

Inspection of good school: Shirley Infant School

Wilton Road, Southampton, Hampshire SO15 5XE

Inspection dates:

24–25 September 2019

Outcome

Shirley Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Shirley Infants is a friendly, welcoming school where people put children first. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds, but everyone gets on well together. One parent described it as being 'like a family'.

Pupils work hard and try to do their best. They know that all who work at the school have high expectations and want pupils to be successful. As a result, pupils achieve well in the school, as they have done in the last few years.

Everyone is full of praise for children's behaviour. One lunchtime supervisor described it as 'brilliant'. Pupils behave well in lessons. They listen carefully and join in enthusiastically. They want to do well. Pupils' behaviour is as strong around the school and on the playground as it is in class.

Pupils learn to be respectful. They understand that everyone has important rights and that it is important to value and uphold these. This belief lies at the heart of the school's work.

Pupils feel safe. They trust staff to look after them and to deal with any worries that arise. Pupils understand bullying, but they say that it almost never happens. Adults are good at sorting it out quickly.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders want pupils to enjoy the best education possible. Staff are fully behind them. Teachers have nurtured a love of learning in pupils, who also want to do well.

Teachers are clear about what pupils will learn in each subject, every term. They plan lessons that build on pupils' previous learning, so pupils know more and can do more as they go through the school. Senior leaders have made sure that the subjects taught meet the requirements of the national curriculum fully. The curriculum in the great majority of

subjects is really well planned.

Reading is a vital part of the school's curriculum. As soon as children join the school in Reception, they start to learn to read. Teachers are skilled at teaching reading. They introduce new learning carefully, checking that everyone understands. Pupils have regular opportunities to practise their learning from previous lessons, so that they do not forget. Staff spot any who start to slip behind and help them to catch up quickly. Teachers read to pupils regularly. This captures pupils' interest and creates an appetite for reading. Pupils achieve well and almost all leave the school as capable readers.

This same thoughtful approach to learning is seen in all subjects. Teachers sequence lessons carefully, so that pupils build new knowledge and skills securely. Teachers do not rush. Pupils have time to get to grips with new ideas. For example, in mathematics, tasks are carefully selected to help pupils fully understand place value. Pupils explained clearly what they had learned. The same was true in geography when pupils were learning about map-reading.

Pupils' written work also shows that they are progressing through the curriculum and learning well. However, in Year 1, some pupils' work contained repeated mistakes in letter and number formation. Teachers remind pupils how to form their letters accurately, although some pupils still struggle with this.

Teachers skilfully help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The inclusion manager leaves no stone unturned in working with staff to enable pupils who struggle to keep up. Staff understand these pupils' needs and help them to achieve well.

The school provides well for pupils' wider personal development. From a young age, pupils learn to appreciate and respect differences in people's beliefs. Teachers help them to understand tolerance in a range of ways, for example by learning about local football rivalries. Several clubs give pupils a range of extra opportunities and experiences beyond the school day.

The early years curriculum covers all areas of learning. It provides a clear pathway to prepare children for Year 1. Children settle into school quickly. They understand and follow the classroom routines. This leads to a calm place where children can learn and behave well. They get on with staff and their classmates, learning to take turns and share. Children become absorbed in their learning in the well-resourced classrooms and outdoor areas. Teachers provide an exciting range of activities to help children learn well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Senior leaders have a clear picture of the possible risks that pupils in this community face. They make sure that all who work in the school receive up-to-date training in safeguarding. They are determined that everyone in the school is well equipped to take care of pupils.

The school's policies and practices are rooted in senior leaders' firm conviction that, 'It could happen here.' One staff member explained that what they notice, 'could be one piece of a much bigger jigsaw'. Staff understand this and so report even minor concerns, making sure that pupils remain safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Senior leaders made sure during the last academic year that the subjects taught meet the requirements of the national curriculum fully. In the majority of subjects, the curriculum is carefully planned and sequenced. Teachers use these plans effectively to enable pupils to learn and progress well through the curriculum overall. However, in a small number of foundation subjects, such as geography, pupils' achievement is not quite as good. Leaders should continue their work to further strengthen the curriculum so that pupils make the same strong progress across the full range of subjects.
- Some pupils in Year 1 do not form letters and numbers accurately in their written work. Senior leaders should ensure that all pupils learn how to form letters and numbers accurately early on, so they develop good habits.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	138903
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10111270
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	269
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Ellis
Headteacher	Cate Gregory
Website	www.shirleyinfantschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 January 2016

Information about this school

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged Shirley Infant School to be good in May 2011.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher throughout the inspection. Our discussions included: leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement; the design and implementation of the curriculum and how well it enables pupils to achieve; pupils' behaviour; and how leaders ensure staff's well-being.
- I had telephone conversations with the chair of trustees of the Hamwic Education Trust and the trust's chief executive officer.
- I considered reading, mathematics and geography in some detail. We carried out linked activities to gather evidence about how well the curriculum enables pupils to gain knowledge and skills. These included discussions and meetings with senior leaders and the leaders of each of these subjects. Meetings were held with the inclusion manager and the leader of early years.
- We visited lessons in all year groups, including Reception. Senior leaders joined in these lesson visits. We also spoke to pupils and teachers from these lessons. Where

possible, we looked at the work of these pupils. I observed teachers listening to pupils read. This included pupils with SEND.

- I considered 104 responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey, together with 62 written responses. There were 27 responses to the staff survey and none to the pupil survey.
- A range of activities were conducted to understand how well pupils are kept safe in the school. I had a meeting with the headteacher and looked at records relating to various aspects of safeguarding. This included looking at the record of the checks carried out on people who work in the school. We spoke to pupils, parents and carers, and staff throughout the inspection to consider their views and understanding of safeguarding.

Inspection team

Bruce Waelend, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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