

Sholing Junior School

Middle Road, Southampton, Hampshire SO19 8PT

Inspection dates

23 May and 13–14 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils are not yet good because not all pupils make the progress they should, particularly disadvantaged pupils.
- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can do and achieve.
- Teachers do not consistently use assessment information to plan tasks and activities that meet the differing needs of pupils.
- The feedback leaders give to teachers to improve their practice does not focus sufficiently on pupils' learning. Although teaching is improving, this is not happening as rapidly as it should.
- The most able pupils are not challenged sufficiently so they do not do as well as they should.
- Senior leaders and governors are too positive in their evaluation of the school's effectiveness. Senior leaders' checks on achievement of groups of pupils are not precise enough.
- Governors offer useful support but do not hold leaders fully to account, particularly for the progress pupils make.
- Some middle leaders are new to their roles and require further training to enable them to fulfil their roles effectively. Actions taken have not yet had time to impact on pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility.
- Procedures for the management of teachers' performance do not sufficiently link to how well pupils achieve.

The school has the following strengths

- School leaders and governors are committed to improving the progress pupils are making in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school has strong support from parents and the local community. Parents appreciate the high standards of care their children receive.
- Pupils enjoy school and have very positive attitudes to learning. They are confident, polite and are proud to be part of the school.
- Recent changes to help those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are effective in helping these pupils make better progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in reading, writing and mathematics, by:
 - providing precise feedback on learning in lessons and identifying where further progress should be made
 - having higher expectations of what pupils can achieve during lessons
 - ensuring that activities and tasks are carefully matched to meet the needs of pupils at different levels of ability, including the most able.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers, by:
 - ensuring that governors effectively hold leaders to account for the progress of pupils and groups of pupils
 - developing leaders' skills to accurately monitor teaching
 - developing middle leaders' skills further so that they are able to drive improvements in the areas for which they are responsible
 - making sure that teachers' performance reviews and pay are closely linked to pupils' progress.
- Improve outcomes for pupils in the school, by:
 - increasing the proportions of pupils who make age-related, expected progress across the school in reading, writing and mathematics
 - accelerating the progress of disadvantaged pupils so they achieve standards of which they are capable
 - enabling the most able pupils to reach the higher standards in their learning.

An external review of governance should be undertaken so that governors develop the skills necessary to hold leaders fully to account for the progress pupils are making in reading, writing and mathematics.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Some groups of pupils across the school do not do as well as they should. This is particularly the case for the most able pupils and those who are disadvantaged. Leaders and governors have recently identified this issue and have begun to take action, but it is too soon for consistent improvements to be seen.
- Leaders have had an overoptimistic view of how well the school was doing. They have a broadly accurate understanding of the strengths and areas of development but do not focus sufficiently on making sure that different groups of pupils make the progress of which they are capable.
- Leaders check the progress pupils make. However, their checks are not precise enough to identify where specific groups of pupils are not making enough progress.
- Monitoring of teaching is not as systematic as it should be and feedback focuses too much on what teachers do rather than what learning is taking place.
- Recently, senior members of staff have sensibly been deployed to work alongside colleagues and share their good practice. This is leading to some improvements in teachers' skills.
- Some middle leaders are new to post and have not yet developed the necessary skills to help teachers improve their practice in their area of responsibility. They recognise the need to focus on the different groups of pupils to improve attainment and have begun to look more closely at the standards of work pupils are achieving.
- Funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used well. The recently appointed special needs coordinator identifies and implements relevant support so these pupils now make better progress and achieve more.
- Systems to manage teachers' performance are not as robust as they need to be to hold teachers to account for the progress that groups of pupils are making. Performance targets are not specific enough and do not take account of the starting point of different groups of pupils. Pupil premium funding has been used for a range of support and activities, some of which appear to have had a positive impact on outcomes for these pupils. However, leaders and governors are not clear enough about what is and is not working because they have not checked progress closely.
- Equality of opportunity and tolerance underpin the school's values, reflecting the importance leaders put on pupils' personal development. Pupils learn without fear or discrimination, in a learning environment where pupils and adults show high levels of trust and respect for each other. Pupils understand British values, with democracy reflected in the election of school councillors and respect shown when recently visiting a synagogue and a gurdwara.
- Pupils study a wide range of subjects under one theme so that they can make links across subjects. Specialist teaching in music and art ensures that progress in these subjects is good. All pupils learn a musical instrument in Year 3 and during the inspection Year 4 pupils were designing motifs based on the work of Mark Anthony Jordan to support their North America topic. The curriculum is appropriately supported

by a wide and varied range of visits and visitors, to add to pupils' enjoyment and interest. Pupils particularly appreciate the opportunity to take part in four residential trips: one in Year 4, one in Year 5, and two in Year 6.

