

Inspection of a good school: Shirley Junior School

Belle Moor Road, Shirley, Southampton, Hampshire SO15 5XE

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 June 2023

Outcome

Shirley Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a strong focus on making sure that everyone is included at this school. Staff place great emphasis on understanding the needs of all pupils. The curriculum helps pupils to understand the unique qualities they have.

Pupils are proud to represent their school. They take their roles seriously. For example, pond monitors make sure that everyone follows the agreed rules. Pupils understand the importance of applying for one of the many jobs they can undertake. They appreciate the time that adults take to help them with this process. One pupil explained that this experience would help them later in life.

Playtimes are sociable occasions. Pupils play happily together, using the vast array of resources. This includes sharing the basketball court and taking turns on the climbing net. Adults help to keep everyone safe by making sure the school rules are followed. Pupils are clear about the school's behaviour approach. They know the 'explain, remind, action' process will be used for everyone. Sometimes, pupils and parents worry about bullying. Pupils know, though, that adults will help them if they have any concerns.

Due to the carefully designed curriculum, pupils achieve well. They comment on the usefulness of the systems that teachers use to help them understand key information in different subjects.

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

There is a well-sequenced curriculum, which helps pupils to remember increasingly challenging content. Leaders have thought about the most important concepts in every subject and how these build year on year. This means that pupils are supported to have a strong understanding of complex information. Generally, teachers use an agreed approach when introducing key material. This supports pupils' understanding. However, in some subjects, there is variability in how well this is done.

Teachers have a good understanding of how to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They make appropriate adaptations to make sure pupils with SEND can learn alongside their peers. There are effective processes in place to identify pupils with SEND. Throughout the school, adults use questioning and retrieval tasks to check that all pupils know key information. Pupils understand how this helps them to remember more.

A love of reading has been successfully promoted throughout the school. Pupils are enthusiastic about the books they are reading and the texts that teachers are reading to them. Leaders have carefully selected the books that pupils read in class. These have been chosen to help pupils develop a greater awareness of diversity, as well as build their reading knowledge. Some pupils are at the early stages of reading. During the current academic year, leaders have introduced a phonics programme to support these pupils to catch up quickly with their peers. These pupils read books that are matched to the sounds they know. This helps them to be confident when reading. Adults generally provide strong help to pupils during reading interventions. However, there is some minor variability in support due to staff subject knowledge not always being as secure as it needs to be.

Staff manage behaviour effectively. The system is understood by all. Pupils report that it is much better now because no one is publicly shamed because of their behaviour. On the rare occasions that behaviour falls below expectations, adults give swift reminders to pupils. As a result, pupils usually change their behaviour immediately. This creates a calm atmosphere, which helps pupils to learn. There is a zero-tolerance approach to any prejudicial behaviour. Leaders take this seriously, and any incidents are dealt with quickly. Some pupils and parents still feel that behaviour is not dealt with well. Leaders plan to improve their communication so that everyone understands how the behaviour policy is used in school.

Leaders have carefully considered how to support pupils' wider development. The curriculum is designed to ensure that pupils understand how to be responsible and considerate of others. Pupils know that the three school values of respect, integrity and kindness are central to all they do. There is a strong focus on pupil voice. Pupils are encouraged to share their opinions and ideas through their ambassador roles.

Executive leaders within the multi-academy trust and the local governing committee support school leaders well. There is a sharp focus on working together to ensure the best outcomes for pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a culture where all staff understand the risks and potential for abuse to occur. There is a clear system in place, which is understood by staff. All staff have completed training, so they know what to look out for. They feel confident to report any concerns, no matter how small. The governors understand their responsibilities around safeguarding. They ensure that it remains a focus during meetings and school visits.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. They know what to do in different situations, in real life and online. This includes learning about water, rail and road safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are some minor inconsistencies in the additional support given to pupils who are learning to read. This means that some pupils are not learning to read as quickly as they could. Leaders must ensure that all support staff have the necessary subject knowledge and expertise to use a coherent approach when delivering reading intervention.
- A few areas of the curriculum are still being refined. In these subjects, the intended curriculum is not always implemented in line with leaders' expectations. Leaders need to ensure that all staff use the agreed pedagogical approaches consistently.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2017.

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	138910
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10241683
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	360
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alice Wrighton
Headteacher	Annette Hixon
Website	www.shirleyjuniorschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 and 7 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Hamwic Education Trust.
- The school uses two unregistered providers of alternative provision.
- The school runs an on-site breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. She also met with other school leaders, staff and pupils.
- The inspector met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspector met with the CEO and Standards Officer from Hamwic Education Trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.

- The inspectors also reviewed curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about design and technology, history and geography.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector checked the single central record of recruitment checks and talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding. The inspector also talked to a range of staff and pupils informally.
- The inspector considered the responses to the confidential staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- The inspector took account of the 157 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the additional 122 free-text responses. The inspector talked with some parents on the second morning of the inspection.
- The inspector met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally during social times and in lessons.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including the school improvement plan and school self-evaluation.

Inspection team

Sara Staggs, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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