

# Shirley Junior School

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

## Inspection dates

6–7 June 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Since the previous inspection, the school has faced a number of organisational and leadership changes. Since the start of the current academic year, the executive headteacher and head of school have led the school with drive and rigour.
- Leaders know their school well and have implemented rapid improvements. There is visible impact from their work on the outcomes of current pupils.
- Leaders are ambitious for pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. Leaders track pupils' progress carefully and discuss it in detail with teachers. Agreed actions are enabling pupils who need to catch up to do so.
- Teachers make learning enjoyable. Pupils respond eagerly to interesting and creatively designed topics. Pupils learn skills in all subjects but also have many opportunities to apply existing literacy and numeracy skills in their different topics.
- Pupils work hard in lessons and are proud of their achievements. They contribute meaningfully to the school's ethos by taking on responsibility. Pupils talk about their work and the school with genuine enthusiasm.
- Parents said that the school keeps pupils safe and pupils agree. The curriculum ensures that pupils of all ages learn to keep themselves fit, safe and healthy.
- In recent years, disadvantaged pupils have been less likely than their peers to make strong progress from their starting points. The school is successfully tackling the barriers that they face, and their performance is improving rapidly.
- Governors have not shied away from making strategic decisions in the best interests of the school. They are increasingly adept at holding leaders to account for the impact of their actions on pupils' outcomes. However, this aspect of their role is not well developed.
- Leaders are aware that there is some variability in teaching because teaching is not consistently matched to pupils' abilities. The most able pupils and those with low prior attainment are less well provided for than other pupils.
- A small minority of staff and parents shared with inspectors their concerns about inconsistency and a lack of clarity in the school's leadership.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further strengthen leadership and management so that:
  - senior leaders build greater levels of confidence in staff and parents by improving communications with them
  - governors hold senior leaders to account for their impact on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, in order to improve outcomes for all groups of pupils.
- Ensure that teaching and learning enable all pupil groups to achieve consistently strong outcomes by:
  - matching learning tasks more precisely to meet the differing learning needs of all pupil groups, particularly the most able and those with low prior attainment
  - firmly establishing strategies for improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the start of the year, the school has improved rapidly. Following a period of significant turbulence, leadership is now settled. Senior leaders work together closely and take effective action to ensure that teaching and learning are consistently good.
- Leaders share a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and needs by carefully tracking pupils' progress and well-being. The senior leadership team has implemented targeted actions to address identified priorities. In particular, leaders have improved teachers' understanding and use of assessment. This has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Leaders make effective use of funding to diminish the differences in the progress of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders are ambitious for the progress that this group of pupils can make. The head of school maintains a clear oversight of how well disadvantaged pupils are progressing and takes action with other leaders and teaching staff to ensure that barriers to pupils' achievement are addressed.
- The curriculum gives pupils creative opportunities to plan and execute their own projects. It enables pupils to apply literacy and mathematical skills across the curriculum, to deepen their knowledge and understanding. Pupils' work in other subjects is of a high quality, for example in art and design and in history. Extra-curricular provision and homework are designed to ensure that pupils' interests are developed beyond the school day.
- The school uses the primary physical education and sport premium effectively. A coach provides specialist provision for pupils and training for staff. This enables teachers to be confident in leading opportunities for pupils' physical development. During the inspection, pupils and staff were enjoying a highly active health and fitness week. From the moment pupils entered the playground, they engaged with staff in a Zumba session, and specially planned lessons and activities continued with pace as the day proceeded.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development features strongly throughout the different curriculum subjects and in the broader opportunities that the school provides. Pupils reflect on their beliefs and those of others through high-quality religious education enquiries. Pupils widen their understanding of cultural similarities and differences within the community, for example, through a topic about family and background. They sensitively share their own experiences. Pupils have opportunities to develop their artistic skills and to explore their literary heritage, for example, by reading 'Treasure Island'. Year 6 pupils reflected articulately to inspectors the feelings evoked by reading 'The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas'. Well-planned learning opportunities promote pupils' consideration of values such as fairness, justice, discrimination and equality.
- The curriculum prepares pupils well for growing up in modern Britain, helping them to show respect and tolerance towards others whose background and experiences are different from their own. By the time pupils leave in Year 6, they have developed the academic and personal skills to manage the demands of secondary school.

