

# Inspection of Sherford Vale School

Hercules Road, Gb, Sherford, PL9 8FA

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Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are happy and safe at Sherford Vale. They appreciate the warm and respectful relationships they have with staff, and with each other. Some older pupils are 'playleaders', for example. They relish helping younger pupils during social times. Pupils say that staff listen to them and help them to do their best.

Pupils live up to leaders' high expectations of their behaviour. As a result, the school has a calm and positive atmosphere. Leaders place a strong emphasis on extending pupils' oracy skills. For example, in assemblies, pupils discuss the weekly 'picture news' topic. Leaders have established clear routines that encourage confident speaking and respectful listening.

Pupils contribute actively to the life of the school. For instance, some pupils are school librarians. Others are voted in by their peers as school councillors. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about whole-school events, such as a sponsored walk to raise money for charity. They equally enjoy community events, for example celebrating when the cycling 'Tour of Britain' passed by the school.

Pupils and parents share confidence in leaders to resolve any bullying. On the rare occasions it occurs, leaders take swift and effective action. Pupils said they feel comfortable to speak to an adult if they are worried.

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

Trustees and school leaders have ensured that the school provides a good quality of education. They share an ambitious vision for pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged. Children, including two-year-olds in the nursery, are well cared for and ready for their next steps in life.

Leaders have carefully planned and sequenced the knowledge that pupils learn. For example, they have designed the science curriculum, so that pupils understand increasingly complex ideas about energy. Where leaders have embedded the curriculum, such as in mathematics, pupils learn subject content in depth. However, in some subjects, the curriculum is in its infancy and pupils do not gain such detailed knowledge and skills.

Teachers have the subject knowledge they need to teach the curriculum well. This is a result of effective professional development, which successfully builds teachers' expertise. Leaders, in turn, oversee how well the curriculum is put into place. In the early years, leaders have placed a sharp focus on improving pupils' vocabulary and spoken language. Staff collaborate well to ensure children make a smooth transition from Nursery to Reception.

Leaders have ensured that reading is a priority. The early reading curriculum enables pupils to learn to read accurately and fluently. Pupils initially read books that are matched closely to the sounds they have learned. As their reading develops, they read books which extend their fluency and knowledge of language. Pupils who need help with reading receive it quickly and effectively. As a result, pupils become confident readers.

Teaching presents information clearly and uses assessment well. In mathematics, for example, teachers frequently check pupils' understanding and respond to any misconceptions. This helps pupils to improve their mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills. Across the curriculum, teachers use assessment effectively to help pupils to consolidate their learning.

Leaders identify the needs of pupils with SEND accurately and provide useful information to teachers. As a result, teaching is usually adapted to meet pupils' needs. Leaders understand the next steps they need to take to improve the curriculum further for pupils with SEND.

The personal, social and health education programme develops pupils' understanding of healthy relationships appropriately. Pupils learn about protected characteristics and important values, such as tolerance. Leaders carefully choose the books teachers read to pupils to develop pupils' understanding of difference and diversity. Pupils enjoy a range of extra-curricular activities, which extend their interests and talents.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel that leaders support them well and are sensitive to their workload and well-being. Trustees challenge leaders and rigorously hold them to account. They also provide appropriate support to leaders and ensure leaders manage resources well.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are vigilant in ensuring the safety of children. Staff receive useful training, which enables them to identify if pupils are at risk. Leaders are tenacious when securing the support that children need. This includes making timely referrals to safeguarding partners and escalating concerns if required.

Pupils feel safe and learn about keeping safe on and offline. Policies and practice to manage harmful sexual behaviours are appropriate. The recruitment process ensures staff are suitable to work with children.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum is in its infancy. This means that pupils do not learn subject content in sufficient depth. Leaders should ensure that pupils learn the detailed knowledge and skills they need in all areas of the curriculum.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use 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 on how to complain about a school.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	145907
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241601
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy free school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	225
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Iain Grafton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Susie Evans
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sherfordvaleschool.co.uk">www.sherfordvaleschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Westcountry Schools multi-academy trust.
- The school has a nursery, which admits two-year olds.
- There have been recent changes to governance.
- There is a before- and after-school club.
- 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.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, curriculum leaders, the chair of trustees and trust executive leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record of adults working in the school. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and examined the school's safeguarding records. Inspectors also spoke with a range of pupils and staff about safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and to Ofsted's online pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

James Oldham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sally Hannaford

Ofsted Inspector

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