

Inspection of a good school: Shotton Hall Primary School

Waveney Road, Peterlee, County Durham SR8 1NX

Inspection dates:

22–23 October 2019

Outcome

Shotton Hall Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Shotton Hall Primary is a caring and supportive school. Leaders have created a family atmosphere and a 'haven' for those that need it. Pupils are happy and enthusiastic. They have good relationships with their teachers and other adults. Everyone respects each other's rights to learn in a calm and positive environment. Pupils told me they enjoy going to school because staff are kind and helpful. As one parent said, 'Nothing is too much for the school and things are dealt with quickly and positively; they are a fantastic support network to my child and myself.'

Pupils feel safe. Leaders expect the best of pupils. Leaders and staff insist on good behaviour as a minimum. Staff only reward exceptional behaviours. Pupils try hard to live up to these expectations. Bullying is rare but is dealt with by staff swiftly should it occur. When pupils have concerns, they are dealt with fairly by staff. Pupils enjoy playing with their friends and work hard in lessons. They trust staff with their worries and believe they are treated with respect.

Leaders make sure that pupils' specific needs are met. Pupils told me they enjoy a wide range of subjects, trips and activities, including using the forest school. They value being told about other religions and cultures and have a good understanding of the wider world. Staff also enjoy working in the school and feel well supported by school leaders.

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

Leaders are determined that all pupils should succeed in developing their basic skills in English and mathematics. Leaders and teachers also expect pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding equally well in all other subjects. The order in which key facts and key words are taught has been well planned. This helps children to remember the most important ideas they have been taught. Pupils also recap important knowledge on a regular basis. This helps pupils have better informed discussions. In history, pupils were able to discuss the differences between Viking and Roman times by recalling important information. Leaders have also looked closely at the knowledge, skills and

attitudes pupils will need in order to become confident young people. However, the planning of subjects other than English and mathematics is not tied in with what children are being taught in early years.

School leaders have established a programme of work to help pupils love reading and stories. An understanding of the power of books is at the heart of what the school is striving to achieve. Pupils are excited by the stories that are shared with them. They talk avidly about their favourite books and writers. Pupils also talk about the new words and ideas they have come across in their storytime. Teachers choose books very carefully from a list of 'must read' books. Teachers also choose their own favourite books to share with children.

Leaders noticed a rare dip in the number of pupils who know their letters and the sounds by the end of Year 1 last year. Subject leaders have worked hard to improve matters and address any gaps. The way that phonics is taught has been reorganised. Changes in staffing and better teaching make sure pupils now get accurate and precise help with developing their phonic knowledge. Pupils that needed to catch up have done so. Those that fall behind are being given extra help. Some pupils' reading is stilted and hesitant. Pupils' reading books match their phonic knowledge, but do not always lead to children reading with confidence and fluency.

The way lessons are ordered in mathematics is effective. Clear plans show how learning is developed from the Reception class through to Year 6. Teachers know the subject well and quickly spot any gaps in understanding that pupils may have. Pupils achieve well in mathematics.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) thrive because they have their specific needs met with additional help and resources, when needed. They also receive extra help individually or in small groups, but this does not mean that they miss important learning in other subjects.

Pupils get regular lessons and assemblies that help them understand and celebrate the wider world and the different types of people they may come across. A planned set of visits and access to the outdoors builds their self-reliance. Pupils are encouraged to stick at things and are given challenges to develop perseverance. Pupils develop a keen sense of right and wrong.

Pupils like their lessons and say they can concentrate on their work. They seldom get disturbed. Pupils who find controlling their emotions difficult get good advice and support from staff. Pupils' attendance has improved. The number of children who have missed a lot of school has also decreased markedly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture about keeping children safe both in school and beyond the school gate. Leaders understand the risks pupils might face and build sequences of

lessons to help them understand what to do if they feel worried. Pupils are clear about staying safe when online. Checks are in place to make sure that staff are suitable to work with children. All staff are well trained in how to pick up on issues and what to do if they have a concern. Leaders keep a careful eye on emerging issues and potential risks to pupils. Leaders make sure that staff are aware of these.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils can decode their books accurately, but do not always do so quickly enough to become fluent readers. Leaders need to make sure that pupils get enough opportunities to practise their decoding, including by re-reading familiar texts, so that they develop into confident readers.
- Planning in subjects other than English and mathematics does not systematically build on pupils' prior learning from the early years curriculum. This slows the progress pupils make as they move into Year 1. Leaders should make sure that all subjects reflect the whole-school progression evident in the English and mathematics curriculum planning across the school.

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.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 2016.

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	135838
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10110825
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	350
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carole Barclay
Headteacher	Anita Boyd
Website	www.shottonhallprimary.durham.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	19–20 April 2016

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND that are receiving support is lower than that found nationally.
- The school provides extended childcare provision through running breakfast and after-school clubs. These are managed by the governing body.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, I spoke with pupils in selected groups, in lessons and at playtimes. I spoke with the governing body, a representative from the local authority, the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff. I looked at a range of documents including those about attendance, safeguarding and checks on the suitability of staff.
- I looked at 38 responses from parents and carers in response to Parent View (Ofsted's online survey). I spoke to a number of staff individually about what it is like to work at the school.
- I looked in depth at reading, mathematics and history. This involved talking to subject

leaders, classroom teachers and pupils. I watched some parts of lessons and looked at examples of pupils' work. I also listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

Jonathan Brown, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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