

Inspection of Shenley Primary School

London Road, Shenley, Radlett, Hertfordshire WD7 9DX

Inspection dates: 28 to 29 September 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Shenley Primary School is a friendly and inclusive school. Pupils benefit greatly because adults know them and their families well. There is a strong sense of community despite the many changes in leadership over the last few years.

Pupils behave and learn well because leaders have set high expectations. Pupils are calm and polite. As a result, pupils feel safe. Visits from the police help pupils to learn about the possible dangers while in their community. They learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Pupils with additional needs, including special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), receive effective support so that they take part in all aspects of school life alongside their peers.

Pupils are very proud of their school. Older pupils look out and care for younger pupils. Pupils enjoy learning because they study a broad and exciting curriculum. They value opportunities to take on leadership roles, such as house captains and play leaders. Pupils have mature attitudes towards equality. They know it is okay to be themselves. They trust adults will listen to them and respect their opinions.

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

The school has in place an ambitious curriculum. It is clearly sequenced so that pupils can build new knowledge on the foundations that have been laid before. The curriculum has been overhauled to make sure pupils learn the important knowledge they need to remember. Pupils are now performing well because they are able to quickly recall their knowledge to help them interpret new ideas. However, it will take time for this to be shown in published outcomes, which were weak in 2022.

Reading is prioritised across the school. Pupils enjoy reading, especially during their weekly 'book buddy' reading times. The reading curriculum is well designed. Children start to learn to read as soon as they begin school. Teachers expertly deliver the phonics programme. Books pupils read closely match their ability, which helps them practise and apply their new learning. Adults know the pupils who need extra help with reading. Some pupils who need help to catch up do not receive the precise guidance they need. Some adults do not yet have the knowledge they need to provide the right support. This means some pupils do not catch up as quickly as they could.

Teachers present information clearly. They break down ideas into precise steps. This helps pupils build on their prior learning. Pupils remember important knowledge well, such as in mathematics, where older pupils can accurately subtract four digit numbers because they learned efficient methods when they were younger.

Pupils with SEND have their needs identified accurately. The school is proactive in seeking support from external agencies. Pupils receive a wide range of extra support, including a nurture provision. This helps pupils achieve well.

Children in early years settle quickly. The environment is inviting and well resourced. Children have opportunities to work independently and with one another. They cooperate and are able to negotiate and compromise when needed. The curriculum develops children's knowledge from Nursery to Reception, so that they are ready for key stage 1. There are close communications between families and school. Parents understand what their children are learning through 'stay and learn' sessions.

Provision for pupils' personal development is strong. The wide range of trips and visits help develop character and deepen learning. Pupils visit local places of worship, including St Albans Cathedral and a synagogue. They benefit from opportunities to engage with their local community, such as singing at a residential care home. These visits develop their understanding of different faiths, cultures and the community they live in. They learn about healthy relationships and the importance of good mental health. Forest school sessions develop resilience and social skills. Friday assemblies are a highlight for all. Pupils talk kindly about how they celebrate everyone who gets an award.

Pupils conduct themselves well. They understand behaviour expectations. Staff consistently apply the behaviour policy. Restorative conversations between adults and pupils help bring about changes in behaviour. Leaders are tenacious about improving attendance. They support families in different ways to help pupils attend.

Many parents hold the school in high regard. However, for some, their trust in the school has been eroded. Leaders know and understand this. Leaders are working hard to rebuild positive relationships with all families.

Governors know the school and its priorities well. They provide effective challenge and support to help improve the school. Leaders are ably supported by the local authority. The majority of staff, including those new to the school and the profession, say workload is manageable. They appreciate the training and support leaders provide.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all adults have had training to provide high-quality support for pupils who find reading difficult. This means that some pupils do not receive the precise support they need. They do not catch up quickly enough. Leaders should ensure staff receive training to develop their expertise.
- The school has undergone a period of significant change. This has led to some parents losing faith in the school and not fully understanding the vision of the school. Leaders should ensure they work closely with parents and carers to

develop positive and trusting relationships that will result in a shared vision to achieve the best outcomes for 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 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 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	117150
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10288452
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	151
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jamie Stockwell
Headteacher	Rachel Amos
Website	www.shenleyprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 May 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There is a new headteacher since the previous inspection. The headteacher has been in post since January 2022.
- There is a nursery provision on site, which is managed by the school.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 met with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, the leader for SEND, the parent and family adviser and governors. They also met with the school improvement partner from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and design and history. For each deep dive inspectors spoke to subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at work in pupils' books. Inspectors also heard pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors met with staff to talk about the curriculum, workload and the behaviour and personal development of pupils. They also met with groups of pupils to talk about learning and well-being.
- Inspectors considered a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, plans for improvement and minutes of meetings of the governing body. Attendance records were checked.
- Inspectors visited the before- and after-school provision provided by the school.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at playtimes, lunchtimes and at the wraparound care. Inspectors talked to pupils about behaviour, bullying and welfare.
- Inspectors talked to parents and considered the online responses to Ofsted Parent View. The option for free-text responses was not available during the inspection but inspectors did take account of written correspondence that was received from parents.

Inspection team

Karen Stanton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Richard Fordham

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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