

Inspection of Shirland Primary School

Park Lane, Shirland, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 6BH

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

At Shirland, the central aspiration is for every pupil to be the best that they can be, in everything they do. This ambition is evident in the school's curriculum, through its rich personal development programme and in the warm relationships between staff and pupils.

Pupils feel safe and secure. They know there is support on hand if they need it. Pupils say, 'If ever you are in difficulty or have a problem, there are people here to get things sorted.'

Pupils are happy and well behaved. They understand the importance of being safe, ready and respectful. Pupils demonstrate respect in the way they conduct themselves in lessons and around the school. Good manners are recognised with weekly 'Etiquette Awards'.

Pupils are proud of their school. They describe it as being a fair place where everyone gets a chance to do everything. They learn about the importance of equality. Pupils show this understanding through their welcoming, inclusive attitudes. They say, 'We embrace everyone's differences at Shirland.'

There are many activities on offer beyond the classroom to develop pupils' talents and interests. Pupils relish being part of the school's wonderful 'Musical Theatre Club'. They love expressing themselves by singing, acting and dancing.

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

The school's curriculum is well sequenced. Pupils learn knowledge and skills in a precise order. The school has thought carefully about the words they want pupils to learn at each stage of their education. There is a heavy focus on vocabulary development in all lessons. However, pupils sometimes confuse their learning in one subject with another. The school's curriculum does not yet lead to all pupils gaining a sufficient understanding of the ways in which different subjects are studied.

Every area of learning in the early years curriculum is set out in small, progressive steps. This ensures that children build their knowledge and skills gradually in preparation for key stage 1. The Reception classroom is a nurturing environment that supports the growth of children's independence. Staff develop children's communication and language skills well during free-flow learning most of the time.

Staff are passionate about reading. They pass this passion on to pupils. Story time is a favourite time of the day for many pupils. They say they love listening to their teachers read and 'making pictures in their minds'. Staff teach the school's chosen phonics programme well. They ensure that pupils begin to learn to read accurately and fluently from a young age. The books that pupils take home to read are matched to the letter sounds they recognise. The school ensures that anyone who falls behind in phonics is given extra help straight away. Older pupils enjoy

answering quiz questions about the books they read and taking on the 'Million Word Reading Challenge'.

Staff have good subject knowledge. They explain things clearly and model learning well. Staff frequently go back over important information that pupils have learned earlier this academic year to keep it fresh in pupils' minds. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of what they are studying now. Year 6 pupils, for example, know lots about the Battle of Britain and the Blitz from their current history topic on World War Two. However, pupils' recall of learning that is not as recent is not always as secure. This is because staff do not systemically revisit key content from previous years in some subjects.

The school is ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff make adaptations to their lessons so that pupils with SEND achieve well. Pupils with complex needs benefit from precise, individual support.

There are high expectations for pupils' behaviour and attendance. Staff model the behaviour they want to instil so that pupils learn from their example. The school intervenes swiftly if any pupil has too much time off school.

Through its personal development offer, the school aims to broaden pupils' horizons and equip them for life beyond the school gates. Pupils learn about mental health and there is high-quality pastoral support available for any well-being needs. Pupils understand the importance of eating well and staying fit. The school organises a range of endurance events for pupils in running, cycling and rowing. There are numerous opportunities for pupils to learn musical instruments and to perform on stage. The curriculum is enriched with topic-linked visits, including trips to the seaside and stays overseas.

Shirland Primary School is well led. Staff appreciate the time they get to lead their subjects. One member of staff spoke for the team when they said, 'I love working here – we look after each other.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, pupils do not remember what they have been taught before in enough detail. This prevents some pupils from building on what they have already covered and deepening their understanding over time. The school should review its approach to the recall of prior learning so that staff systematically revisit the key content from previous years, helping all pupils to remember it securely over the long term.

- In some subjects, there is not sufficient emphasis on the development of pupils' disciplinary knowledge. This means that pupils can confuse their learning in one subject with another. By the end of key stage 2, pupils do not have a secure understanding of how some subjects need to be studied. The school must refine its curriculum thinking so that pupils gradually build their disciplinary knowledge in readiness for the next stage of their education.

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	112620
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10254769
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	176
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing	Tim Farndon
Headteacher	Louise Vessey
Website	www.shirland.derbyshire.sch.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	26 and 27 January 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, geography and history. For the deep dives, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculums for writing and science. They looked at pupils' work and visited lessons in these subjects.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, subject leaders and a sample of teaching and support staff. Inspectors met with the leaders with responsibility for pupils with SEND, behaviour, attendance and personal development.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors 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.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, the school improvement plan and documentation relating to behaviour, attendance and governance.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 read to a familiar adult. Inspectors met with groups of pupils from across the school.
- The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. He also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the results of the Ofsted staff survey.

Inspection team

Shaun Carter, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sylvie Newman

Ofsted Inspector

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