

Shilbottle Primary School

Shilbottle Grange, Shilbottle, Alnwick, Northumberland NE66 2XQ

Inspection dates

18–19 June 2019

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	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable, particularly in writing and mathematics. Teachers do not plan effectively to fully meet pupils' needs, particularly for less able and middle-attaining pupils, in these subjects.
- In 2018, key stage 2 pupils' progress was weak in reading, writing and mathematics and pupils' attainment was below that found nationally. While there is some evidence of improvements this year, current pupils' progress across key stage 2 is not strong enough in mathematics and writing.
- The academic progress of vulnerable groups such as pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils is not consistently good.
- Leaders' self-evaluation judgements about the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes are too positive. The improvement plans do not fully address all the school's priorities.
- Middle leaders for English and mathematics and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) are all new to their roles. Their actions to bring improvement are at an early stage of implementation and are not fully embedded.
- Governors are supportive and want the school to deliver the best opportunities for pupils. However, they do not provide sufficient challenge to leaders, particularly in relation to pupils' outcomes and the effective spending of pupil premium funding.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has identified the school's priorities accurately. He is developing leadership capacity across the school. Actions to improve pupils' outcomes in key stage 2 are showing early signs of positive effect.
- Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is strong in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders have ensured that children in early years make good progress. Children settle quickly into the school's routines in this nurturing, supportive provision.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare is strong. Pupils develop into caring, considerate and tolerant young citizens.
- The school ethos, clear expectations and positive staff role models ensure good pupil behaviour. Pupils are respectful and well mannered. However, some pupils' attendance is not high enough.
- Parents have a very positive view of the school. The overwhelming majority would recommend the school to another parent.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in key stage 2 by:
 - embedding the developments in mathematics and ensuring that pupils’ mathematical problem-solving and reasoning skills are developed in all year groups
 - improving the teaching of writing so that the quality of pupils’ writing and the accuracy of their English grammar, punctuation and spelling improves
 - having high expectations for the quality of handwriting and presentation in all subjects
 - ensuring that disadvantaged pupils make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics
 - continuing to develop assessment approaches and teachers’ understanding of the school’s pupil progress recording system
 - planning work which supports the learning of lower and middle attaining pupils effectively so that they make good progress in mathematics and writing.
- Strengthen the capacity of leadership so that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and pupils’ progress improve by:
 - sharpening the school’s self-evaluation and improvement plans
 - further developing the role of subject leaders in monitoring school improvements, particularly in English and mathematics
 - develop the role of the SENCo, including checking that the plans for pupils with SEND are implemented in practice
 - developing the role of governors so that they hold leaders to account effectively, including for pupils’ outcomes and the effective spending of pupil premium funding.
- Further improve pupils’ attendance levels, particularly for disadvantaged pupils by:
 - maintaining the school’s focus to encourage good attendance and ensuring that additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils has a positive effect in this aspect.

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

- Since the last inspection, the school's age range has changed from that of a first school to a primary school. Leaders and governors have maintained high levels of attainment in early years and in key stage 1. However, they have not been entirely effective in securing good progress for pupils by the end of key stage 2. Their actions to bring about improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes in key stage 2 are not fully embedded.
- The headteacher has taken appropriate actions to steer the school from a first school to a primary school. He has motivated staff to make the necessary changes to approaches to teaching and assessment. Developments to the building have created an improved learning environment and there are plans in place to further improve outdoor learning areas. Following the weak 2018 key stage 2 results, he has acted promptly to improve pupils' outcomes in mathematics, and there are early signs that this is having a positive effect. He has developed engagement and communication with parents. Overall, parents' responses to the Ofsted survey, Parent View, were very positive about all aspects of the school.
- Leaders' self-evaluation has generally identified relevant priorities, but some of the current judgements are too positive, specifically in relation to pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching and learning. The school improvement plan is beginning to address some priorities, such as improving the teaching of mathematics. However, the targets in the plan are not sharply focused on addressing the school's priorities. There are limited examples of specific measures to evaluate the success of the plan.
- Some subject leaders, such as the leaders for English and mathematics, are relatively new to their roles. The headteacher is providing guidance and opportunities for them to develop their leadership skills. Some are accessing relevant national training, which is enhancing their leadership skills. Consequently, leadership capacity is improving, and these leaders have started to take actions to improve the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility. However, leaders' actions to bring improvements, such as the quality of teaching of mathematics, are not consistently embedded across the school.
- Leaders have created a curriculum which provides effective coverage of the national curriculum. There has been a recent review of the mathematics curriculum and some changes made, which have begun to ensure that this better meets the needs of pupils. The school provides specialist teaching in subjects such as music, physical education (PE) and modern foreign languages. A range of after-school activities successfully enrich the curriculum and enhance pupils' social and physical development.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is interwoven into the life of the school. Links with the local community and the school's caring ethos help pupils develop their understanding of how to be a responsible citizen. Residential visits and visitors into school, such as visiting authors, widen pupil's cultural understanding. The religious education curriculum, combined with visitors from different faiths, is beginning to enhance pupils' understanding of the range of world faiths. Leaders are taking relevant action to widen pupils' understanding of the range of diversity of people found in modern Britain and developing links with schools abroad; some of this work is at an

early stage of development.

