

# Inspection of Sheldwich Primary School

Lees Court Road, Sheldwich, Faversham, Kent ME13 0LU

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Inspection dates: 21 and 22 May 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
The quality of education	<b>Outstanding</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The headteacher of this school is Sarah Garrett. This school is a single-academy trust. The school is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Milham.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are extremely happy at Sheldwich Primary School. Right from the start of early years, children learn how to make friends, and how to be a good friend. Pupils of all ages play together happily in the school's extensive outdoor grounds. Staff know each pupil extremely well, and pupils and their families view the school as a 'big family'. Pupils told inspectors that they could not think of anything that could be improved about their school.

Pupils particularly appreciate the broad range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. Coding and chess clubs are particularly popular. Pupils have opportunities to take part in a very broad range of inter-school sports, and leaders ensure that every pupil will have had this opportunity by the end of Year 6.

Expectations are consistently high. The school ensures that every pupil gets the teaching and support that they need to achieve the best possible outcomes. Pupils learn to be responsible for their own behaviour and learning. Pupils consistently demonstrate highly positive attitudes to learning. They behave extremely well. Pupils take great pride in upholding the school's values of determination, resilience, friendship, honesty, respect, happiness and kindness. Pupils' attendance is very high, because pupils enjoy coming to school.

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

The school provides an exceptionally strong education. Expert and passionate teachers deliver the school's well-sequenced curriculum. Teachers carefully check pupils' developing knowledge and understanding and ensure that all pupils have opportunities to revisit and secure key knowledge. The school has ensured that all teachers have a strong understanding of how to adapt learning to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Last year, however, older pupils did not achieve as well as they might have in writing, and this was reflected in the school's outcomes at the end of key stage 2. The school has taken rapid and effective action to further strengthen the teaching of writing. As a result, pupils of all ages now write to a very high standard. As a result, pupils now achieve very well in all subjects.

The school introduced a new approach to teaching early reading in September 2022. This approach is now fully embedded. All staff have expert knowledge of how to teach early reading. Very careful assessment and support means that any pupil at risk of falling behind is quickly identified and provided with expert support that enables them to catch-up quickly. Alongside successfully teaching pupils how to decode words, the school works carefully to develop pupils' love of reading. Teachers regularly read aloud to children in early years and to older pupils. All pupils, including those who have found learning to read harder, have highly positive attitudes to reading and can talk about their reading preferences with great enthusiasm. Older pupils read widely and regularly, and this supports their learning in all areas of the curriculum.

Children can join the pre-school, Little Hedgehogs, when they are two and a half years old. Staff in the pre-school have expert knowledge of child development. They develop very positive and caring relationships with children and their families. This helps all children to settle quickly and enables them to fully engage in learning and play. Children receive highly effective support in learning to regulate their feelings and emotions. The school have put in place an extremely well-developed early years curriculum. Careful consideration has been given to ensuring there is a clear progression from the pre-school into Reception. Staff ensure that children have new experiences that support their developing understanding of the world at every stage. Children develop highly positive attitudes to learning in early years and maintain these positive attitudes throughout their time at Sheldwich Primary School.

The school provide very effective support for pupils' personal development. Personal, social and health education (PSHE), which includes relationships and sex education (RSE) is taught very well. The youngest children learn, for example, about different kinds of families, while older pupils can talk confidently about the protected characteristics, equality and diversity. Children in early years learn to value difference, and each other's cultural and religious heritage. Older pupils know that each individual's unique characteristics make them special and should be valued. A strong culture of respect runs through the school. An extensive range of trips and visits support the planned curriculum and broadens pupils' cultural capital. Pupils contribute within and beyond the school, for example, by fundraising for the school, and for a range of local charities selected by the school council.

Trustees and leaders have a very clear vision for the school. They know that every lesson and every moment of the school day matters. They ensure that as a single-academy trust, the school remains outward looking, with a constant focus on refining and sharpening their offer for pupils. Staff receive highly effective support, both for their wellbeing, and to ensure that they have the expertise required to deliver the ambitious curriculum.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137397
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10321945
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	273
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair</b>	David Milham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Garrett
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sheldwich.kent.sch.uk">www.sheldwich.kent.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school provides before- and after-school care.
- The school is registered to admit children into their pre-school from the age of two. Most children are two and a half when they join the pre-school.
- The school is not currently using any 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.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and the assistant headteacher. The lead inspector met with representatives of the school's board of trustees, including the chair of the board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and computing and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. For the reading deep dive, the lead inspector listened to pupils reading. Early years was included within all deep dives. Inspectors discussed the curriculum for early years and some other subjects with leaders and looked at samples of pupils' work in these subjects.
- Inspectors considered pupils' behaviour and attitudes throughout the inspection and discussed the school's analysis of pupils' behaviour and attendance with leaders.
- Inspectors considered personal development through all deep dives. They met with leaders to discuss the school's personal development programme, including the curriculum for PSHE and relationships education. Inspectors talked to pupils about PSHE and other aspects of the school's personal development programme.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.

### **Inspection team**

Alice Roberts, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Leah Morgan	Ofsted Inspector
Catherine Hylands	Ofsted Inspector

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