- Year leaders were new at the start of the academic year. They are knowledgeable and provide strong support for their teams through discussion about effective teaching and learning. Teachers and support staff value their year-group leadership and readily seek advice to extend their skills. Year and subject leaders appreciate the induction that they have received and the training opportunities that senior leaders make available, both within school and beyond.
- The school's capacity for further improvement is good because leaders at different levels of the school are skilful. Their work to improve current pupils' outcomes is having a positive impact. Leadership is stronger in some year groups than others.
- Senior leaders are not as certain about how systematically additional funding supports pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They are not as sure of the impact of this funding, compared to the impact of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils.
- Parents who spoke to inspectors during the inspection are supportive of the school. They praise the way in which their children are encouraged by the school's provision. A typical parent summed this up for many by saying that staff 'are quick to pick up on any problems ... and try to resolve them', and added that 'it is a good and friendly school and I am happy with the care and education [my child] is receiving'.
- A small minority of parents expressed concerns through Ofsted's online survey, 'Parent View', about how well the school is led and managed. They pointed out inconsistencies in their contact with senior leaders and a lack of clarity about leaders' roles. This view was shared by a few staff.

## **Governance of the school**

- Since the previous inspection, governors made the decision to align the junior school more closely with the on-site infant school. They created a number of shared senior leadership posts and federated governance, and agreed with the trust to reduce the size of the school so there is a single infant school feeding into Year 3. Governors have managed these changes successfully.
- Governors understand their responsibilities for safeguarding. They are well informed, and diligently check on the implementation of the child protection policy to evaluate whether it is fit for purpose.
- Through their committee structure, governors are aware of how other additional monies are spent, such as the funding for sports and physical education and funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, governors do not have a sufficient overview of the difference that such funding makes to pupils' progress.
- Following a pupil premium review offered by the trust, governors prioritised the need to ensure that pupil premium funding is used appropriately to diminish differences in achievement for disadvantaged pupils. Governors carry out their role with determination by making rigorous checks on the school's progress in this area.
- Governors appreciate the challenge offered by the trust's school improvement reports, which support them to ask challenging questions. However, governors do not systematically check the impact that senior leaders are having on the quality of

teaching and learning to ensure that outcomes are strong for all pupil groups across the school.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The head of school confidently leads the implementation of very thorough procedures to keep pupils safe. She dedicates time to her role as designated safeguarding lead, in order to maintain a complete overview. Communication is effective, both with parents and stakeholders. Record-keeping is rigorous, which helps support for pupils and families to be carefully coordinated.
- All staff and governors receive regular and comprehensive training to support them to understand about the different aspects of safeguarding. They are familiar with and fully understand the school's systems. Staff are thorough when making a referral, and each referral is followed through meticulously.
- The school regularly promotes pupils' understanding of how to keep safe, including online and in their locality, such as on the roads and with strangers. Leaders also provide helpful information for parents so they can reinforce safety messages.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Pupils typically make good or better progress with their learning because teachers use assessment effectively. They plan learning that progressively meets pupils' needs. Pupils respond enthusiastically to learning tasks and they appreciate the way in which teaching staff support them during lessons. For example, in mathematics, there is strong support for pupils to develop new concepts by making use of practical equipment. Pupils are prepared to work hard and to grapple with challenging mathematical problems.
- Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. They are encouraged to talk about their work. Pupils reflect on what they have learned and develop positive attitudes to learning.
- Reading and writing are linked skilfully to maximise the development of literacy. Teachers have broadened the provision of fiction to encourage pupils to read challenging literature. Teachers have also extended the opportunities for writing, so that pupils have time to improve both their accuracy of grammar and spelling and the content. As a consequence, pupils edit their writing thoughtfully as though they were authors. They also consider whether it is fit for purpose for the audience for whom it is written. By the time pupils are in Year 6, they are able to write with accuracy and at considerable length, using ambitious vocabulary that is enriched by their own love of literature.
- Teachers are knowledgeable about the different curriculum subjects. They give helpful feedback to pupils as lessons proceed. Pupils value this because it helps them to be clear about how they can make greater progress in their learning. Questioning supports pupils to deepen their understanding and to think of alternative responses.

