

Inspection of a good school: Shute Community Primary School

Haddon Road, Shute, Axminster, Devon EX13 7QR

Inspection date:

29 September 2021

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy their time at this small, friendly village school. The school is a calm, safe and happy place for pupils to learn. Children get off to a flying start in the vibrant Nursery class. Pupils quickly establish a love of school. This is reflected in their thirst for learning. This strong start ensures that they are well prepared for their Reception year.

Leaders have introduced a set of learning expectations. They expect pupils to follow these, and they do. As a result, pupils behave well in lessons and during social times. Pupils are adamant that bullying is not an issue. They know who to talk to if they have a concern. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet and mobile technology.

The quality of the curriculum needs to improve. Some staff do not have high enough expectations of what pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can achieve. Furthermore, in some subjects, curriculum plans are not well thought out.

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

The school has been through a turbulent period. The new executive headteacher has had a significant impact on the school in a short period of time. Staff are positive about the recent improvements made since the school joined the Devon Moors Federation. The new federation governors have quickly got to know the strengths and weaknesses in the school. However, leaders' plans for improvement have been hampered by the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

For pupils with SEND, the curriculum does not meet their needs well enough. Individual support plans are not precise enough. They do not provide teachers with the appropriate information they need to plan an ambitious curriculum. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not reach their full potential.

The curriculum is not well thought out, including in the early years. For example, in history, curriculum plans do not set out what pupils need to know and understand. The content pupils study is not well organised across the curriculum. This leads to some pupils having a confused understanding of essential knowledge. Furthermore, teachers' checks of what pupils have learned are not precise enough. Consequently, pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding.

Children in the Nursery class begin learning to read as soon as they start school. The curriculum helps children to quickly develop speech and communication skills. This prepares them well to learn how to read. Pupils use their phonics skills confidently to read words. Staff check on pupils' phonics knowledge regularly. They make sure pupils are confident in using their new skills before they move to the next stage. This ensures that pupils do not have any gaps in their knowledge. There are effective systems in place to support pupils who find reading tricky. This additional support is helping pupils to catch up quickly. However, once pupils have learned how to read, the curriculum is not well thought out. This means that pupils do not continue to develop reading as well as they should.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development well. Trips and visits are an integral part of school life. Pupils enjoy the wide range of opportunities on offer, in particular the outdoor learning provision. They say that this helps them to develop their team building and resilience. A wide range of clubs and activities contribute to pupils' enjoyment of school. Pupils raise funds for many local and international charities.

Pupils behave well in lessons. Expectations for learning are quickly established in the early years. These expectations are applied consistently across the school. Well-trained staff provide suitable support for pupils who find learning more challenging.

Staff appreciate the support they get from leaders. Teachers who are early in their careers feel well supported. Staff say that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspectors agreed that further curriculum development, including provision for pupils with SEND, may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff, including governors, receive regular and up-to-date training. Leaders carry out appropriate checks on new staff to ensure that they are safe to work with children. An effective programme of induction ensures that staff know how to report any concerns. Leaders record any incidents promptly and ensure that they are followed up. Leaders have developed strong relationships with external agencies to ensure that pupils and families get the support they need. Staff teach pupils how to stay safe and pupils know how to respond appropriately if they do not feel safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils with SEND do not experience a high-quality curriculum. Support plans do not meet their academic needs consistently well. Consequently, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders need to ensure that the content of the curriculum and support plans is suitably ambitious so that all pupils reach their full potential.
- Curriculum plans are not well organised, including in the early years. They do not set out the knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. This leads to pupils not knowing and understanding what they should. Leaders must ensure that they develop curriculum plans that are well organised and support pupils in building their knowledge.
- The curriculum for reading in key stage 2 is not well organised. Leaders have not considered what they want pupils to know by the end of each year. This leads to gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding by the end of Year 6. Leaders need to ensure that the content of the key stage 2 reading curriculum is well thought out so that pupils secure the appropriate knowledge and skills.

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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2012.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 the school and 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

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| Unique reference number | 113109 |
| Local authority | Devon |
| Inspection number | 10200107 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 83 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Chris Dack |
| Head of School | Patrick Germscheid |
| Website | www.shute-primary.org.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 27 September 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- In January 2021, Shute Community Primary School joined the Devon Moors Federation.
- The school has pre-school provision that is managed by the governing body.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, head of school, curriculum leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, a representative from the local authority, teaching and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning, looked at samples of pupils' work and listened to pupils read.

- Inspectors examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to attendance.
- Inspectors scrutinised safeguarding records, tested staff's safeguarding knowledge and spoke with pupils. The lead inspector also met with the designated safeguarding leader.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. They also took into consideration the responses to the survey for staff.

Inspection team

Matt Middlemore, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lisa Dadds

Ofsted Inspector

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