

Inspection of a good school: Shotley Bridge Primary School

Benfieldside Road, Shotley Bridge, Consett, County Durham DH8 0SQ

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 October 2023

Outcome

Shotley Bridge Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Shotley Bridge Primary School are being moulded into leaders for the future. The school values, including kindness, honesty and courage, are taught to pupils explicitly. The school recognises and rewards when pupils demonstrate these values. Consequently, pupils throughout school treat each other considerately. They are kind to each other. Older pupils have a keenly developed sense of responsibility. They explain being role models and volunteering to help because 'it's the right thing to do'. Behaviour, in lessons and at social times, is exemplary. Pupils explain that bullying is not a problem in school as people are kind to each other.

Leaders are ambitious about the school experience they want pupils to have. They have high aspirations for pupils' academic success. However, the school also ensures that pupils have access to an exciting range of extra-curricular opportunities. Pupils can participate in yoga, American football, boxing and learn Japanese and Spanish. Pupils, parents and carers appreciate, and take advantage, of these opportunities.

The school has ensured that there is a strong focus on well-being. There are well-being champions for both staff and pupils. Well-being conversations are an important part of school culture. This is a caring community that ensures all voices are heard.

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

Despite recent changes in leadership, the school has maintained a focus on developing the curriculum. Leaders have designed a curriculum that carefully maps out what pupils will learn. The school has ensured that content is logically organised and that pupils can build on what they already know.

Pupils are keen to explain what they have learned across the curriculum. They demonstrate sound mathematical understanding and enjoy learning languages. They explain attacking and defensive strategies in the sports they have been learning about in physical education. Pupils approach learning with enthusiasm.

The school has created a strong culture of reading in a range of different ways. Reading enjoys high status in school. Pupils of all ages enjoy daily story time, author visits and popular reading rewards incentives. Pupils discuss their favourite stories and genres with enthusiasm. Parents are regularly invited to attend reading cafés.

The school has also prioritised the teaching of reading. Phonics is taught well. Teachers identify gaps in learning quickly and address them to make sure that all children keep up. The school makes good use of adult support to help pupils who find reading more difficult. All pupils develop their fluency through regular reading practice.

In classrooms, teachers deliver the curriculum effectively. At the beginning of lessons, teachers help pupils to recall what they have learned before. Teachers then model new information and guide pupils to complete tasks independently. Pupils enjoy completing 'hashtag' activities to deepen their understanding. Children in the early years are well supported by adults to practise what they have learned. Teachers are well aware of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND are provided with the right level of support to enable them to succeed. Leaders have high expectations of what pupils with SEND can achieve.

There are robust assessment systems in place across reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers also make use of assessment in some foundation subjects. These systems are more developed in some subjects than others. In some subjects, these systems do not allow teachers to check what pupils have remembered over time.

Pupils regularly learn about important messages that will prepare them for their future. In personal, social and health education, pupils learn about how to be respectful citizens and how to stay safe. Pupils learn about the importance of democracy through pupil parliament. The 'make a difference' committee looks for positive changes that can be made in school and in the wider community. The committee collects food and clothing donations to support local charities.

The vast majority of staff explain feeling well supported through a change of leadership. They recognise the efforts that leaders have made to help balance their workload. Staff also believe that their opinions are valued and leaders are approachable. Staff are proud to work at this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has formative assessment systems in place for some foundation subjects. However, these systems do not allow the school to check what pupils have remembered over time. This means that it is difficult for the school to judge the impact

of the wider curriculum. The school should ensure that there are assessment systems in place in foundation subjects that allow teachers to check what pupils have remembered over time.

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 May 2018.

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

Unique reference number	114038
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10290016
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	350
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Liz Charlton
Headteacher	Vicky Atkinson (Acting headteacher)
Website	www.shotleybridgeprimary.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes in school leadership.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the acting headteacher and the assistant headteachers. The inspector met with representatives from the governing body, including the chair. The inspector spoke with school leaders responsible for personal development, SEND and safeguarding. They also spoke with the school leadership adviser from the local authority by telephone.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.

- The inspector also spoke with leaders and looked at curriculum documents for some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector observed the behaviour of pupils during lessons and at social times.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including the minutes of local governing body meetings and the school's self-evaluation and development plan.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online staff questionnaire. They also considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Katie Spurr, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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