- Teachers are aware that disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most able, have not always made enough progress. Teaching staff have deepened their understanding of these pupils' academic, social and emotional needs. They now ensure that this group makes progress that is at least in line with that of other pupils.
- All parents who spoke to inspectors, and most who responded to Ofsted's 'Parent View' survey, said that they are satisfied with the information they receive about their child's progress. The school has worked with parents to ensure that homework is understood and supported. Leaders have gone to considerable lengths to make helpful information available through the school's website. A range of homework options are available, and many pupils complete enjoyable learning tasks at home that support them to extend their achievement.
- The school offers a wide range of additional support for pupils. As a result, most pupils develop confidence and improve their skills. However, there is some variability in the impact of these strategies, and support does not always make enough difference to pupils who could catch up more quickly. For example, some of the additional support for reading does not enable pupils to catch up, including some who are at the earlier stages of learning English.
- Teaching strategies are implemented more successfully for pupils with middle prior attainment than for those with low prior attainment. Similarly, the most able pupils do not consistently meet the challenge to extend their learning. Middle leaders recognise the need to secure ongoing improvements to teaching, learning and the use of assessment. They are working with teachers to refine their skills to meet the full range of pupils' learning needs.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are positive about learning. They said that teaching staff are helpful, and topics are both fun and exciting. Pupils are rightly proud of the work that they complete across a range of subjects.
- Pupils enjoy the responsibilities that they are given. There are many ways in which they learn the importance of working with and for others, such as by being elected learning ambassadors or eco-warriors. These and other similar roles, many of which are coordinated by the school's 'employment agency', make an important contribution to everyone's well-being. Pupils learn to take responsibility for themselves and others, and they understand the difference between right and wrong.
- Teaching and support staff give skilful support to pupils whose behaviour is challenging. As a result, emotionally vulnerable pupils are able to successfully manage their own behaviour. These pupils recognise the extent to which they improve as a result of the school's support. Other pupils acknowledge the improvements that emotionally vulnerable pupils make, showing respect for how hard such pupils have worked to change their behaviour.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, fit and healthy. For example, Year 3 pupils

are knowledgeable about healthy eating, and Year 6 pupils appreciate the lunchtime 'health and safety station' that helps to keep everyone safe.

- Pupils appreciate the recent improvements that leaders have made to recognise and reward their positive attitudes and behaviours.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils enjoy school, and attendance is above the national average. It continues to improve for all groups of pupils. Staff are rigorous in following up the reasons for absence. They give additional support for families where there are difficulties.
- A new behaviour policy has been developed with pupils' involvement. It ensures that good behaviour and attitudes are rewarded and consequences are given for pupils who make poor choices of behaviour. Pupils are positive about the way in which behaviour is managed and think it is fair.
- Inspectors saw consistently good behaviour in lessons, in the playground and around the school. Relationships between adults and pupils are warm and pupils are friendly towards each other.
- Pupils talked about incidents when name-calling and bullying have occurred in the past. They reported far fewer incidents this year. Pupils know that incidents must be reported and an adult can be trusted to take action. A minority of parents who responded to Ofsted's 'Parent View' questionnaire expressed a concern about the way in which the school deals with bullying. Inspectors checked these views thoroughly. When asked about the school's current provision, bullying was not a concern shared by the parents who spoke to inspectors or by the majority of pupils.
- All reported incidents are carefully logged and followed through with all involved pupils and with parents when this is appropriate. Staff have been specifically trained to resolve disagreements and conflicts. They take steps to resolve incidents thoroughly and sensitively before they escalate. This approach is supported by pupils who have a role as 'repair and rebuild monitors'.

## **Outcomes for pupils**

**Good**

- The standards achieved by pupils currently at the school are rising as a result of the school's recent improvement initiatives. This is particularly evident in mathematics but is also apparent in reading and writing.
- There have been historic differences in the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils. In 2016, the progress in reading of disadvantaged pupils who entered the school with attainment below age-related expectations was well below other pupils nationally. Similarly, the progress in reading for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities was also well below. In 2016, only a very small minority of Year 6 pupils reached the higher standard in writing. Progress for a few groups of pupils in all subjects was below and sometimes well below expectations.
- There have been some considerable improvements. Disadvantaged pupils in all year

groups are currently making strong progress from their starting points. The differences between their outcomes and those of other pupils are diminishing rapidly. During the course of this academic year, leaders and teachers have made focused efforts to ensure that disadvantaged pupils are challenged and supported to achieve well.

