

Shears Green Infant School

Packham Road, Northfleet, Kent, DA11 7JF

Inspection dates 5–6 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Standards have improved since the previous inspection and pupils now make good progress by the time they leave Key Stage 1.
- Levels of attainment are above the national average in mathematics and reading and markedly above at the higher levels in writing.
- Children in the Reception classes make good progress from their starting points because activities promote their independent learning.
- Teaching is good with some that is outstanding. Teachers use new technology well to engage pupils who are enthusiastic about their learning.
- Behaviour is good and pupils feel safe in school. They say they enjoy their lessons and joining in the extra activities and clubs provided by the school.
- The subjects taught are designed effectively to develop pupils' skills and knowledge and to meet their personal needs and interests.
- School leaders and the governing body have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Governors carry out their responsibilities well and have ensured the effective restructuring of the school leadership.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not consistently ensure work is closely matched to pupils' abilities so they are always effectively challenged to make the best possible progress.
- Sometimes pupils are not always actively engaged in the lesson and so the pace of learning slows.
- Pupils do not always have sufficient guidance to understand how to become more successful in their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons, seven of which were joint lesson observations with senior leaders. Three additional intervention groups were also observed and inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at pupils' work in their books.
- Inspectors met with pupils and talked to them about their work. Meetings were also held with middle leaders, four members of the governing body, and representatives of the local authority.
- Documentation covering safeguarding, the management of performance of staff, records of behaviour and safety, attendance, checks of pupils' attainment and progress were reviewed.
- Inspectors took account of 33 responses from parents and carers to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View); the school's own parent survey and 35 questionnaires from staff. An inspector also talked to parents and carers informally during the inspection.

Inspection team

Howard Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Elizabeth Cole

Additional Inspector

Maureen Coleman

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-size infant school.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there are four Reception classes.
- The very large majority of pupils come from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support from the pupil premium funding, which is the extra government support for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and those from service families, is average and relates to pupils who qualify for free school meals in this school.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is average as is the proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs.
- There is a breakfast club which is managed by the governing body.
- A new headteacher takes up her appointment from September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching to promote rapid and sustained progress for all pupils by:
 - making sure work is consistently matched at the right level for pupils of different abilities
 - ensuring pupils are clear about what they must do and how they can further improve their work in order to make the best possible progress
 - increasing the pace of learning so that pupils are always actively engaged and progress more rapidly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children in Reception Year make good progress. The majority of children leave Reception at levels above those expected for their age and are well prepared for the next stage in their learning. This is especially so in their social development and aspects of learning linked to problem solving.
- Since the previous inspection there has been an improvement in standards. Attainment in English has risen steadily over the last two years. Attainment in reading is above the national average and markedly so in writing where pupils achieve especially well in the higher levels.
- Attainment in mathematics is now above the national average. A range of practical activities and effectively planned opportunities to apply numeracy skills in solving problems, serve to engage pupils and extend their knowledge and enhance their skills.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because support from assistants and other adults ensures they confidently access tasks within the classroom and benefit from additional approaches provided by the school. Parents are involved in their child's learning and especially in sharing in homework activities.
- Pupils make good progress overall. Given their different starting points, pupils achieve well however, progress can sometimes be variable and not as rapid as it might be because work is not always as well matched to pupils' abilities.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standards in the 2012 Year 1 phonics check (linking sounds and letters) was below average. The school has identified this as a priority for improvement and pupils are now taught phonics through a structured approach. Pupils across the school enjoy reading and older pupils confidently talk about the styles used by different authors to portray the characters and themes in their stories.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium funding performed less well than others in 2012. The gap in attainment was equivalent to four months in reading and three months in writing. Pupils were also behind by two months in mathematics. However, gaps in pupils' understanding and skills are now closing because of the impact of a range of additional support in place for example, using the sports coach as a positive role model to develop phonics skills.

The quality of teaching is good

- In Reception children's independent learning is a strong feature. For example, teachers and other adults provide opportunities for children to plan, 'do' and evaluate their activities which include outside sessions involving phonic hunts. Consequently, children's confidence is enhanced as they play and learn together.
- Children effectively use investigative skills to develop their language and writing. For example, in one Reception class, children following a 'mini-beast' trail in the outside area were required to give reasons for their ideas and make comparisons about different insects in their writing.
- Teachers are skilled at using questioning to develop pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson the teacher extended pupils' knowledge and ensured they applied their literacy skills effectively. Pupils were highly motivated and made exceptional progress as demonstrated in the standard of their written work.
- Teachers use their subject knowledge effectively to deepen pupils' understanding. For example, in one Year 2 English lesson pupils' were appropriately challenged in their use of subject vocabulary as they talked about the different styles used by an author in his writing. This served to develop their inference skills and comprehension.
- Additional adults are especially effective in providing support for pupils. They make a strong contribution to pupils' learning either within the classroom or through additional approaches in small groups. Consequently, less-able pupils and those who need extra help make progress similar to their peers.

