

# Scholes (Holmfirth) J & I School

Wadman Road, Scholes, Holmfirth, West Yorkshire HD9 1SZ

## Inspection dates

11–12 July 2018

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

- Leaders have not secured consistently good teaching, learning and assessment across all subjects and year groups. As a result, pupils' progress is variable.
- Many middle leaders are new to their roles. They are not measuring the difference they make to pupils' outcomes. Therefore, improvements to their areas of responsibility are not rapid enough.
- Leaders' plans for improvement lack precision and their checks on the quality of teaching are not rigorous enough. Therefore, they are not able to hold staff to account effectively.
- Learning time in mathematics lessons is not always used efficiently. Pupils do not grasp concepts as quickly as they could because teachers do not always model concepts clearly.
- Reading comprehension skills are not taught consistently well.
- Pupils, particularly the most able, do not always receive work which is sufficiently challenging in English, mathematics and wider curriculum lessons. As a result, pupils' progress is hampered and too few pupils reach the higher standards of attainment.
- Leaders cannot be certain that targets and associated provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are well matched to their needs.
- Pupils' outcomes in writing over the last three years in key stages 1 and 2 have been below average, with the proportion of pupils exceeding the standard expected for their age being particularly low.
- Although recent improvements to pupils' handwriting in their writing books are evident, presentation of work across other subjects remains variable.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have successfully established an ethos which focuses on compassion for others and prioritises the well-being of pupils, parents, carers and staff. As a result, pupils are self-assured, confident learners who are proud of their school.
- Pupils' attendance rates are above average.
- Leaders' evaluations of the school's performance are accurate.
- Teaching in the early years is good and results in children making strong progress.
- Pupils behave well and demonstrate respect for others. Instances of bullying are rare.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that it is good or better, and improve pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics by ensuring that:
  - all pupils, particularly the most able, receive work which is sufficiently challenging
  - the teaching of reading comprehension skills is effective and pupils have frequent opportunities to deepen their understanding of books and extracts
  - teachers make appropriate use of resources and images to model mathematical concepts effectively
  - pupils have regular opportunities to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics
  - writing activities are matched to pupils' needs, with particular regard to support for the least able pupils and challenge for the most able pupils
  - further improvements to pupils' presentation and handwriting are extended across all subjects.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently good or better
  - plans for improving the school are linked precisely to gains in pupils' outcomes
  - governors hold leaders to account effectively in relation to the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' outcomes
  - rigorous and timely monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are used to inform leaders' actions
  - systems for setting and reviewing targets for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are in place, along with regular monitoring and evaluation of provision to make sure that this meets pupils' particular needs
  - middle leaders take responsibility for improvements in teaching, learning and assessment in all subjects, by monitoring and evaluating them effectively.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leaders, including governors, have not been fully effective in ensuring that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and, therefore, pupils' outcomes are consistently good. There has been considerable turbulence in terms of staffing in recent years. A significant number of governors and senior and middle leaders are new to their roles, including the headteacher and both assistant headteachers. Although leadership and staffing are now stable, these changes have slowed the pace of improvement over time.
- Leaders have begun to tackle the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning and this has led to some recent improvements. However, leaders' monitoring of this aspect of the school's performance has not been rigorous or frequent enough to secure rapid and sustained improvement.
- Leaders have established an assessment system which accurately captures pupils' attainment and supports leaders in evaluating pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, teachers are not using this information effectively to ensure that activities are well matched to pupils' needs. As a result, pupils, particularly the most able, do not receive a sufficient level of challenge to enable them to exceed the standards expected for their age.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view of the school's current effectiveness and are clear about the priorities for improvement. However, their plans aimed at manifesting these improvements lack precision and are focused on the completion of actions rather than on the difference they intend to make to pupils' outcomes. This means that leaders and governors are not able to hold colleagues to account effectively. Therefore, improvements are not as rapid as they could be.
- Middle leaders have strong subject knowledge, are passionate about improving the quality of teaching in their area of responsibility and have identified appropriate actions to fulfil this. Although this is heartening, because many are new to their roles, they are not measuring the difference they make to pupils' outcomes. Therefore, their contribution to improvements in teaching and learning is not maximised.
- The special educational needs coordinator is new to post. She has developed systems to ensure the accurate identification of pupils' needs and assessment of their attainment. She has begun to make sure that pupils have appropriate targets which are reviewed regularly. However, these initiatives are at an early stage of implementation and, because of this, leaders cannot be certain that provision is effective in meeting all pupils' needs.
- In partnership with the local authority, leaders have accessed appropriate support to provide professional development for staff aimed at improving the quality of teaching in writing. The school also has plans in place to gain the support of a national leader of education. However, it is too early for leaders to be able to evidence the effect of any external support on pupils' outcomes.
- The positivity and determination shown by the headteacher to raise standards for pupils has ensured that, despite a period of turbulence in staffing, staff morale is high.

