

# Sharpness Primary School

New Town, Berkeley, Gloucestershire GL13 9NU

## Inspection dates

2–3 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The progress pupils make and the standards they reach at the end of key stage 2 have been below national averages for the last two years.
- The teaching of phonics in key stage 1 is inconsistent and does not prepare children for the next stage of their education.
- Over time, monitoring by leaders has not secured good teaching, learning and assessment. Although recent changes have been made, it is too soon for these to have had sufficient impact on pupils' progress, especially in writing.
- Leaders have not implemented their improvement plans swiftly to ensure that the school improves quickly.
- Some staff do not have high expectations for what pupils can achieve. Work is not consistently challenging for pupils to enable them to make the best possible progress.
- Support and training for teachers have not yet had the desired impact on improving the outcomes for pupils, including those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- Strategies introduced by leaders to improve teaching are not used consistently by staff.
- Pupils do not make sufficient progress in their writing as they move through key stages 1 and 2. Teachers do not provide the guidance and support pupils need to develop their skills in writing in subjects across the curriculum.

### The school has the following strengths

- Staff have created an atmosphere where pupils are safe, well supported and able to articulate their views.
- The headteacher and senior staff know the school well and what steps the school needs to take to improve. They work together purposefully and are committed to improving the school.
- Attendance has now improved and is in line with the national average.
- Pupils appreciate the support they are given to help them with their work and are proud of their school. The school provides a wide and varied curriculum to gain pupils' interest.
- The school's early years provision is good. Children leave Reception ready for Year 1.
- Pupils are keen to develop their learning. They enjoy their lessons and show respect for one another and their teachers. Behaviour is good.

## Full report

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

- Strengthen teaching, learning and assessment across the school so that pupils, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities, make at least good progress by ensuring that:
  - teachers support pupils to practise the skills they learn to improve the quality of writing in subjects across the curriculum
  - teachers have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - training and professional development for staff have a positive impact on pupils' outcomes
  - teachers use assessment information to identify pupils' misconceptions and plan work which supports them to make good progress
  - teachers plan work which challenges pupils consistently to achieve well and make faster progress
  - the good practice of teaching phonics that exists in the early years is shared across key stage 1.
- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that senior leaders:
  - have higher expectations of pupils and staff in order to create a more ambitious school culture
  - decisively implement current plans for improvement in partnership with governors, and frequently evaluate the impact they have on pupils' achievement and progress.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- The governors and headteacher have not yet created a consistent culture of high ambition and aspiration for pupils or staff. Although parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, said that the school is well led and managed, the leaders of the school recognise that there are areas for improvement.
- In the past, leaders' evaluations of the school's strengths and weaknesses have not been accurate about the standards pupils achieve or the quality of teaching. Leaders' actions and efforts to raise standards have not been sharply focused. The headteacher and newly formed senior team have detailed plans in place to address this. However, the implementation and impact of these actions is not yet sufficiently in place for outcomes to be good.
- Previously, leaders at the school did not check the school's performance and the quality of teaching rigorously. As a result, weaknesses in teaching continued and so pupils did not make enough progress. The headteacher and senior leaders have been honest in recognising this. They have now developed action plans in partnership with the local authority. However, they have not acted swiftly enough to bring about improvement.
- School leaders and governors have not shied away from making difficult decisions to improve the quality of teaching. School leaders understand the need to invest in support for the training and development of staff. However, training has not yet had sufficient impact on improving the quality of teaching across the school and the progress pupils make in their learning.
- Staff are fully supportive of the headteacher and his leadership. Staff expressed this in staff surveys and discussions with the inspector. Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff shows that staff feel the school has improved since the previous inspection and that children are safe.
- Staff prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. Older pupils can discuss the major world religions they have studied. Pupils demonstrate their understanding of fundamental British values, such as tolerance of others, when they discuss people of different cultures or faiths. School assemblies, enrichment activities and the curriculum support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The school provides a physical education (PE) and sports curriculum which is well led and maximises use of the additional funding schools receive for PE and sport. Pupils also receive specialist French and music teaching. The curriculum is enriched by arts, sports, drama and activities which include extensive use of the local physical and historical environment. However, senior leaders do not yet ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for pupils to engage in extended writing for a range of purposes and audiences across the curriculum. As a result, they are not developing their skills quickly and making the progress they are capable of.