- Pupils from minority ethnic groups are articulate about their learning. They have positive attitudes and make good progress.
- Teachers have raised their expectations of what pupils, including the most able, can achieve, to challenge them to reach high standards. There has had a clear impact on standards for this group, particularly in writing. Consequently, the school's own tracking system shows that a higher proportion of current pupils are on track to achieve a greater depth of understanding.
- Outcomes are improving because assessment information is used rigorously by senior and middle leaders. This enables regular discussion with teachers and rapid follow-up for pupils, groups and classes. Catch-up strategies and additional support for individual pupils are identified and put into place when required.
- By the time pupils leave the school, almost all are on track to achieve or exceed the standard expected for their age. Given their starting points on entry to the school, current pupils in Year 6 have increased their rates of progress in order to catch up on work from previous years. Pupils and parents recognise that this has been demanding, although pupils are pleased with the rapid progress in learning that they have made.
- The drive by new leaders to improve progress for all groups of pupils, is visible in classrooms, in pupils' workbooks and when talking to them about their learning. However, some variability remains. For example, the most able pupils are not consistently challenged as much as they could be. The needs of low-prior-attaining pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are understood and supported, but some do not make the progress of which they are capable.

## School details

Unique reference number	138910
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10033067

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	371
Appropriate authority	The Hamwic Academy Trust
Chair	Peter Gould
Head of School	Annette Hixon
Telephone number	02380 771434
Website	<a href="http://www.shirleyjuniorschool.org.uk">http://www.shirleyjuniorschool.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@sj.jetrust.org">head@sj.jetrust.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	21–22 March 2013

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than most other primary schools, with three classes in each year group. The school's pupil admission number has been reduced so that the number of classes aligns directly with the on-site infant school.
- Since the previous inspection, governance has become federated for both the infant and junior schools. A new chair of governors has been appointed.
- The school is part of a multi-academy trust (the Jeffrey's Educational Trust) of local schools. Since the previous inspection, it has become part of an umbrella trust, Hamwic, which provides a full range of school improvement services.
- The previous headteacher left the school in 2014. The current headteacher took up post in September 2014 and is the executive headteacher of the infant and junior schools. The head of school was appointed following the appointment of the executive

headteacher. A range of other senior leaders work across both the partner infant school and the junior school.

- There have been a number of leadership and staff changes that have created turbulence for the school.
- A higher-than-average proportion of pupils who attend the school are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than the national average.
- The school's pupil population is more stable than that found nationally.
- In 2016, the school met the government's floor standards that set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 17 lessons. Almost all observations took place with a senior leader. Inspectors also undertook two focused learning walks with leaders to pursue enquiries about teaching, learning and the curriculum.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at transition times, during break and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, head of school and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector met with three members of the governing body, as well as the chair. She also met with a representative of the academy trust.
- Inspectors considered the school's published information for 2015 and 2016 and the information on its website. They examined a wide range of school documents, including information relating to safeguarding, attendance, funding for disadvantaged pupils, school improvement evaluation and planning and minutes of governors' meetings. Inspectors reviewed pupil-level information and school assessment information. They scrutinised a sample of pupils' books in English and mathematics, and examined pupils' topic work.
- Inspectors heard pupils read in Year 3 and discussed reading with Year 6 pupils.
- To gain their views of the school, inspectors spoke with pupils in lessons and met groups of pupils outside of the classroom.
- In addition to speaking to a number of parents at the start of each day, inspectors considered written comments from 78 of them, and 105 responses to the 'Parent View' questionnaire. They considered 25 staff responses to Ofsted's survey and 239 responses to the pupil survey.

## Inspection team

Linda Jacobs, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Nicola Cale	Ofsted Inspector
Jo McSherrie	Ofsted Inspector
Patricia Wright	Ofsted Inspector

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