Led by the headteacher, the staff engender a 'can do' attitude, which is adopted by almost all pupils readily. Leaders and staff share the view that teamwork will bring about the improvements in the quality of teaching and learning that they desire. This is reflected by pupils in the way in which they work effectively together in learning activities.

- Leaders direct the spending of pupil premium funding with the clear intention of improving disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and broadening their experiences. They make sure that, where needed, disadvantaged pupils are supported through targeted, often bespoke, interventions and they check that provision is having the intended positive effect. This funding is also used to enable disadvantaged pupils to participate fully in extra-curricular clubs and educational visits, including a residential trip. Leaders' evaluations of their spending evidence that the funding is allocated effectively.
- Leaders ensure that the primary physical education (PE) and sport funding is used effectively. Pupils appreciate the wide variety of workshops, clubs and competitions which are available to them, ranging from ballet to rugby and cross country. Leaders check pupils' participation rates and use this to inform their future planning of activities and associated spending.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. A comprehensive schedule of assemblies covers pertinent issues, such as celebrating diversity and building positive relationships. Pupils also benefit from specialist teaching in music lessons, as well as opportunities to learn instruments and perform in the school orchestra and choir, all of which supports their spiritual and cultural development. Through religious education (RE) lessons, pupils develop a secure understanding of a range of faiths. Consequently, pupils demonstrate understanding of and respect for others.

## **Governance of the school**

- Due to leaders' plans for improvement not concentrating on pupils' outcomes tightly enough, governors are not able to hold them to account with suitable rigour. Governors do not have a detailed enough understanding of the quality of teaching and the rate at which leaders are improving it. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent and, therefore, pupils' progress is variable.
- Although governors receive valuable information relating to pupils' outcomes, they struggle to evaluate the progress and attainment of different groups of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. This means that they are unable to challenge leaders effectively about pupils' performance over time.
- Governors take their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding very seriously. The named safeguarding governor has taken part in a range of training opportunities and, therefore, has sound knowledge of safeguarding requirements. Governors are involved in checking on the effectiveness of the school's systems in relation to a variety of aspects of safeguarding. For example, governors check the premises to ensure the health and safety of the occupants. They also scrutinise records relating to staff and volunteers to make sure all are suitable to work with children.
- Governors know the school very well and are committed to contributing to its improvement journey. They are regular visitors to school and take part in a range of

monitoring activities. As a result of this, they have a secure understanding of some of the aspects which need improving and know about the actions leaders are taking to address these.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff undergo comprehensive safeguarding training which ensures that they are knowledgeable about how to keep children safe from harm. Where referrals to designated safeguarding staff or outside agencies are necessary, adults take swift action. The records they keep in relation to this are well maintained.
- Strong relationships exist between pupils and staff, and staff are vigilant to any changes in pupils' behaviour which could indicate a concern. Pupils who made their views known to inspectors say they feel safe in school and that they trust the adults to support them with any worries they may have.
- Leaders, alongside the pastoral team, have built strong relationships with pupils and families whose circumstances make them vulnerable. As a result, parents and carers engage well with the school and communication is strong. The tailored support for families provided by the school is effective in leading to improved pupils' attendance and outcomes.
- Leaders carry out appropriate checks on the suitability of staff working with pupils when making appointments. Records are detailed and well maintained. Therefore, any potential risks to staff and pupils are minimised.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good in all year groups and subjects. Too frequently, learning activities are not well matched to pupils' needs. This is particularly evident for the most able pupils. The school's assessment information and pupils' work in books and in lessons show that pupils' progress is variable across a range of subjects.
- The teaching of writing requires improvement. Too often, activities represent a lack of challenge for the most able and a lack of support for the least able pupils. Therefore, the writing these groups of pupils produce shows that their progress is hampered. Teachers have strong subject knowledge, particularly in relation to English grammar, punctuation and spelling. Although this is a positive starting point, pupils' grammatical errors are often overlooked by teachers and, subsequently, repeated by pupils. Some pupils are motivated to write because they are asked to write about topics from the wider curriculum or in relation to a stimulus, such as an educational visit or workshop. However, leaders are aware that they have not provided teachers with guidance on how best to plan a sequence of learning which builds up the skills pupils need in order to write at length successfully.
- In mathematics lessons and additional targeted sessions, teachers and teaching assistants demonstrate secure subject knowledge. They model mathematical vocabulary appropriately and this is effective in ensuring that pupils understand and use these words. However, teachers' explanations are often lengthened because

resources and images are not used frequently enough to help pupils grasp concepts quickly. Therefore, learning time is not always used efficiently. Pupils also experience too few opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in problem-solving and reasoning contexts. This represents a lack of challenge for pupils of all abilities and means that pupils' progress is not maximised.

