

Inspection of Shepley First School

Firth Street, Shepley, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD8 8DD

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 April 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Shepley First School is at the heart of the local community. There is a real sense of belonging and togetherness from the pupils, staff, parents and the governing body. The school wants the very best for every pupil. Their motto of 'Being the best that we can be' accurately captures the ambition of this caring school community.

The school has high expectations for all pupils' achievements. Published outcomes are high and standards are maintained consistently well. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are well prepared for their next stage of education.

Pupils learn in a calm and orderly atmosphere. They behave well. Older pupils understand their responsibility to be role models for the younger pupils. Positive friendships are not defined by age. All pupils care for and look out for each other. Pupils of all ages arrive on time and attend well. The school takes timely action to support any pupil whose absence is becoming a concern.

Leaders and staff understand the importance of building warm and positive relationships with their pupils. This starts from the time that pupils join the school in Reception. Pupils feel safe. They are well cared for by a dedicated staff team, whose members know them individually. Any pupils who need help to manage their emotions and behaviour are supported extremely well.

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

Leaders have developed a culture of ambition for all. There is a continuous drive for excellence at the school. Leaders are supported well by an experienced governing body. Governors have an accurate understanding of the strengths and any further development priorities. Staff feel valued. They have a voice and are listened to. They are fully committed to working with leaders to put in place any further changes. Everyone who is part of the school is working to ensure that the offer for its pupils is of the highest standard.

The school has focused on revising and implementing a new curriculum. Most of the curriculum is well sequenced and implemented effectively. In subjects such as art and design, leaders have considered the need for pupils to reflect on the differences of the artists they study. This helps pupils to understand and celebrate diversity in the wider world.

In geography, leaders have ensured that the essential knowledge pupils should learn, from Reception to Year 5, is clearly mapped out and builds on prior learning. The school has woven in opportunities for pupils to fully appreciate and investigate their locality, which is rich in opportunities. For example, pupils in Year 4 take part in a local river study. In addition, all pupils at the school take part in 'Muddy Puddle' sessions. These are regular opportunities for pupils to apply their learning within the school grounds and woodlands.

In some subjects, curriculum leadership is relatively new. In these subjects, leaders do not have a secure understanding of how well pupils are learning. They do not have a consistent understanding of how, as leaders, they can effectively support staff to deliver high-quality lessons.

The school has embedded a new approach for the teaching of reading. Children start this curriculum straight away in Reception. Pupils learn in small groups. This ensures that they are working on the exact knowledge they need to grow in confidence as they learn to read. Leaders are vigilant in ensuring that any gaps in pupils' early reading are identified swiftly. Pupils receive the support they need to catch up quickly. They enjoy reading and can explain why it is so important.

In mathematics, pupils learn from carefully sequenced steps of learning. This builds their knowledge of important mathematical concepts. In the early years, staff focus on children understanding number in greater depth, before using numbers to solve problems. Leaders have developed a school-wide approach to using concrete materials to support pupils' learning. Leaders' monitoring of these curriculum developments is not regular enough. This means that there are some inconsistencies in the implementation of the curriculum.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with SEND accurately. Staff include pupils with SEND fully in all lessons. There is a comprehensive plan in place to ensure that staff access the appropriate training to support the needs of all pupils. Staff are quick to step in if a pupil needs extra support.

In Reception, there is a clear, considered curriculum in place, which prepares the children well for Year 1. This includes the development of their independence skills. For example, children are encouraged to dress themselves in waterproofs and wellington boots for their 'muddy puddle' sessions outside. There are, however, some missed opportunities for children to make choices of their own and apply their learning through the wider provision on offer. Some of the resources and tasks within the learning environment are limiting and do not encourage children to make their own decisions.

The school has considered the offer that pupils have for their personal development well. Aspects of wider emotional well-being, such as pupils' spiritual development, have been carefully and deliberately planned. For example, pupils can explore how they feel about themselves and their relationships with others. The school focuses on developing pupils' sense of awe and wonder about the natural world.

The school teaches pupils how to stay safe both within the local community and when using the internet. Pupils can discuss the rules of e-safety when online and know why these are important. Pupils talk confidently about how they can promote good mental health.

Parents recognise that the school is going from strength-to-strength since the recent leadership changes. One parent captured the thoughts of many, informing

inspectors, 'All the staff go above and beyond. Relationships with the community, friends of Shepley and the parents are being nurtured and the future is bright for this wonderful school.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the school does not monitor the implementation of the curriculum regularly enough. This means that leaders do not have a secure understanding of how well pupils are learning. The school should ensure that all leaders are supported to make regular, focused checks on all curriculum areas and address any inconsistencies in implementation.
- In the early years, there are some missed opportunities for pupils to make choices of their own and apply their learning through the wider provision on offer. The school should ensure that the learning environment reflects the ambition of the curriculum, providing children with opportunities to make choices, decisions and apply or practise their learning independently.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	107663
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10268087
Type of school	First school
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	170
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lucy Bradley
Headteacher	Becky Adams
Website	www.shepleyschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 May 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher took up their substantive positions in September 2022.
- The school has a breakfast club and an after-school club run by an external provider.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, staff and members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspectors also met with a representative from the local authority and other leaders within the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and design and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents shared through Ofsted Parent View. They gathered the views of pupils and staff through surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Sarah Gordon, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Zoe Helman

His Majesty's Inspector

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