

Shepton Mallet Community Infants' School & Nursery

Waterloo Road, Shepton Mallet, Somerset BA4 5HE

Inspection dates

6–7 February 2018

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 form a strong leadership team. They are highly effective in ensuring that pupils make good progress, are kept safe and enjoy their education at this school.
- The governing body knows the school well and works closely with school leaders to ensure that the school continues to improve.
- Most pupils make good progress from their starting points. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. However, in mathematics the most able pupils are not always challenged to reach the highest standards.
- The standard of teaching is good. Teachers plan interesting and engaging lessons and assess their pupils' progress regularly. Teachers are well supported by leaders and they receive appropriate training. Pupils who are new to learning English are particularly well taught and make fast progress.
- Bullying and poor behaviour are rare and dealt with effectively by the school. Playtimes and lunchtimes are enjoyable occasions and pupils move around the school sensibly.
- Pupils' behaviour is good, and they respond well to the high expectations adults set. Pupils play well together and can take turns and share equipment. In lessons, pupils have good attitudes to learning. They listen and participate well.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are good. Pupils told the inspectors that they feel safe in school, and parents and staff support this view. The school checks carefully to ensure that only appropriate people have contact with pupils.
- The majority of pupils who join the school in the Reception class have attended the on-site nursery, so transfer smoothly. Children enjoy the well-planned curriculum which develops their skills and knowledge.
- Although senior leaders and governors are strong, middle leaders do not yet play a large part in maintaining improvements and developing teaching.
- Pupils in the school are not learning phonics as quickly as pupils in most schools. Fewer pupils are meeting the expected standard than in most schools nationally.
- The school works well to foster links with parents and carers and the community.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by developing the role of middle leaders so that they can support colleagues and improve the school further.
- Improve pupils' phonics knowledge so that a greater proportion meet the expected standard at the end of Year 1.
- Ensure that the most able pupils reach greater depth in mathematics by ensuring that teachers challenge pupils with work that stretches them.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, together with her deputy and the governors, has developed a school where pupils can thrive and learn. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They feel safe and well cared for.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have correctly identified areas for development and have plans in place for further improvement.
- The leadership of teaching is strong, with effective support given to staff. Teachers and teaching assistants have good training to help them to improve their skills. However, the leadership and monitoring of teaching is mainly undertaken by senior leaders. Middle leaders do not have sufficient opportunities to drive improvements in their subject areas and share best practice with each other. This is slowing the rate of improvement of teaching.
- The national curriculum is taught through topics that are well designed and appeal to both boys and girls. As a result, pupils enjoy their learning. Pupils have many wider curriculum opportunities, which include attending after-school clubs and going on school trips.
- Leaders identified that standards in phonics are low. They are now taking action to improve this and standards are beginning to rise.
- Nearly half of the pupils in the school do not speak English as their first language. Leaders ensure that new pupils are welcomed into the school, and they are well supported to learn English quickly.
- The SEN coordinator has ensured that there are effective plans in place for each child who requires additional support and that they receive good-quality support. Pupils' needs are met, enabling them to make progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Leaders ensure that this is well planned and incorporated into the curriculum. Inspectors saw pupils engaged and thinking deeply during a whole school assembly which explored feelings, and the uniqueness of each of us. Pupils' social development was evident from their increasing confidence in speaking in pairs and groups.
- Fundamental British values are taught well. Pupils learn about democracy by voting for the school council. They understand why it is important to have rules and to treat each other with respect. Pupils learn about different faiths and speak about them respectfully.
- Leaders use additional funding well to help disadvantaged pupils catch up. They monitor pupils closely and give good support where necessary.
- Pupils do not attend as well as they do in most schools nationally. However, due to concerted efforts from leaders, working with parents and rewarding good attendance, the level of attendance is improving.

- The school receives support from the local authority, and also purchases support from an external advisor. This is valued by the school, whose leaders consider that the support helps them to improve standards.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club. There is a high ratio of staff to pupils, and the staff organise suitable activities, which pupils enjoy. In addition, teachers run clubs to give pupils a wider range of experiences, including learning to play the ocarina, computing and sport.
- School leaders have the confidence of the parents, staff and pupils, who said that any concerns they raise are addressed and taken seriously.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They know how well the school is performing when compared to other schools nationally. They receive detailed reports from the headteacher and also visit regularly to monitor the school for themselves.
- Leaders and governors together produce well-targeted plans for school improvement.
- Governors have all received training for their roles, including specific training for those taking on particular responsibilities, for example safeguarding. Many governors have particular expertise which they offer to the school.
- Governors challenge and support the school appropriately. They hold the school's leaders to account for its performance, but also offer support with difficult issues.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has a very strong culture of safeguarding. All staff and governors have had safeguarding training. Staff know what procedures they need to follow and understand that safeguarding is the responsibility of everybody. All the necessary records and checks on adults who work with children are in place.
- Record-keeping is good. This helps to ensure that no pupil is overlooked.
- Pupils believe that they are well looked after. They are confident that if they have any concerns they can talk to their teacher or the headteacher and that these would be acted upon.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers plan interesting and engaging lessons based around topics that are chosen to appeal to both boys and girls. Most lessons are well planned to meet the needs of all groups of pupils.
- Teachers monitor their pupils' progress and extra help is quickly given to those who need to catch up. Teachers and well-trained teaching assistants provide effective targeted support.