- Leaders spend pupil premium funding with variable effect. Enrichment activities, such as supporting residential and curriculum visits, help disadvantaged pupils' personal and cultural development. However, in key stage 2, current disadvantaged pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is not strong enough. While there is emerging evidence that the persistent absence is reducing for some of these pupils, their overall attendance remains below that of others nationally and in school.
- Leaders make effective use of PE and sport premium funding. Pupils have opportunities to engage in a range of competitions and a wider range of sports. They are rightly proud of their achievements in a number of local competitions, which are celebrated in a newsletter to parents. Pupils benefit from specialist PE teaching and there are several after-school clubs which encourage them to adopt healthy lifestyles.
- The SENCo is relatively new to the role. He has received appropriate training related to the local authority arrangements for accessing additional support for pupils with SEND. He intends to undertake the national SENCo training from September. Suitable plans are in place for supporting pupils with SEND. These are highly successful in meeting pupils' social and emotional needs. However, the academic progress made by these pupils is variable and sometimes the identified actions in pupils' plans to support their learning are not fully in place in practice.
- A National Leader for Education (NLE) has started working with the school this term. It is too early to determine the effect of this leadership support.

Governance of the school

- Governors are supportive of the school. They are developing their understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development through visits to the school. Other information, such as the headteacher's report and more recently information from subject leaders, strengthens their understanding of the school's priorities. However, they do not provide sufficient challenge in aspects such as pupils' outcomes and the effectiveness of additional funding, such as pupil premium.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, staff and governors give a high priority to keeping pupils safe. There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose.
- Leaders complete careful safeguarding checks for all staff, governors and volunteers to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. Staff receive regular and appropriate training, which ensures that they know and follow the school's procedures to keep pupils safe.
- Parents' responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, show that the overwhelming majority of parents who responded believe that their children feel safe and happy at the school. Discussions with pupils show that they feel safe and that the adults will support them should they have any concerns or anxieties.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is variable, and this results in pupils making inconsistent progress, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Staff have received training to develop their skills in teaching mathematics. This is beginning to have a positive effect. The teaching of number work and fluency is improving. However, there is still some inconsistency of approach and sometimes the work planned for middle-ability and particularly lower-attaining pupils does not reinforce their mathematical knowledge effectively. The development of pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills is variable across key stage 2.
- Teachers provide pupils with a range of opportunities to write and links to quality texts are beginning to improve the content of pupils' work. However, by the end of Year 6 some of the required fundamentals of English grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting are not consistently evident in pupils' work.
- A focus on widening pupils' vocabulary and developing spelling aims to improve pupils' knowledge and spelling accuracy. Sometimes this teaching is not delivered effectively and does not successfully achieve its intended effect. Consequently, pupils' spelling and vocabulary is not developing in a consistent manner.
- Expectations for the quality of handwriting and presentation are not high enough. By the end of Year 6, while some pupils have a well-formed handwriting style, too many pupils are still printing and sometimes work in books is untidy.
- The headteacher has successfully introduced new approaches to assessment and recording pupils' progress. Staff are now gaining greater ownership and understanding of pupil progress and attainment information. The headteacher has plans for further using this information to better plan learning to meet pupils' current learning.
- Pupils receive regular phonics teaching from starting in Reception. This structured approach is well matched to their needs. Consequently, younger pupils gain strong phonics knowledge, which they use successfully when reading and writing.
- Teachers successfully plan regular reading in school. This is reinforced by reading a range of school library books and reading books at home. Leaders and staff have raised the profile of reading in school. For example, they have developed the library, which provides an attractive area to motivate pupils to read. During the inspection, pupils were excited by a visiting author who was working in school. As a result, pupils develop competent reading skills and a love of reading.
- Relationships in lessons are very positive. Adults and pupils relate well to one another. Pupils cooperate well in pairs or small groups. Teaching assistants are generally deployed effectively to support pupils' personal development and learning needs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils can explain their learning confidently. Assemblies provide opportunities to develop speaking to an audience and sharing their learning.
- Roles in school for pupils to take responsibility, such as through the pupil council, prefects and head boy and head girl, develop pupils' understanding of how to be an active citizen. A group of older pupils were keen to explain to an inspector the work that they were undertaking to create a wildlife garden and the benefits it would bring.
- The school meets pupils' physical and emotional needs effectively. After-school clubs encourage pupils to lead active lifestyles. Playtimes and lunchtimes have a range of activities to encourage active play. Pupils are confident that staff will listen to and help them to address any worries that they have. Staff are well trained in supporting pupils with additional social or emotional needs and they use this to successfully support pupils where required.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms that bullying can take. They believe that bullying is very rare at the school and they are confident that staff will support them with any concerns they may have. School records show that there are few incidents of reported bullying. Where this has been the case, staff deliver prompt guidance and teaching to resolve issues.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in lessons. They cooperate well when working with their peers and they work diligently on independent tasks.
- Throughout the inspection, pupils displayed impeccable manners. They were polite and respectful to staff and to their peers.
- During playtimes and lunchtimes, pupils play games sensibly and socialise well with their friends. There is an extensive range of equipment available for pupils to play with. Pupils mix well, and older pupils keep a watchful eye for younger pupils who need support. Suitable supervision by adults ensures that pupils are safe and pupils know that they have adults to turn to if they have any concerns.
- Leaders' recent actions have reduced the proportion of pupils with persistent absence. However, overall, pupils' attendance is slightly below the national average of schools in similar contexts, and disadvantaged pupils' attendance is too low.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because, in some year groups, current pupils do not make good progress in mathematics and writing. Furthermore, while there is evidence of recent improvements to key stage 2 pupils' outcomes, in 2018 too few

