

Seven Hills Primary School

Appleby Way, Morley, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS27 8LA

Inspection dates

13–14 December 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a strong, dynamic vision for the school based on mutual respect and individualised provision for all pupils. This informs all working aspects of the life of the school and is shared by all staff and governors.
- Teachers, ably supported by teaching assistants, provide skilled support to a range of learners. They have the skills and subject knowledge needed to support pupils' learning effectively.
- Pupils make good progress across the school and leave the school well equipped to access their secondary education. However, children do not always use their phonics skills to support better writing outcomes in early years and key stage 1 as well as they could.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for because relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Teachers are aware of, and responsive to, the children's needs.
- Attendance is around the national average. However, the attendance of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, although improving, remains stubbornly below that of other pupils.
- Children have secure foundations put in place in the early years. The environment is stimulating and engaging, and promotes questions, collaborative learning and investigation. Children establish positive attitudes and behaviours to support their learning.
- The provision for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is a strength of the school. Pupils are well equipped for life in modern Britain and understand the values that underpin it.
- The diversity and range of the curriculum ensure that pupils are able to explore and develop their skills and talents, but on occasions, opportunities to explore and deepen their thinking in foundation subjects are missed.
- Governors hold school leaders to account and have increasingly secure knowledge about what is and is not working well in the school. Some of the information provided to them, including improvement plans, by school leaders lacks sufficient detail for them to do this with certainty.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure further opportunities for pupils to develop and apply skills to a greater depth in foundation subjects.
- Build on the pupils' skills in phonics to further raise standards in writing in early years and key stage 1.
- Improve the quality of information provided to governors, including school improvement plans, so that they can clearly identify what success will look like and how it will be measured.
- Continue to improve attendance rates for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has created an enthusiastic staff team that works well together, building on strengths seen at the last inspection and taking effective action to improve the school further. Leaders rightly focus their energies on ensuring that teachers are well equipped to meet the needs of the pupils within their class.
- School senior leaders are secure in recognising effective practice and weaknesses in teaching. All staff are held accountable and engaged with sharing responsibility in ensuring that school priorities are met. A strong commitment to improving teaching and learning ensures a focus on individualised professional development alongside whole-school training. This ensures that teachers develop the necessary skills to improve outcomes for pupils so that standards rise.
- Leaders ensure the accuracy of assessment information by checking work in books and external testing and working with other schools locally. They know how well individual pupils are progressing and use this information well to provide additional support where necessary, including for the most able. Consequently, most pupils are making at least expected progress.
- Although leaders know how individuals are progressing, they are not using all the assessment information available to systematically check progress against national benchmarks. This information does not always inform the measures by which planned improvements can be gauged. Consequently, school leaders do not have a fully secure picture of strengths or weaknesses over time. Governors are therefore not always equipped with sufficient information to hold school leaders fully to account.
- The role of middle leaders has been enhanced since the last inspection. They have a secure understanding of their roles and responsibilities and now contribute well to developing consistent and effective practice across the school.
- The leader of SEN provision is highly knowledgeable and effective in ensuring that pupils have their needs met. She collects and analyses information to ensure that these pupils are identified correctly and are beginning to catch up. Funding to support these pupils is used well. As a result, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make strong progress.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. Pupils' performance is tracked and the progress they make monitored systematically. Provision is adjusted to take account of their individual needs, including for the most able. Consequently, these pupils make rapid progress, especially in key stage 2.
- The school's curriculum is broad, balanced and provides pupils with opportunities to explore key concepts. Planning ensures that all subjects are covered and leaders check this is adhered to. Opportunities to apply writing skills across the curriculum are identified and rigorously pursued. This is sometimes at the expense of developing subject-specific skills at even greater depth in some foundation subjects such as history. A wide range of curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities are provided. Homework is often personalised to meet the needs of individuals. Consequently, pupils

achieve well across the curriculum but opportunities to explore some subjects in greater depth are missed.

- The pupils' understanding of British values, equalities and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Pupils talk eloquently about tolerance, respect, democracy and cultural diversity in society. They are mature in their discussions about the wider world.
- Parents have confidence in the leadership of the school. Those spoken with during the inspection say that the school has been transformed and has continued to improve since the last inspection. The vast majority say that school leaders take their concerns seriously and act on them swiftly and appropriately.

