

Inspection of Shalford Primary School

Church End, Shalford, Braintree, Essex CM7 5EZ

Inspection dates: 24–25 September 2019

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this small, friendly village school feel happy and cared for. They enjoy attending school and taking part in clubs such as carnival, martial arts, football and gymnastics. They also appreciate opportunities to go on trips to places like Duxford, as well as longer residential visits.

Class numbers are quite small and all the pupils in the school know each other and look after each other. At playtimes and lunchtimes, the older pupils keep an eye out for the younger ones, and there are always enough adults on hand to check that everything runs smoothly. As many parents and carers commented, the school feels like a large, happy family.

Pupils enjoy the topics they study, and can give examples of their recent learning, for example classifying rocks in a science lesson. Pupils love it when their teachers read to them.

Pupils behave well in class and around the school. They generally concentrate hard and listen carefully to adults and to each other. They are tolerant of those who sometimes find it harder to concentrate because of particular needs. They are confident that instances of bullying are extremely rare. They know what to do if they are worried about anything.

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

The school provides a good quality of education. Since it opened as an academy in December 2016, the school has improved significantly. Trustees and governors have directed considerable resources into improving facilities. With the support of the multi-academy trust (MAT), leaders have ensured that the quality of teaching in the school has improved enormously.

Children get off to a good start in Reception. There is a valuable induction programme, including a family picnic, which helps everyone get to know each other. The newly refurbished outdoor area for the Reception and Year 1 class, provides additional opportunities for playing and learning in the fresh air.

The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is generally well organised. All teachers plan learning activities which enable pupils from the different year groups to work together in harmony. Most teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn, and most of the work is well matched to pupils' needs. Nevertheless, there are some inconsistencies, and sometimes work is not as challenging as it should be.

Senior leaders have recently introduced improvements to the way teachers plan pupils' learning in subjects such as history and science. Some curriculum leaders are unsure about the priorities for their subject. More work needs to be done to ensure that the wider curriculum is taught systematically and in depth.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is a strength of the school. Pupils carried out an in-depth study about their local community at the start of this term and spoke excitedly about what they had learned.

In all key stages, pupils usually achieve in line with what is expected for their age. This is an enormous improvement from the situation in 2016, when outcomes across the school were much lower. Disadvantaged pupils receive additional support to help them make as much progress as their peers. If pupils are at risk of falling behind, they are given the help they need to catch up.

Teachers encourage a love of reading from Reception to Year 6. Phonics is taught well in key stage 1, and in the early years, phonics starts as soon as children enter Reception. Teachers provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to improve their comprehension skills. Teachers select quality texts, such as 'Carrie's War', with vocabulary that extends pupils' learning and links to the topics pupils are studying.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive good support and are fully included in all aspects of school life. Staff are well trained in meeting pupils' needs and, as a result, pupils with SEND make good progress in their learning and personal development. Some pupils have complex needs and their parents are particularly appreciative of the support offered to them and their children.

Pupils behave well in lessons and listen carefully to adults. They socialise happily around school, often playing with other pupils of different ages. The good range of clubs, trips, residential visits and responsibilities helps build character. Pupils thoroughly enjoy these activities, and many choose to put themselves forward for election to the Learning Council.

The school is well led and managed and leaders are well supported by senior leaders from the MAT and by colleagues from other MAT schools. Staff know that leaders take an interest in their professional development and their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained, and leaders keep adults up to date with any new procedures. The adults understand their roles and responsibilities for keeping everyone safe. Leaders remain vigilant, and, as a result, the culture of safeguarding is strong. Governors and trustees monitor leaders' actions to be certain that the correct checks are made on everyone who works in the school. Leaders seek the advice of external agencies whenever the need arises.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently coherently planned and sequenced in some subjects. However, it is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken to plan next year's curriculum and train staff in how to deliver it that they are in the process of bringing this about.
- Leaders should support teachers to implement recent changes to the school's curriculum map to help pupils learn more and remember more. Inspection evidence shows gaps in coverage in subjects including science and history. Leaders should ensure that knowledge builds sequentially on prior learning.
- Curriculum leaders need to improve their understanding of how well their subject is planned and taught and ensure that staff training is used effectively.
- Where weaknesses in teaching have been identified, swiftly bring about improvements. Leaders need to ensure that, in every class, pupils' prior knowledge is taken into account when lessons are planned. This will ensure that learning is consistently well matched to the needs of all pupils.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	142935
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10110181
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	58
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Bruce Hanley
Headteacher	Louise Venables
Website	www.shalford.changesp.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Shalford Primary School opened as an academy in December 2016.
- The school is part of the CHANGE Schools Partnership.
- The number of children attending the school is well below the national average.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- As part of this inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the early years leader, curriculum leaders and MAT representatives, including the chief executive officer and the MAT director of teaching, learning and assessment. They also met with teachers and pupils. They met with members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors gathered the views of parents on the playground before school.
- Reading, mathematics, history and science were considered as part of this inspection. Inspectors spoke to curriculum leaders, visited lessons, carried out work scrutinies and met with teachers and pupils to learn about the quality of education.

- To inspect the school's safeguarding arrangements, inspectors spoke to the designated safeguarding leaders, members of staff, parents, governors and pupils. They checked the single central record and a sample of safeguarding records.
- Inspectors observed playtimes and lunchtime. They spoke to pupils about their school.
- The transition arrangements for quality of education apply to this inspection.

Inspection team

Nick Rudman, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lynsey Holzer

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