- The effective teaching of phonics has been successful in ensuring that pupils have the skills they need to decode words and read fluently. Pupils develop their fluency further through daily opportunities for independent reading. Moreover, leaders have put systems in place which ensure that pupils choose books that they can read without support. However, teaching does not systematically support pupils in developing the skills they need to understand fully the content of the books and extracts they read, for example through inferring meaning. Hence, pupils are not making the progress they are capable of.
- Following the last inspection, leaders have implemented initiatives to improve pupils' presentation of work and handwriting. This is clearly improving the neatness of pupils' work in their writing books. However, pupils' presentation remains variable when they produce work in other subjects.
- The quality of teaching in many of the wider curriculum subjects is variable and, often, pupils do not receive activities which are sufficiently challenging to enable them to develop subject-specific skills as well as they are able. Additionally, the opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their English and mathematical skills in other subjects are too infrequent. However, teaching and learning in music lessons are a strength of the school. A specialist music teacher enables pupils to explore concepts, such as rhythm and tempo, through engaging and suitably challenging activities. As a result, pupils make strong progress in this subject.
- Teaching assistants are effective in providing support for individual pupils and in providing interventions for small groups of pupils. They play a crucial role in ensuring that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive adaptations which enable them to participate fully in lessons. As a result of their support, many targeted pupils make accelerated progress in reading, writing and mathematics, which is effective in helping them to catch up with their peers.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- There are a wide range of leadership roles open to pupils, including opportunities to run extra-curricular clubs for other pupils and to lead on projects to increase other pupils' self-esteem. Pupils appreciate these opportunities and understand that these additional responsibilities teach them valuable skills. Consequently, pupils are self-assured and show considerable levels of maturity and independence.
- Pupils understand the importance of exercise in contributing to a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are involved in supporting other pupils to become involved in the wide range of extra-curricular sports clubs which are on offer. This has been effective in increasing

the participation of pupils who had previously been reluctant to join sports clubs due to a lack of confidence.

- Pupils are taught how to stay safe in a variety of situations. For example, pupils know about how to stay safe when riding their bikes or crossing roads. They understand the potential risks that they face online and know how to avoid these. Pupils are clear about what they would do if the building needed to be evacuated or if a lockdown procedure was required. This knowledge contributes to the feeling of safety which pupils say they experience in the school.
- In lessons, pupils have frequent opportunities to work with their peers to support one another in their learning. As well as ensuring that pupils develop strong team-work skills, it also means that most pupils participate well in lessons and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. However, a very small number of pupils do not always participate fully in paired or group work when the opportunity to do so arises. This is linked to adults not making their expectations for participation clear to all pupils.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders' emphasis on developing a compassionate ethos in the school has ensured that pupils are polite, courteous and considerate of others. Pupils conduct themselves well at breaktimes and lunchtimes, as they play cooperatively with their peers. They are keen to welcome visitors and are proud to be a part of their school.
- Nurture provision has been introduced to support targeted pupils. The staff who teach in this provision possess a high level of expertise in supporting vulnerable pupils to manage their own behaviour. This initiative has been effective in improving pupils' self-confidence and in reducing any incidents of unacceptable behaviour.
- Pupils attend school regularly; they are punctual and ready to learn. Leaders have introduced incentives for good attendance and pupils understand the importance of attending every day. For the small proportion of pupils who are regularly absent, leaders provide additional support which is proving to be effective in improving their attendance.
- Pupils say that instances of bullying and poor behaviour are rare. This is confirmed by the school's detailed records. Pupils know the difference between falling out and bullying and say that they trust the adults in the school to deal with bullying if it did occur.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- In 2016 and 2017, by the end of key stage 2, pupils' progress was below average in reading and was well below average in writing. The proportion of pupils who reached the higher standards of attainment was also below average for these subjects. Unvalidated information for pupils in Year 6 in 2018 shows that these patterns have continued. In mathematics, pupils' progress has been closer to average and the proportions of pupils attaining the expected and higher standards have been in line with or above average over the last three years.



