

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



16 October 2017

Mrs Laura Jestico
Executive headteacher
Shelton with Hardwick Community School
Low Road
Shelton
Norwich
Norfolk
NR15 2SD

Dear Mrs Jestico

Short inspection of Shelton with Hardwick Community School

Following my visit to the school on 4 October 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in May 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Since becoming leader of the Shelton with Hardwick and Hempnall Federation a year ago, you have worked very effectively with governors and staff to bring about rapid improvement at the school.

You have formed a strong team of leaders who work together to build the strengths of both schools, sharing best practice and holding one another to account. Subject and phase leaders span the federation and make a positive difference to teaching and learning through their rigorous monitoring. For example, the previous Year 1 teacher at Hempnall has been supporting the teaching of phonics at Shelton.

Leaders and governors have not shied away from tackling inconsistencies in teaching, which has resulted in some changes to teaching staff. The new teachers at Shelton bring fresh ideas and high expectations. Already, barely a month into term, the good progress of pupils is evident in key stage 2 especially.

Parents spoke highly of the school, including families who have sent generations of children to you and those new to the area. Parents with pupils of all ages commented on how happy their children are, the friendliness of staff, and the good quality of the education that their children are receiving.

Very small cohorts mean that it is impossible to draw trends from performance information. Most year groups contain five or fewer pupils. This means that it is not possible to discuss end-of-key-stage outcomes, except in general terms, as individual pupils could be identified.

In 2016/17 there were no Reception children at all, so the current younger class consists of children receiving an early years curriculum and those in Year 2. The older class contains pupils in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have become adept at offering pupils an appropriate and rich curriculum that takes into account their individual needs. For example, older pupils enjoyed taking part in 'Formula Goblin' last year where they designed and raced a vehicle on the runway at former RAF Coltishall. Pupils were involved in all aspects of the design and building of the racing car and competed against other schools.

Teaching assistants support pupils well. There is a relatively large proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Well-trained staff provide the help that these pupils need to enable them to keep up with their peers. Pupils who have particular difficulties are extremely well supported and included in the life of the school.

Pupils go out of their way to make newcomers feel welcome. Pupils who joined the school part way through their school careers said how quickly they made friends. Pupils' behaviour is good. They are keen to learn and spoke enthusiastically about making three-dimensional models in art. Pupils also enjoy using the school's extensive and well-resourced grounds, including through 'forest school' activities, such as whittling butter knives.

Teachers provide well for pupils of different ages and abilities within their classes. They know the pupils very well, and track their progress carefully. They are quick to identify pupils at risk of falling behind. Staff deal with any misconceptions quickly, as they arise. For example, in key stage 2 the teacher identified which pupils were struggling to convert sentences from the past tense to the present tense and provided them with additional support straight away.

While there are not many disadvantaged pupils across the school, teachers enable them to make accelerated progress through using the pupil premium effectively to provide additional support. This means that these pupils perform as well as their peers. The very few pupils whose progress is slower have complex additional needs.

Safeguarding is effective.

Pupils said that they feel safe in school and know that adults will take their concerns seriously. The older pupils look after the youngest children at breaktimes. Parents commented on the school's happy family atmosphere. Leaders ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children and record any concerns about pupils' welfare carefully. Staff know all the children very well and are quick to raise with leaders any worries that they may have. Staff receive high-quality training so that they are aware of the latest guidance on keeping children safe. The school works effectively

with outside agencies such as social services, and provides considerable support to families facing difficulties. The school funds counselling services for children and puts on a variety of activities that boost their confidence and support their well-being.

Inspection findings

- In order to make sure that the school remains good, I identified a number of key lines of enquiry that we agreed at our initial meeting. First of all, we considered what leaders have done to raise pupils' progress and attainment in writing. This is because in 2016 pupils' attainment in writing was not as strong as in reading and mathematics.
- Leaders were quick to identify issues in the teaching of writing last year, including the presentation of work. They set up a scheme of support and acted swiftly when they considered that improvements were not rapid enough. Consequently, there have been some new appointments that have strengthened the teaching of writing. Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 improved considerably in 2017 as a result of leaders' actions. However, it was not as strong as in mathematics. Presentation of work is now neat.
- While a large proportion of pupils reached the expected standard in writing in 2017, too few reached greater depth. Leaders have identified pupils capable of greater depth this year and are monitoring their progress closely to ensure that they do not fall behind.
- The second key line of enquiry we considered concerned the effectiveness of provision in the early years. In 2016, no children reached a good level of development and there were no children in the early years in 2017. In preparation for this year, staff undertook training and reviewed previous provision to ensure that this improved. The outdoor area has been refreshed, with more activities available to children and a greater purpose in how they are used. For example, there is a greater emphasis on using natural materials and supporting pupils in developing their knowledge of the world around them.
- This year, children have settled well into the early years. They work together well. The early years leader, who is based at Hempnall, has provided support with assessment and shared best practice. The children's learning journeys are well set out and provide useful information about the positive start children have made this year. Children are quickly acquiring the skills that they need to reach a good level of development by the end of the year.
- Finally, we looked at progress since the previous inspection in the effectiveness of governance and the provision of information and communication technology (ICT). Both were areas for improvement at that time.
- There have been many changes to the governing body since the previous inspection. There is now one governing body across the federation. Governors have audited their skills. They bring a wealth of experience, not only from the world of education, but from the wider world of work as well. Governors' minutes show that governors are now challenging school leaders effectively. They receive the information that they need to ask probing questions.

- The school has engaged a specialist teacher in ICT to oversee improvements. As a result, pupils enjoy a rich curriculum in ICT and are very aware of e-safety, for example. Pupils use programmable robots and make animations. They apply their ICT skills in different subjects, such as measuring their heart-rates after exercise in physical education. They used ICT in designing their racing car as part of the 'Formula Goblin' project. Consequently, standards in ICT are above what is typically expected, especially in key stage 2.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- achievement in writing at key stage 2 comes up to the same standards as in reading and mathematics
- the most able pupils reach the greater depth that they should, especially in writing.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Norfolk. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Nick Butt
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, other school leaders, two governors, administrative staff and pupils. I met with a representative of the local authority. Short, regular visits were made to both classes where books were scrutinised. A range of documents, policies and assessment information was examined. I spoke to parents at the school gate and considered 14 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted questionnaire.