Governance of the school

- Governors receive detailed and regular reports from the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior and middle leaders which keep them well informed about the actions being taken to improve the school. In addition, members of the governing body visit the school to check what is being reported is happening in the classrooms. Consequently, governors have a secure view of what is, and is not, working. They hold school leaders, at all levels, to account for the impact of their actions. However, some of the information they receive lacks sufficient focus on current national performance information for them to evaluate fully the impact of the work of school leaders.
- Governors are committed to reviewing their performance regularly. They have collective and individual improvement plans, which have improved their level of challenge and support to school leaders. These have played an important role in securing the improvements seen in the school.
- Governors have a good understanding of the use of additional funding for sports and disadvantaged pupils. They track how the funding is spent and evaluate its impact. This is because the governors responsible meet with staff and discuss emerging issues with school leaders. As a result, they are knowledgeable about how funding is spent and what difference it is making.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- An inclusive culture of safeguarding is a strength of the school and informs the work of all staff. Staff have a clear understanding of what to do, and what to be aware of, in ensuring that children are kept safe. Training programmes and updates are a regular part of school life. Regular updates and reminders ensure that staff remain vigilant and aware of current and ongoing issues.
- Pupils know about how to keep themselves and others safe online, at home and outside school in the wider community. This is because the curriculum is designed to be responsive to current and emerging issues, both locally and nationally. Programmes of work and the revisiting of key themes underpin the personal, social and health education and increasingly reflect the school's focus on supporting mental health and equality.

- The designated governor keeps a close watch on the quality of the provision to ensure the safety of children and adults. She meets regularly with school leaders to ensure that best practice is reviewed and maintained.
- All records are reviewed and checked on a regular basis. They are of a high quality and capture the timeline of events systematically. The school works closely with a range of other agencies. Additional support and assistance is provided to families, including help with attendance issues.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- School leaders have continually focused on improving teaching and learning and taken effective action to address any insecure practice. For example, the actions to improve the effectiveness of teaching assistants have ensured a better understanding of roles and responsibilities, secured subject knowledge and developed teachers' understanding of the role they play in securing better outcomes for pupils. Consequently, teaching assistants respond quickly to pupils' misconceptions and are skilled at working with individuals and groups of pupils to help them keep up in lessons. In addition, they contribute to extending and deepening the thinking of the most able pupils. As a result, teaching is now good across the school.
- Teachers have high expectations, which are evident across nearly all classes and year groups. Building on positive and secure relationships between pupils and staff, learning is celebrated; risk and challenge are encouraged so that pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. Most teachers are agile in lessons and recognise quickly when pupils have a grasp of key concepts and move them on quickly to new tasks and challenges. They are skilful at providing targeted support for those that need help to keep up.
- Pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work. They respond well to feedback and advice that supports their next steps in learning. Time is given to pupils to address any mistakes and follow up on the advice from teachers.
- Reading is taught well. Pupils are enthusiastic about books and reading. They discuss confidently their favourite books and authors and why others may enjoy them also. They use skills taught in English lessons well to add expression to their reading. The most able pupils are given and enjoy and respond to more challenging books.
- Phonics is taught accurately and systematically on a daily basis in early years and across key stage 1. These skills are applied consistently in pupils' reading but less so when writing independently. This is rightly the focus for school leaders to improve writing standards further.
- Pupils take care in the presentation and accuracy of their written work and when setting out their mathematical problems. They apply their writing skills in a range of challenging contexts and across a range of subjects. They frequently write at length and appreciate opportunities to review their own work.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about all subjects in the curriculum, especially mathematics. This is because teachers provide opportunities to apply their number facts in a variety of ways that make them apply logic and reasoning to solve problems. Some lack of fluency in basic number facts holds some pupils back and where this is identified appropriate support is given.

- Teachers use the information of what children can and cannot do well to plan learning that meets the needs of individuals and groups of pupils, regardless of their starting points.
- The planned curriculum ensures that pupils develop their basic skills in mathematics and English in a logical sequence. Teachers sometimes overly focus on teaching basic skills in other subjects, including history and geography. As a consequence, opportunities to deepen pupils' skills and understanding in these subjects are sometimes missed.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils rightly take pride in the presentation and quality of their written work.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. The planned curriculum ensures that they have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe in a range of situations and contexts.
- Staff know the pupils well. Strong and positive relationships ensure that children are confident in sharing their concerns with any adult and they trust that it will be dealt with sensitively. Staff work closely with families to ensure that support is given where needed and the vast majority of parents value this aspect of school provision.
- Pupils have a mature understanding of each other's differences because leaders ensure that they are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Displays around the school and work in books recognise the value of diversity in society.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about healthy lifestyles, and life choices that could be detrimental to their physical and mental health. They talk knowledgeably about the impact that healthy eating and fitness has on their learning.
- Parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and who spoke with the inspector, are confident that their children are kept safe by the school. The vast majority say that any worries they raise are taken seriously, addressed quickly and usually resolved appropriately.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils apply themselves well to tasks and work independently with resilience and persistence. They are kind to each other and polite in corridors and classrooms. However, some pupils find the 'noise' in the hall overbearing at times. They arrive in lessons ready to learn and settle quickly.
- Pupils' positive attitudes to learning are evident across the school. Pupils say that there is very little distraction in lessons from other pupils. If this does happen, teachers are quick to react.
- Pupils say that bullying rarely happens. When it does occur, they are aware of the steps that they need to take. Pupils and parents are confident that issues with bullying

will be taken seriously and resolved effectively by staff. Pupils have a mature awareness of the different forms that bullying can take, including racist bullying.