- The governors, headteacher and newly developed senior team are focused in their drive to improve the opportunities, experiences and outcomes for the pupils and community they serve.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors have high expectations of staff. They are working closely with the local authority to ensure that they provide sufficient challenge and support. However, they recognise this rigour has not been sufficient previously to improve the school quickly.
- Governors monitor how pupil premium funding is spent to ensure that disadvantaged pupils' achievement improves. They also monitor the extra funding for PE and sport well.
- A new chair of governors has been appointed since the previous inspection. The governing body has a range of expertise. Governors have a good knowledge of how well the pupils are achieving. However, they recognise that they have not challenged the school sufficiently about pupils' progress. Greater focus and rigour in the school's approaches to performance management is beginning to result in improved quality of teaching and the outcomes pupils achieve.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Reports from the local governing body highlight pupils' safety as an ongoing priority.
- Pupils are safe and can articulate how the school supports them to stay safe online.
- Staff know pupils well and are fully familiar with the procedures for making referrals should they have concerns about a child. These records are comprehensive and well organised. Vulnerable pupils are monitored carefully. The school works effectively with other agencies to ensure that effective support is in place for pupils who need it.
- All parents, staff and pupils, who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, said that children are safe in school.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Requires improvement**

- Teaching requires improvement, particularly in key stage 1. The quality of teaching is inconsistent because some teachers do not use assessment information to plan sufficiently challenging work for pupils. Nevertheless, the quality of teaching in mathematics, particularly at key stage 2, is improving so that pupils are now making more progress in this subject.
- The teaching of phonics in the early years is effective with children making progress in line with expectations. However, in key stage 1 the quality of teaching in phonics is inconsistent. Pupils at the end of Year 2 do not achieve the required score in the phonics screening recheck.
- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Work is sometimes too easy for pupils, or pupils spend too long going over content they

already know. Where teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, they make better progress.

- Teachers follow the school's agreed approach to providing feedback to pupils. However, they do not check consistently how well pupils are making progress. They do not routinely address misconceptions and as a result, pupils do not make the progress that they are capable of. Senior staff are supporting teachers' planning, with the introduction of new resources and schemes of learning. Nevertheless, the impact is not yet evident in the progress pupils make, particularly in writing.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop their writing are not explored across the curriculum in subjects other than English. Staff do not ensure that spelling is taught consistently, which hinders the progress they make in writing.
- Where teaching is more effective teachers have a secure understanding of pupils' needs and good subject knowledge. Teaching assistants are also used well as an extra resource to support learning.
- The atmosphere, culture and environment in the classrooms and around the school support pupils' learning well. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. This helps these pupils engage in learning alongside their peers. Nonetheless, these pupils do not make consistently good progress because the quality of teaching is not yet good.
- Parents are provided with helpful information on their children's progress. Parents are very positive about the school's work to support their children's learning.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils value their school experience, and are engaged in their learning. They understand the importance of working hard to achieve their best. Pupils show a positive attitude to learning.
- Not all pupils are confident and self-assured. However, the school's culture and ethos provide an environment in which pupils can develop these qualities and support one another. Leaders encourage greater confidence and self-esteem through regular achievement and celebration assemblies.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe, including when online. They know who to speak to if they are concerned. Advice and guidance are provided to parents to help them support their children's safety.
- Pupils are very clear about what bullying is and the different forms it can take, including physical, racist and cyber bullying. They are also clear about the difference between bullying and 'falling out'. Pupils said that there is very little, if any, bullying in the school. Any incidents that happen are quickly dealt with by adults.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and permeates the school's work. Diversity is celebrated well and pupils are given many

opportunities to reflect on their beliefs and those of others through assemblies and extra-curricular opportunities.