- Outcomes in writing in key stage 1 in 2016, 2017 and 2018 mirror those in key stage 2, with the proportion of pupils reaching and exceeding the standard expected for their age being below average. Attainment in reading and mathematics is more positive, with an average proportion of pupils meeting the standards expected for their age. However, the proportion of pupils exceeding those standards remains below average.
- This inconsistent picture of pupils' outcomes is replicated for pupils across year groups and subjects. Because teaching and learning often lack suitable challenge, not enough pupils exceed the standards expected for their age.
- The majority of pupils enjoy reading and are encouraged to do so through regular opportunities to read to adults, along with frequent sessions where high-quality stories are read to them. However, both of these practices are inconsistently applied by staff and this means that pupils' enthusiasm for reading is variable across year groups.
- Many disadvantaged pupils now benefit from additional teaching, which often supports them in making stronger progress. Despite this, because of the variability in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time, disadvantaged pupils are not always able to catch up with other pupils nationally.
- Following a dip in 2017, the proportion of children who reached a good level of development in Reception in 2018 has increased. This group of children have made good progress from broadly average starting points.
- The proportion of pupils that attained the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been below average for the last four years. However, phonics teaching is now effective and pupils across the key stages are equipped with appropriate skills to decode unfamiliar words.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make similarly variable progress to other pupils in school. While there are signs of improvement in the systems for setting and reviewing targets for this group of pupils, these are at the early stages of implementation. Consequently, progress towards their targets for these pupils is not as rapid as it could be.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- The early years leader is effective in ensuring that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. She has implemented systems to make sure that all adults have sound knowledge of each child's attainment and their needs. This is reflected in adults' questioning of and interactions with children, during which adults skilfully steer and extend learning. As a result, in adult-led activities, children of all abilities are suitably challenged.
- Most children join the early years provision with knowledge and skills which are typical for their age. They make good progress during the Reception Year. Provisional outcomes for 2018 show that the proportion of pupils reaching and exceeding the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and number is average. Children are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Children develop particularly strong language and communication skills. This is because adults encourage them to explain their opinions and their learning frequently. Children are also given a wealth of opportunities to collaborate with their peers. This develops



their speaking and listening skills further and ensures that they are able to cooperate with others well.

- The teaching of phonics is good. During teacher-led phonics sessions, activities are well planned to meet children's needs. Consequently, their early reading skills are consolidated and extended effectively. Adults ensure that children's participation in activities is maximised and, as a result, children show high levels of engagement. Adults make appropriate links to spelling and letter formation. This is effective in supporting children to develop their early writing skills further.
- Children benefit from having a wide range of opportunities to initiate their own learning in both the indoor and outdoor provision. The activities on offer represent a suitable focus on developing children's writing and number skills. However, these child-initiated activities do not always provide sufficient challenge for the most able children. Therefore, opportunities for this group of learners to extend their knowledge, skills and understanding are sometimes missed.
- Adults place a heavy emphasis on designing the provision to encourage children to develop as effective learners. As a result, children enjoy their learning and show high levels of independence and sustained concentration.
- Parents have opportunities to contribute to their child's assessment information by recording and sharing 'wow' moments which have happened outside of school. This supports staff in developing a full picture of each child's interests and stage of development.
- The relationships between adults and children are strong. This, coupled with the high expectations adults have of children's behaviour, ensures that children conduct themselves well. Children are well cared for and their development is nurtured. The welfare of the children is prioritised and all requirements are met. As a result, children in the early years are happy, confident learners.

## School details

Unique reference number	107661
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10048962

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cynthia Osborne
Headteacher	Tina Thornton
Telephone number	01484 682 190
Website	<a href="http://www.scholesji.org.uk">www.scholesji.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head.scholesji@kirkleeseducation.uk">head.scholesji@kirkleeseducation.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	6 February 2018

## Information about this school

- Scholes (Holmfirth) Junior and Infant School is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils in Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning across the school in a range of subjects. Many of these observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, governors, a local authority school improvement partner and a group of staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work, talked to them about their learning and listened to them read. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including playtimes and lunchtimes, was observed. Pupils' opinions about the school were gathered through formal and informal discussions. The 26 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey were also taken into account.
- A range of documentation was viewed, including the school's self-evaluation, the school's improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding documents and monitoring records of the quality of teaching and learning. Information relating to pupils' outcomes, behaviour and attendance was also evaluated.
- Inspectors took account of the opinions of 63 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 43 free-text responses, as well as those of parents who spoke to inspectors at the start of the school day.
- The 14 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire were also considered.

## Inspection team

Karine Hendley, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Don Parker

Ofsted Inspector

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