- The school has a team of learning mentors who support individuals and families to access learning and attend school. While attendance is improving and matches that seen nationally, some children continue to be frequently absent. Work to tackle this is ongoing and persistent. Work with families, including sanctions and support, is making a difference but some pupils, especially those who have SEN and/or disabilities, require this focus to be maintained to improve their rates of attendance further.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The improvement in teaching and learning since the last inspection has resulted in better outcomes for pupils. In 2017, a higher proportion of pupils left Year 6 with the required skills in reading, writing and mathematics than was seen nationally. This year, the proportion of pupils operating at and beyond age-related expectations has continued to improve across the school.
- In 2017, pupils made better progress than seen nationally in key stage 2 in mathematics, reading and writing. Progress measures are in the top 20% of schools nationally in each subject. Pupils and groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, continue to make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics in most classes in key stage 2.
- Pupils take pride and care in the presentation of their work and the quality of pupils' writing has improved since the last inspection. This is because teachers' expectations of pupils' application and presentation of writing are high. They also apply these skills in subjects other than English.
- A recent dip in outcomes in key stage 1, in 2017, reflected some cohort issues and movement of pupils in and out of the school. Gaps have been identified for this group and urgent actions to address them are beginning to have an impact. In key stage 1, pupils now progress well from their various starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. Evidence seen in lessons and in pupils' workbooks confirms the school's own assessment information that the proportion of pupils working at age-related expectations is increasing for current cohorts across key stage 1.
- Outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check continue to improve and help pupils to achieve well in their reading but less so in their writing by the end of key stage 1.
- In early years, outcomes have remained below that seen nationally in recent years, especially in writing. More children are now developing skills typical for their age in all early years classrooms.
- In the 2017 key stage 2 tests, disadvantaged pupils made better progress than other pupils nationally, in reading and mathematics, and significantly better progress than others nationally in writing. In Year 1, a greater proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieved the phonics standard than seen nationally for other pupils. The proportions of disadvantaged pupils achieving expected standards is improving and is close to that seen nationally by the time pupils leave the school at the end of key stage 2.

Early years provision

Good

- Children start in the Nursery class with a range of abilities and skills and pre-school experiences. The school accurately identifies many children that have limited communication skills and works hard to address them.
- In early years, children make typical progress from their starting points and some make increasingly rapid progress. Evidence seen in sessions and in children's work reflects the school's own view that the proportions of children with skills and attributes typical of their age is increasing. Progress in writing is not as strong as that seen in reading and mathematics.
- Children are excited and engaged by the learning opportunities provided within the early years. Activities help children to try out new experiences and revisit activities that require consolidation. Children work well together, developing an understanding of taking turns and helping each other. They learn in an environment of mutual respect that promotes effective learning.
- Children are well behaved and establish good relationships with adults and other children. Staff are skilful at building on children's interests and experiences to plan learning and provide exciting opportunities for children to engage with in the setting.
- Learning logs are frequently updated and show the range of activities that children have engaged with. Photographs and work show the progress that children are making. The next steps for learning are identified and referred back to. They show children making rapid progress from their starting points and confirm the accuracy of initial assessments made by staff.
- Accurate day-to-day assessments inform planned learning opportunities that take account of children's needs. Detailed records for individual children inform the planning for their next steps in learning, and support adults in providing individualised support to children. Interesting and engaging opportunities are provided to ensure that children apply their basic skills in their reading and writing in a variety of contexts.
- Safeguarding is effective and staff identify and meet children's emotional needs well. Staff work closely with families and other agencies to ensure that care and support is appropriately provided.
- The early years leader has a realistic and accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses in the provision. She has taken the lead on initiatives to raise expectations and standards. The focus on improving writing outcomes supported by a wider communication skills strategy is now making a difference.
- Parents are encouraged to contribute their own evidence to assessments of what children can and cannot do. They are kept well informed about the progress that their children are making and value their relationships with the key members of staff.

School details

Unique reference number	107824
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10037717

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	470
Appropriate authority	Governing body
Chair	Carrie Cheeseman
Headteacher	Richard Catherall
Telephone number	01132 527194
Website	www.sevenhillsmorley.org.uk
Email address	Helen.Robertshaw@seven-hillsschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–28 November 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is above the national average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors held discussions with governors, the headteacher, senior leaders, the local authority and some subject leaders.
- The inspectors observed learning in all classrooms. Joint observations were carried out with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' work, had discussions with pupils and listened to some pupils read.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school, at playtimes and in lessons.
- The inspectors looked at the responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, considered some written comments from parents and met with some parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors examined a wide range of documentation, including evidence of the school's self-evaluation, information about the performance of teachers and pupils, reports to the governing body, as well as information on the curriculum, safeguarding and other key policies.

Inspection team

Jonathan Brown, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Heather Mensah	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Ashworth	Ofsted Inspector

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