- The proportion of pupils who join the school with poorly developed language skills or who are at an early stage of learning English is much higher than in most schools. These pupils are supported well through targeted support and good classroom practice, for example through skilled questioning which encourages pupils to express themselves fully and develop their ideas. The teaching of language skills is a strength of the school.
- Pupils' enjoyment of reading is also strong. Pupils read regularly with an adult, and enjoy reading and talking about their books. Reading materials are closely matched to each pupil's stage of reading development.
- The quality of teaching of writing is good. Pupils are taught to write for different purposes. For example, they are taught how to use language to write persuasively. They are encouraged to use a wide vocabulary, and there is evidence of good progress in spelling throughout the year.
- In some mathematics lessons, teachers do not challenge the most able pupils to reach the highest standards, with the result that too few are working at greater depth.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. This results in calm, orderly classrooms. Pupils also have very good attitudes to learning.
- There has been an improvement in phonics teaching in recent years. This has resulted in improved standards, but phonics lessons are still not closely matched to each pupil's stage of learning. As a result, too few pupils reach the expected standard at the end of Year 1.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and have very positive attitudes to learning. They receive praise and encouragement from adults that results in pupils being prepared to 'have a go'. Caring adults quickly give help and guidance, although this can sometimes result in pupils being over-reliant on adult support.
- Pupils work together well. They take turns and share equipment. The adults in school listen to pupils and take account of their comments and views. As a result of these good role models, pupils listen attentively to the teacher and to each other.
- Playtimes and lunchtimes are happy occasions. Pupils enjoy playing with the equipment and there is a good level of adult supervision. Adults interact well with pupils to make sure that nobody is left out.
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe in the real world, for example on the roads and online. Pupils are confident to speak to an adult if they are worried.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.

- Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils know what is expected of them. This results in pupils usually behaving in a sensible way, and typically being kind and helpful to each other.
- There is very little bad behaviour or bullying in the school. If these do occur they are dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils told the inspectors that they feel safe and well looked after in school. All staff and a very large majority of parents agreed.
- The attendance of pupils remains below average. However, attendance is improving and few pupils are absent regularly. The school is successfully using a variety of strategies which include working closely with families and rewarding good attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Children enter school with skills and knowledge below what is typical. They make good progress, and the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 is similar to other schools nationally. However, it is slightly below this in writing. Pupils currently in school are making good progress from their starting points in all three subjects.
- Disadvantaged pupils are well supported and make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because their needs are quickly identified, allowing teachers and teaching assistants to provide good support.
- The school has a much larger proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities than is found in most school nationally. These pupils, including those who have complex needs, make good progress.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Those who arrive in school with little or no spoken English make very fast progress learning the language due to the good teaching and well-planned support they receive.
- The proportion of pupils who reach greater depth in reading and writing in key stage 1 is similar to that found in most schools nationally but fewer pupils reach greater depth in mathematics. This is because the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in this subject.
- Progress in the Reception class is good, and children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Outcomes in phonics have improved over recent years, but the proportion who reach the expected standard by the end of Year 1 remains below the national figure. However, by the end of Year 2 pupils have caught up and the proportion who reach the expected standard is in line with the national average.

Early years provision

Good

- Many children start school with skills and knowledge lower than is typical for their age, particularly in the area of language development. Children are well taught and supported, and they make good progress and leave the Reception classes well prepared to join Year 1.

- The leadership of the Reception classes is good. Teachers and other Reception staff know the children very well. Assessment on entry is rigorous. Regular detailed assessments and observations mean that the staff are able to plan activities closely matched to children's needs, enabling them to learn well.
- Children who have SEN and/or disabilities, those who are disadvantaged, or those who need to quickly acquire English language skills are all well supported.
- English language skills are developed well through conversations and questioning. Adults encourage children to answer fully rather than accepting single-word responses. Language skills are also developed through planned activities, for example the hospital role-play area, where inspectors saw children successfully learn and practise associated language and vocabulary.
- Children are very happy in the Reception classes. They feel well looked after and know that the staff care for them. Safeguarding in the Reception classes is of the same high standard as in the rest of the school.
- Staff manage children's behaviour very well and, as a result, good behaviour is the norm. Children listen well to adults and to each other. They are very good at taking turns in play and sharing and have very good attitudes to work. For example, children were observed successfully writing letters on mini-whiteboards and then proudly showing their work to the teacher.
- Reception staff have a good relationship with parents. Parents said that they appreciate the information sessions and the opportunity to 'drop in' to find out how their children are progressing. They also said that the staff are very approachable, and that they are confident that their children are safe and well looked after.

School details

Unique reference number	123660
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10042692

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 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	127
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kate Lovell
Headteacher	Honorina Thompson
Telephone number	01749 342 322
Website	www.sheptonmalletinfants.co.uk
Email address	sheptonmalletinfants@educ.somerset.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 November 2013

Information about this school

- The school shares the site with a nursery which takes children from birth to four years old. The nursery is run by the same governing body as the school and has the same headteacher. However, it is registered and inspected separately from the school.
- Nearly half of all pupils are not from a White British background. The largest proportion of these come from Eastern European countries, mainly Poland, with other pupils coming from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Nearly half of all pupils do not speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is similar to the national figure.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and who receive support is much higher than the proportion found in most schools.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club on site.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning across the school and completed observations jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, who also has the roles of coordinator for pupils who have SEN, Reception leader and literacy coordinator. Inspectors also met with governors, teachers, parents and pupils.
- Inspectors looked carefully at work in pupils' books to check that they are making progress.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, attendance records and information relating to the pupil premium and the sport premium.
- Inspectors talked to pupils in the playground while observing lunchtime and playtimes as well as in lessons.
- Inspectors took account of 17 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and 27 responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding documentation carefully and spoke with adults and pupils to check that pupils are kept safe.

Inspection team

Janet Maul, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Bragg	Ofsted Inspector
Marion Borland	Ofsted Inspector

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

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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2018