

Inspection of a good school: Shipham Church of England First School

Turnpike Road, Shipham, Winscombe, Somerset BS25 1TX

Inspection date:

4 July 2023

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. They are confident and keen to share their thoughts and ideas. When describing the school, pupils say it is a welcoming place where bullying is rare. One pupil commented that 'seasons come and go, but here friendship stays forever.'

While they enjoy learning, pupils do not reach their full potential. This is because the reading curriculum is neither well sequenced nor taught well enough. Across the rest of the curriculum, pupils are developing their understanding. Trips, such as a visit to Bristol Museum to learn about ancient civilisations, enhance pupils' learning.

Adults foster warm, nurturing relationships with pupils. This means pupils feel safe and well cared for. However, the expectations of pupils' behaviours for learning are not consistently high. Adults do not always address disruption, such as calling out, in lessons. Learning is interrupted. As a result, pupils are not able to learn as well as they should.

Parents value the opportunities their children have to 'embrace the outdoors and learn how to look after their world'. Activities, including forest school, gardening and looking after the school chickens, help pupils to develop a sense of responsibility.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all learners. They have overhauled the curriculum. It now meets the aims and breadth of the national curriculum. In many areas, it is well designed and sequenced to develop pupils' knowledge over time.

Leaders have prioritised phonics and have adopted a systematic approach to the teaching of reading. This has brought about increased clarity and structure. Training for staff has

developed their knowledge of how to teach the phonics curriculum. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to recap and practise what they know. They provide support for pupils with gaps in their understanding. However, staff do not always demonstrate the correct use of sounds or ensure that pupils are secure in their knowledge before moving learning on. While adults ensure that pupils read regularly, the books they give them to read are not always well matched to their starting points. This prevents pupils from reading with fluency. Leaders are aware that there are still inconsistencies in the quality of phonics teaching and are taking action to address this, although the impact of these actions is yet to be seen. In addition, the reading curriculum beyond phonics is not cohesive. Leaders have not identified the small steps of knowledge pupils will learn. As a result, learning that teachers provide for pupils does not always support them to develop their reading knowledge. Despite weaknesses in the curriculum, teachers across the school read stories to pupils with enthusiasm.

The work to develop pupils' language is having a positive impact. In Nursery, adults model language to children in an interactive way. Alongside clear routines and high expectations, this sets the foundation for future learning. Across the school, teachers support pupils to articulate themselves with growing confidence. However, they do not check well enough pupils' understanding. They do not consistently identify what pupils know and can do and adapt learning in light of this. This hinders pupils' ability to build their knowledge well and to deepen learning further.

Leaders aim to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. Most pupils with SEND access the full curriculum offer. Staff provide resources to meet their sensory needs and help them to understand routines. Although there is a clear pathway in place to seek extra help, plans to address pupils' learning needs can lack precision. This impacts upon how well staff support pupils.

The curriculum for personal development is a strength of the school. It helps to widen pupils' understanding of the world beyond Shipham. It teaches them how to keep themselves safe. They know about healthy relationships and how to keep their bodies private. They have a deep understanding of online safety, explaining how to protect themselves by, for example, using strong passwords. Leaders carefully choose resources to develop pupils' knowledge of diversity. As a result, pupils are understanding of equality and tolerant of others. They are prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils' spiritual development is well supported. Singing assemblies are uplifting for all involved. They help to build a community feeling.

Leaders and those responsible for governance support staff well. They keep an open dialogue for them to raise any concerns. Collaborative working as part of the trust has developed staff knowledge and helped to make their workload more manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All members of this school community maintain a clear culture of 'it could happen here'. They know pupils and their families well and notice any changes in their manner. All staff

know how to report and record any concerns they may have. Leaders act upon these and take swift action to make sure pupils are safe. The emotional literacy support assistant ensures that pupils are well supported during difficult times.

Leaders, trustees and governors all check on the school's safeguarding work. This includes making sure recruitment checks are carried out for all members of staff.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The reading curriculum beyond phonics lacks clarity and cohesion. Furthermore, the phonics curriculum is not implemented well enough. As such, pupils do not read as well as they should. Leaders need to ensure that the reading curriculum is systematically developed and consistently implemented to ensure that pupils reach their full potential in reading.
- Expectations of pupils' behaviours for learning are not consistently high. As a result, pupils do not always learn as well as they should, and learning is disrupted. Leaders need to support teachers to develop and apply strategies to ensure that the behaviour of all pupils is managed consistently well.
- Assessment is not used well enough. This means that teachers do not routinely check pupils' understanding or build upon their starting points. Leaders need to ensure that assessment is developed to enable teachers to identify what pupils know and can do. Teachers need to use this information to adapt learning.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually, this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Shipham Church of England First School, to be good in May 2013.

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.

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	147823
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10287470
Type of school	First
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	71
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Brian Kirkup
Headteacher	Will Ewens
Website	www.shiphamfirst.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Shiphams Church of England First School converted to become an academy school in April 2020. When its predecessor school, Shiphams Church of England First School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school has undergone considerable change in the last three years. The headteacher joined the school immediately prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the return to school following the pandemic, there have been significant changes to staffing.
- The school is part of the Wessex Learning Trust.
- This is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Bath and Wells. The school received its section 48 inspection under the Education Act for schools of a religious character in December 2019, when it was judged to be good.
- There is an on-site Nursery and pre-school for children aged two years upwards.
- The school provides wraparound care through breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, groups of staff, parents, groups of pupils, representatives from the Wessex Learning Trust and the chair of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1 and 2 read to an adult.
- The lead inspector visited the Nursery setting.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about behaviour, bullying and personal development.
- Inspectors spoke with staff to see how leaders support their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, responses to the staff survey and responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Steph Matthews, lead inspector

Seconded Inspector

Greg Chantler

Ofsted Inspector

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