pupils left Year 6 at the expected standard in reading and, particularly, in mathematics.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils are small. These pupils make variable progress in key stage 2. Consequently, not enough of these pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Similarly, the proportion of pupils with SEND in the school are small. Appropriate plans and additional support are in place to help these pupils develop well socially. However, the academic progress of some of these pupils is not strong.
- Pupils' phonics attainment has been consistently high over the last four years. In 2018, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the national phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 was above the national average. Current pupils' assessments show that this high level of pupil attainment has been maintained.
- Staff provide a range of opportunities for pupils to read widely. This helps pupils to develop their reading skills and comprehension, and widens their vocabulary. Pupils from Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6 read competently to an inspector.
- At the end of key stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, both at expected standards and greater depth, is generally above the averages found nationally. Current pupils' attainment has been maintained at these strong standards.
- In pupils' history, geography and science books there is evidence that, overall, pupils successfully develop the relevant age-related knowledge and skills.
- In 2018, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 was well below the national averages. Consequently, their attainment, particularly in mathematics, was too low and they were not well prepared for secondary school. The school's current pupil attainment information indicates that this has improved. However, overall by the end of Year 6, pupils' progress from key stage 1 is still not strong enough.

Early years provision

Good

- Generally, children start in early years with skills which are typical for their age. They settle quickly into Reception and make good progress. The proportion of children who attain a good level of development generally compares well to the national average, and some children go on to exceed the expectations for the end of Reception. As a result, at the end of early years children are well prepared to start Year 1.
- The quality of teaching in early years is strong. Staff provide an effective balance of adult-led teaching combined with provision where children choose activities for themselves to support their learning. Adults use questioning successfully to deepen children's learning. While there are opportunities for children to write independently, these are not as well organised or motivational as they could be.
- Staff make good use of opportunities to develop learning beyond the classroom. They make good use of the school grounds and regular 'beach school visits' to provide a curriculum which widens children's horizons.
- The experienced early years leader has a good understanding of effective curriculum and provision for Reception children. She has ensured that teaching meets children's needs well, and that children's outcomes are strong. Leaders make appropriate use of

additional funding provided to support disadvantaged children's learning, such as purchasing additional resources for reading in school and at home.

- As in other areas of the school, children's personal development is a strength in early years. Well-considered transition arrangements are in place to help children make a prompt start in Reception. Staff set high expectations for behaviour and children settle well into the class routines.
- Partnerships with parents and other agencies are very positive. Staff engage and communicate effectively with parents. Links with other agencies ensure that children receive support where required.
- Safeguarding is effective, and all welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	122238
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10087662

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	149
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Wilson
Headteacher	Gary Parnaby
Telephone number	01665 575 285
Website	www.shilbottle.northumberland.sch.uk
Email address	admin@shilbottle.northumberland.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 March 2009

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- All of the pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is below that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is below that found nationally.
- The school became a primary school in September 2016.
- The headteacher was appointed in January 2017.
- The school is receiving support from an NLE.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in lessons and part-lessons across the school. The headteacher joined the lead inspector for all his observations in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the SENCo, the subject leaders for English and mathematics and the leader of the early years.
- The lead inspector met with two governors, including the chair of the governing body, and reviewed documents relating to the work of the governing body.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around school and reviewed the school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They observed pupils in the playground and around school.
- Six pupils in total from Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6 read their reading books to an inspector and discussed how the school supports their reading development.
- Inspectors talked with pupils throughout the inspection to discuss their opinions about the school and their learning.
- Inspectors took account of the 57 responses to Ofsted's online parent survey, Parent View. An inspector met with a number of parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including information about pupils' achievement, the school's evaluation of its own performance and its development plans. They reviewed records of behaviour and attendance, and information relating to safeguarding. The inspectors scrutinised samples of pupils' work in their books across a wide range of curriculum areas.

Inspection team

Michael Reeves, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Deborah Ashcroft

Ofsted Inspector

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