

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Shalford Primary School

Church End, Shalford, Braintree, Essex CM7 5EZ

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Inspection date:

10 December 2024

## Outcome

Shalford Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Timothy Arding. This school is part of the Compass Partnership of Schools, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, John Camp, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Susan Skidmore. There is also an executive headteacher Michelle Bernard, who is responsible for this school and three others.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils say this is a welcoming and friendly school that they would give 'a five star rating'. Pupils are proud to show other families around the school, and feel lucky to be here.

Pupils enjoy their learning. They particularly like writing different stories and articulate how to learn from their mistakes in English and mathematics. Most pupils achieve well.

Pupils participate in trips to bring learning to life. These include visiting local historical sites. Pupils also benefit from meeting with visitors to the school, such as those conducting science experiments. Pupils say these activities are 'educational and fun'.

Pupils behave well. Staff have high expectations of their conduct and pupils rise to this well. Pupils feel safe and know a trusted adult will care for them.

Pupils practise bell ringing with the church, perform at the village fete and have recently celebrated the school's 150th anniversary with the community. There are some after-school clubs on offer for pupils. These include multi-skills, choir and football. The school is currently extending the range of clubs to further appeal to pupils' talents and interests.

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

The school is ambitious for all its pupils to develop as confident, independent, and inquisitive learners. It enables them to reach this goal through studying its well-designed curriculum. The school thinks carefully about the knowledge and skills that pupils will learn and in what order.

The impact of this curriculum is most effective where staff have the appropriate expertise and confidence in delivery. For example, this is evident in the teaching of reading. Children start learning to read as soon as they begin school in the Reception Year. They initially learn how to pronounce individual sounds and to blend these sounds to read words. Staff then skilfully support them to build up their vocabulary and to decode unfamiliar words. This means children rapidly start to read. Those pupils who need additional help to catch up are quickly identified and given the support they need to become confident and fluent readers.

On occasion, some staff do not have the subject expertise that they need. This affects how well staff teach some of the curriculum to pupils. In some year groups, pupils' learning of key curriculum content is less successful.

In collaboration with the trust, the school has successfully focused on improving the quality of pupils' writing. This includes revisions to the sequence for teaching the structure of writing. However, the school does not make sure that its agreed approach to teaching writing is consistently followed by staff. In some classes, pupils receive too little help to resolve errors in their grammar, spelling and punctuation. This means that some pupils' writing is difficult to read.

The school's support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is strong. The school quickly and precisely identifies individual pupils' needs and provides appropriate support. This support is closely monitored and reviewed to ensure adaptations remain appropriate for pupils to progress through the curriculum. As a result, pupils with SEND needs are progressing well from their starting points.

The school helps pupils learn how to be responsible citizens of modern Britain. Pupils learn about democracy, such as by voting for their school councillors. The school celebrates festivals such as Diwali with pupils. It helps them to learn about respect for others, for example, by studying Black History Month. As a result, pupils have a strong understanding of equality and how to show respect for others. Pupils also have the opportunity to learn about possible career choices. They are aware of the importance of choosing a career that suits their personality and interests. This helps to prepare for making informed choices at secondary school.

Staff are very well supported by leaders. They say this is a 'friendly, family school' that puts their well-being at the forefront of leaders' improvement work. The trust maintains a robust oversight of the school's work and is, therefore, able to support the school effectively in its development.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Across the wider curriculum, staff do not consistently give pupils the support that they need to resolve weaknesses in their spelling, punctuation and use of grammar. As a result, the quality of pupils' written work across the curriculum does not always reflect how well they are learning or the ambition of the curriculum. The school should ensure that staff expectation of pupils' written work are consistently high across all subjects and throughout the school. This will enable pupils to develop the necessary skills to prepare them well for their future learning
- In a few subjects, staff do not have the subject knowledge and skills needed to deliver the ambitious curriculum effectively. As a result pupils' learning is not as secure in these areas. The school needs to ensure that opportunities to improve teachers' knowledge and skills through training and monitoring are identified, planned and provided.

## Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in September 2019.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142935
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10345432
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	75
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Susan Skidmore
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	John Camp
<b>Headteacher</b>	Timothy Arding
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.shalford.compassps.uk">www.shalford.compassps.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	24 and 25 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Compass Partnership of Schools.
- The leadership of the school has changed since the last inspection. The current headteacher was appointed in April 2024.
- The school runs its own breakfast club, providing childcare before school.
- The school does not use the services of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with school leaders, the chief executive officer, the deputy chief executive officer, trustees and members of the local governing body.
- The inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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.
- The inspectors considered the responses and free-text comments made by parents to Ofsted Parent View. The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Rowena Simmons, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ruth Brock

Ofsted Inspector

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