- Planning is good and teachers set targets for pupils. However, during lessons, teachers do not always ensure work is closely matched to pupils' abilities so they are effectively challenged or adjust tasks to ensure pupils make better than expected progress.
- Where the quality of learning is good, teachers have clear objectives and check pupils' progress closely during lessons. However, teachers do not always clarify for pupils what will count as successful learning so that pupils know how to improve their work further.
- In the best lessons teachers use a range of strategies to engage pupils. For example, they make good use of Information, Communication Technology (ICT) and plan a variety of practical activities both inside and outside the classroom so pupils are enthusiastic in their work. However, not all teaching consistently engages pupils and consequently progress is sometimes less rapid.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well around the school. At play and lunchtimes pupils make good use of the range of play equipment available in the outside space. Pupils are happy to take on responsibilities, for example in caring for the local environment.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and want to learn and behave well in lessons. They work well together during shared activities. However, more exemplary learning is restricted because pupils are not always actively engaged so they can progress more rapidly. This is especially so in Key Stage 1.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. Parents and members of staff share this view too. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and are aware that they need to take care when using the internet. They say bullying is rare and they know about the harm that can arise from cyber-bullying. Records show incidents of racism are rare.
- The school provides support for pupils whatever their background and ensures there is no discrimination and all pupils have equal opportunities to be involved in school life. The exclusions this year relate to a few pupils with identified needs. Incidents are rare and if they arise, there are well-developed procedures to manage these effectively.
- Attendance is in line with the national average. Attendance is improving as a result of actions put in place by school leaders.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior leaders together with all staff have established caring relationships with all pupils. Consequently, pupils have the confidence to learn and are motivated to do well.
- The senior leadership team regularly check the quality of teaching. Subject leaders also effectively evaluate how well pupils are learning and provide appropriate levels of guidance to staff. Teachers say they value the training and support they receive and that this is enhancing their classroom practice across a range of subjects.
- Leaders monitor the progress made by pupils to ensure all achieve well whatever their need. Outcomes on how well standards are improving are linked to staff performance management and salary progression.
- The provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is comprehensive and effectively overseen to make sure these pupils make good progress. The pupil premium funding is used to provide a range of additional approaches for pupils for whom it is intended for example, skilled additional adult support. Consequently, gaps in their learning are closing.
- The local authority provides useful light touch support. It has enabled the school to move forward since the previous inspection and provided high quality guidance to ensure the smooth transition in the appointment of a new headteacher.
- The subjects taught are effectively planned to develop pupils' skills and knowledge. Pupils have opportunities to apply their reading and numeracy skills across a range of subjects through topic

themes. The personal needs and interests of pupils are addressed through a variety of clubs and additional activities.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is comprehensive. Other cultures are celebrated and pupils have an understanding of how change has an impact across the generations and within families. Pupils especially like singing and older pupils enjoy performing in musicals.
- Parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were complimentary about the school. The school's own parent survey supports this positive view and parents say how welcoming the school is.
- All safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have a good understanding of their school. They are clearly aware of its strengths and areas that need to be developed to bring about improvements. Governors participate in discussions with staff about the progress being made by different groups of pupils and use assessment data to compare pupil achievement with other schools nationally. Governors check on decisions about teacher performance and pay progression and oversee the performance targets of the headteacher. Governors have ensured there is a secure succession process in place for the appointment of the new headteacher. Governors understand clearly how the additional funds of the pupil premium are targeted to support the pupils for whom it is intended and check it is bringing about improved outcomes for these pupils. Governors have developed their expertise through additional training. They are fully engaged in ensuring equality and do not tolerate discrimination.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	118265
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	401733

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gary Reading
Headteacher	Sue Bennett
Date of previous school inspection	13–14 January 2010
Telephone number	01474 566700
Fax number	01474 566700
Email address	headteacher@shears-green-infant.kent.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

