vigilant and respond swiftly if they have a concern about a pupil's safety or well-being. Leaders take immediate action to seek appropriate advice and guidance. Designated safeguarding leads are incisive in their knowledge of individual pupils. Communication between teachers and leaders regarding vulnerable pupils is regular and perceptive, ensuring that pupils are well cared for.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have implemented the school's planning and assessment system in all year groups. Teachers plan writing and mathematics activities which ensure that all pupils are able to attempt the work which is set at different levels of ability. Activities increase in difficulty and pupils are given a certain amount of choice about which level of difficulty to select. When teaching leads to rapid progress in lessons, teachers challenge pupils to 'push themselves' and go for the hardest task. This was seen in a Year 4 mathematics lesson when pupils were prompted to go for the most difficult reasoning challenge. Teaching assistants support pupils' learning well and often help lower attaining pupils to access and attempt the task set.
- Teachers have successfully implemented daily group-reading activities across the school. Pupils work in ability groups on texts which are usually pitched at the correct level for them. Teachers support pupils in applying their phonics skills to continuous text. They devise questions and comprehension activities to help pupils develop a deeper understanding of plot, characterisation and meaning. Pupils make good progress in their reading as a result of good teaching. When the most able pupils select their own texts to read in key stage 2, they generally choose books to challenge

themselves. Occasionally, texts selected by teachers for the most able pupils do not challenge them sufficiently. Children who are at the earliest stages of learning to read benefit from a range of books. Leaders have rightly decided to invest further in books to support children at the earliest stages of learning to read.

- Pupils are involved in self-assessment of their work in key stage 2 and they also support each other with peer assessment. This helps them to discuss their learning and learn from each other, as well as from adults.
- Teaching, learning and assessment in the designated special provision are good. The environment promotes the learning of pupils diagnosed along the autism spectrum. Pupils make good progress because teachers and leaders have high expectations of what they can achieve. Pupils are well supported by teaching assistants when they work in mainstream classes and are able to access and enjoy their learning.
- Occasionally, in mathematics and writing lessons, teachers allow pupils to select an activity which does not challenge them. When this happens, pupils do not make the progress expected of them. Sometimes pupils in key stage 2 work too slowly, which limits the progress that they make. Low-level disruptive behaviour such as fiddling with resources or tapping rulers occasionally distracts pupils and also impacts on their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Relationships between adults and pupils in the school are positive.
- Pupils are polite, welcoming and respectful. They care about each other and about their local community. They visit elderly patients in their local hospital and they support charity events for young people with medical conditions.
- Pupils feel safe at school and say that if they have a problem they know their teachers or teaching assistants will 'fix it'. Pupils show a good understanding of keeping themselves safe in school and online. They confidently talk about fire safety and know that incidents need to be reported and recorded immediately.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well around the school, in the playground and in the breakfast and after-school club, where they receive a warm, calm welcome from staff. Pupils adhere to the 'golden rules' and incidents of very poor behaviour are rare.
- Pupils have a positive attitude to learning and try their best. Occasionally, low-level disruption in lessons prevents pupils from making rapid progress.
- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is well below the national average but is beginning to improve as a result of the actions taken by leaders. This poor attendance impacts on the overall level of attendance for the school, which is just below the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 were above the national average in 2014 and 2015. The school's own information about the achievement of pupils who left the school in 2016 suggests that attainment was broadly average. Attainment in writing was higher than in reading and mathematics in 2016.
- In 2015, the proportion of pupils making expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics was in line with the national average. Disadvantaged pupils made similar expected progress to their classmates in reading and mathematics. In writing, disadvantaged pupils made stronger progress than their peers.
- The school's own progress data for 2016 shows that differences between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and that of others are diminishing in most year groups and subjects. Evidence gathered during the inspection in lesson observations confirmed this positive picture.
- Standards at the end of key stage 1 have been above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics since the school became an academy. The school's information about standards achieved in 2016 shows that attainment in reading, writing and mathematics continues to be above average.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check is above average. In 2016, the school data shows that the school successfully diminished the difference between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils nationally.
- From average starting points, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year was in line with the national average in 2015. A lower proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieved a good level of development than their classmates. The school's own information about achievement at the end of 2016 suggests that achievement at the end of the Reception Year has improved.
- The school's own information about how well pupils are doing, together with work seen in books from the last academic year and since September 2016, shows that pupils who are currently in the school are making strong progress. Differences between the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils and those of other pupils in the school are diminishing.
- The most able pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Occasionally they do not make the rapid progress that they are capable of because they choose or are given tasks which do not stretch them or deepen their understanding.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders have supported teachers to ensure that the early years provision is good. Children benefit from a range of interesting activities both inside and outside the classroom. All areas of learning are planned well and children enjoy their learning.
- At the time of the inspection, home visits were taking place for the new children

entering Nursery. Children new to Reception had only started school the previous day. Despite this, they were settled and enjoying school. They all participated happily in 'the circle song'.

- Children in the Reception classes were confidently attempting writing tasks and some were developing early number skills well. Tasks set were at the right level of challenge and showed that teachers had skilfully assessed children's starting points.
- Leaders and teachers worked effectively to improve the teaching of writing in 2015. As a result, attainment in writing improved and the proportion of children achieving a good level of development overall was above the national average.
- During this academic year, teachers and leaders are prioritising their plans to ensure that they meet the needs of disadvantaged children. They aim to diminish the differences which exist between the overall achievement of disadvantaged children and that of others. Clear plans are in place to identify disadvantaged children as early as possible in the year and to track their progress carefully.
- Children behave well in the early years. They are well cared for by adults and feel safe, even though they have only been at school for a few days.
- In 2015, children left the early years well prepared for Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	140532
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	10019224

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	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	447
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Richard Wood
Headteacher	Mrs Karen Cromwell
Telephone number	0208 3036300
Website	www.sherwoodparkprimary.co.uk
Email address	admin@sherwood.bexley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Sherwood Park is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school became a stand-alone academy in 2014, working with support from the Penhill Trust.
- The majority of pupils come from a White British background and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- There have been significant changes to the membership of the leadership team, to the governing body and to the teaching staff since the school became an academy. The headteacher took up her post in September 2015.
- Children in the early years are taught in two part-time Nursery classes and two full-time Reception classes.

- The school has a designated special provision for pupils diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.
- The school runs breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about their special educational needs policy, equalities duty and spending of the pupil premium funding. During the inspection, leaders started to take swift action to ensure that they comply with the current guidance.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all year groups. Observations were undertaken with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with governors and with representatives of the Penhill Trust.
- Meetings were held with pupils to discuss their learning and their views on the school. Pupils took inspectors on a 'curriculum tour' of the school.
- All leaders met with inspectors to discuss their roles and the impact of their work.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and talked to pupils in the lunch hall, in lessons, in the breakfast and after-school clubs, and as they moved around the building.
- Inspectors attended an assembly.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documents, including information on pupils' progress across the school, improvement plans, curriculum plans and checks on the quality of teaching. They also examined school records relating to safety and behaviour.
- Inspectors scrutinised books to see what progress pupils make.
- Inspectors took account of 23 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and of information gathered from discussions with parents during the inspection.

Inspection team

Ruth Dollner, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Brian Simber	Ofsted Inspector
Margaret Warner	Ofsted Inspector
Rosemarie McCarthy	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Sturley	Ofsted Inspector

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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