

Inspection of a good school: Shire Oak VC Primary School

Wood Lane, Headingley, Wood Lane, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS6 2DT

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 June 2024

Outcome

Shire Oak VC Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Shire Oak is a nurturing and inclusive school. It receives high praise from pupils and families. They are overwhelmingly proud of the school and the care they receive from adults. The needs of pupils are at the heart of this school's ethos. This is a school that is 'rooted in the community'.

The enjoyment of being at this school is reflected in the consistently high rates of attendance. Pupils work with focus in class and have a thirst for knowledge. Children in early years sing a song to work together when returning from outdoors. They tidy up and then promptly sit in their places eager to learn. Pupils are responsive to adults and demonstrate high levels of engagement. They are respectful and articulate their learning well. Older pupils support younger children. They act as role models during themed afternoons and at lunchtimes.

The school sets high expectations, and pupils rise to meet them. Pupils understand the clear school principles of 'be kind, be safe and be your best'. They say that the school rules are fair and that reasonable decisions help them to reflect. When pupils struggle with the rules, they are overwhelmingly positive about the support they receive. This helps them to successfully manage the school day and grow their confidence. This happy, nurturing environment is 'growing citizens of the future'.

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

The school has a curriculum that is broad and balanced. It identifies the key knowledge that pupils need to learn. This curriculum is ambitious and includes goals such as all pupils learning to swim in Year 2. All pupils learn to play a musical instrument. The school adapts the curriculum to be relevant to the local context. For example, history topics include local studies that aim to build an understanding of changes to Leeds over time. Pupils visit areas of local interest. They visit Victorian housing, and local experts share artefacts in school. Pupils know and remember facts in these topics. However, in some foundation subjects, pupils do not regularly revisit previous subject learning. This means

that pupils sometimes struggle to connect what they have already learned in earlier topics with new learning.

In mathematics, pupils explain their growing understanding of different concepts. This begins in early years where children explain 3D models using positional language. In Year 6, pupils know the important mathematical facts that they need to solve more-complex problems. They link key knowledge over time. They use this in new contexts, for example when calculating complex area and perimeter problems. The curriculum is inclusive and ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In mathematics, pre-teaching to introduce the learning, repetition of key curriculum knowledge and use of manipulative equipment means that pupils get the scaffolding and extra practice they need.

The well-stocked library is at the heart of this school. Classes spend dedicated time here each week. Pupils carry out research visits when learning about different topics. They enthusiastically share and reference many books that enhance their learning. Pupils talk about class novels they enjoy reading and sharing in class. Older pupils look forward to school performances. They enjoy acting out Shakespeare plays.

The school prioritises learning to read. Adults are reading experts. They consistently provide extra reading practice. This regular reading practice means that pupils read with focus and accuracy. They use their phonics knowledge to read words in books that contain the sounds they know. They read with increasing fluency and use reading strategies effectively with increasing independence. Pupils are highly successful at learning to read.

The school broadens pupils' development beyond the academic. It offers a range of leadership opportunities and experiences. These are inclusive. There is a commitment for every child to attend all trips and residential visits. Visits to places of worship, and worship leaders' visits to school, broaden pupils' understanding of different faiths. The school builds pupils' character. Pupils work on projects in the local community. They work with a hospice and care homes. Pupils participate in hustings, campaigns and elections in school and also in the local authority area. They understand the importance of democracy. Older pupils welcome visitors and independently show them around school during open mornings. Pupils raise funds for global issues as well as raising the profile of environmental concerns. Through these opportunities, pupils learn the impact of being courageous advocates. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

The school thoughtfully manages the well-being of staff. The staff appreciate time to share ideas to improve ways of working. Those responsible for governance work with leaders and regularly check on their well-being. The wide knowledge and experience of governors support informed decisions for the benefit of pupils.

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 foundation subjects, pupils struggle to make links with key knowledge over time. This limits their deeper understanding of the subject and their ability to connect this knowledge to new learning. The school needs to ensure that pupils regularly revisit previous subject learning so that they make links with key knowledge between topics.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 2015.

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	131570
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10346385
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Antonia Nicholls
Headteacher	Jane Astrid Devane
Website	www.shireoak.org
Date of previous inspection	18 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Leeds and has a Christian character.
- The school's last section 48 inspection took place in December 2022.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provider.

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 spoke to the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team and leaders responsible for safeguarding.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. 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, listened to pupils read and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also spoke

to leaders and looked at work for geography and work in English books.

- 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 took account of the views of parents through letters received and surveys, including Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector held separate meetings with the representatives of the school's governing body, including the chair, the local authority school improvement partner, the leader of the alternative provision and the school adviser for the Diocese of Leeds.

Inspection team

Lesley Sullivan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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