- Pupils enjoy opportunities to support others. They abide by a clear moral code and understand right and wrong. For example, older pupils support younger pupils in and outside of the classroom at breaks and lunchtimes, and during the daily running challenge. The school council is active and pupils show a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities as a result of effective support. There are a number of leadership roles that pupils are encouraged to take on. These successfully develop personal responsibility and pupils' sense of civic duty.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and respectful of one another, adults in the school and visitors. Behaviour is good in class, around the school, and during play and lunchtimes. Parents, pupils, governors and staff are positive about how well the pupils behave.
- Pupils are welcoming to visitors, communicate well with each other and with adults who support them. For example, at lunchtimes, pupils interact positively with one another and with adults in a respectful manner. Pupils are helpful and attentive to visitors, show good manners and use appropriate language.
- The school has addressed issues relating to poor attendance of specific groups of pupils. Overall, attendance levels are now in line with national expectations. Leaders and governors analyse information in this area and seek to maximise the attendance of all pupils.

## **Outcomes for pupils**

## **Requires improvement**

- Attainment in key stage 2 tests over the last two years has been below national averages for writing and mathematics. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, did not make sufficient progress, especially in these subjects.
- Pupils currently in the school are making more progress across the curriculum in key stage 2, as a result of recent efforts to improve teaching. Nevertheless, because these changes are recent, pupils are not yet making the progress of which they are capable.
- Not enough pupils are on track to achieve the age-related expectations in phonics in key stage 1. Children achieve good outcomes in the early years and are prepared for the next stage of their education. However, this progress does not continue in Year 1 and Year 2.
- The school has detailed plans to address shortcomings in phonics, mathematics and writing. Revised schemes of learning are focusing more closely on equipping pupils with the skills, knowledge and understanding required to ensure that they make better progress. Staff are targeting pupils' misconceptions and providing greater opportunities for pupils to develop their writing and mathematical skills. As a result, pupils are now making faster progress but this improvement is recent.

- Leaders use pupil premium funding with increasing success to ensure that the relatively low number of disadvantaged pupils are well supported. Staff implement a range of strategies to help pupils to make better progress. However, where the quality of teaching is not yet good, pupils do not achieve the standards they are capable of.
- The relatively low number of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not make good academic progress from their different starting points. However, the school's SEN coordinator ensures that the emotional needs of identified pupils are met through effective pastoral support.

### **Early years provision**

**Good**

- The quality of education provided in the Reception class is good. Children's behaviour in the early years is good. The children feel safe and secure in this setting.
- The Reception teacher has established routines that children know and understand. Consequently, children are ready to learn and are fully attentive. They make good progress in phonics and apply this to early writing skills such as letter formation. Pupils with low starting points make good progress and most children achieve a good level of development. As a result, children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Children willingly initiate their own learning. Teachers and teaching assistants provide strong support. Movement from one activity to another is calm and orderly. Staff care for the children well.
- The early years is well resourced. Children benefit from stimulating and inviting learning environments, both indoors and outside. The Reception class is warm and welcoming.
- The lead for early years is passionate about her role. She has a secure knowledge of early years and is focused on driving through improvements. There is a culture of high expectations in terms of learning and behaviour. Children learn and play together well, displaying empathy and strong social skills. Children are keen to help one another and adults in the classroom.
- Children are integrated well into the setting and arrangements for starting school and for moving to Year 1 are good. Parents are encouraged to get involved with the school from the beginning of their children's time at the school.

## School details

Unique reference number	115526
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10036972

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	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	118
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Mrs Sara Matthews
Headteacher	Mr John Clements
Telephone number	01453 811 220
Website	<a href="http://www.sharpnessprimary.org.uk">www.sharpnessprimary.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@sharpness.gloucs.sch.uk">head@sharpness.gloucs.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	8–9 July 2014

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school did not meet the government's floor standards for 2016, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Sharpness Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. There are five classes.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special



educational needs or an education, health and care plan is also below that found nationally.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed all classes, many in joint observations with senior leaders.
- The inspector looked carefully at pupils' work from all year groups and across a range of subjects.
- Discussions were held with pupils from different year groups. These covered how pupils feel about school, how teachers help them with their learning and how the school keeps them safe. The inspector took into account responses to questionnaires completed by pupils.
- Discussions were held with school leaders, staff, members of the governing body and the local authority. The inspector took into account responses to questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspector looked at the school's evaluation of its own performance, its improvement plan, a number of key school policies and the minutes of meetings of the governing body. He considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector listened to a selection of pupils read.
- The inspector took account of 32 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including a number of free-text responses. The inspector spoke to a number of parents during the inspection.

## Inspection team

Matthew Shanks, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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