- The school is making good use of additional sports funding. Specialist coaches are working alongside teachers to develop their skills and improve opportunities for pupils to take part in sports new to the school, such as cricket.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Parents who responded to the online survey, Parent View, commented positively about the level of care for pupils, the nurturing environment and the welcome given by the headteacher.

Governance of the school

- Governors are actively involved within the school, offering good support for pupils and staff. However, governors acknowledge that until recently they were not sufficiently aware of the progress of groups of pupils. As a result, governors have not been effective in holding school leaders rigorously to account for the quality of education. Additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils is not monitored closely enough so that governors know what impact this is having on the progress these pupils are making. Recent support from the local authority is strengthening their ability to ask more searching questions but they need help and training to ensure that the level of challenge for school leaders is effective.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are well trained and have a clear understanding of the systems in place to keep pupils safe. Concerns are always recorded in detail and all issues are meticulously followed up. There are systems in place to ensure that all adults who visit the school are carefully checked, as are vetting systems for the employment of new staff. Governors regularly check that safeguarding arrangements meet all statutory requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable. Although teaching is improving, not all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can do and achieve. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and the most able.
- Not all teachers plan precisely enough to meet pupils' differing ability needs. They do not consistently use assessment information to plan tasks and activities that build on what pupils already know and understand. As a result, pupils are sometimes given work that is too easy or too hard.
- Teachers create a positive climate for learning. Relationships are strong and pupils enjoy learning. Pupils work well together and particularly enjoy the opportunities given to discuss activities and share ideas. Teachers' subject knowledge is mostly good and leaders are helping staff to understand how to develop deeper learning through problem-solving and reasoning.
- Teaching assistants offer some useful support for pupils but sometimes provide too

much and, so, although tasks are completed, limited learning takes place.

- In mathematics, basic skills are taught well and pupils are confident in manipulating numbers. Not all teachers provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to explore mathematics by looking at more complex problems. As a result, pupils, especially those who are most able, do not have the opportunity to think deeply and develop their understanding sufficiently. For those who find mathematics more difficult, there are not enough opportunities to use physical resources, such as clocks or counting blocks, to help them learn and develop their understanding.
- Reading is improving. Pupils who have fallen behind are now well supported and are beginning to catch up to the expected standard. The 'reading disco programme' has heightened the profile of reading and the 'bed time reading' initiative has been very effective in mobilising parents to support their child's learning.
- Leaders have introduced a structured approach to the teaching of writing, which is helping pupils to identify what they can do and what they need to do next. Carefully targeted teaching on next steps is beginning to have an impact. For example, in Year 3 pupils are now writing in complete sentences, before moving on to more complex sentences with more varied vocabulary. As a result, progress in writing skills is improving.
- Teaching of some groups is not consistently good across the school. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and the most able. This is because teachers are not sufficiently skilled at identifying precisely what these groups need to be successful. However, this is no longer the case for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, where teaching is improving.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. All school staff know pupils very well and this reflects the high priority leaders put on pupils' personal development. The school lives up to its vision of 'learning together'. Good care and guidance ensure that pupils are happy and confident in their learning. The standard of care is highly valued by parents, one of whom commented, 'The school is a real community; teachers know the children well and know what makes them tick.'
- Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their work and this is reflected by higher-than-average attendance. They try hard in lessons to do their best and value the help teachers give them to learn. They aspire to be good citizens and show good understanding of justice and morality. For example, they have petitioned their Member of Parliament, lobbying him to recognise the achievements of a local Second World War veteran by commissioning a commemorative plaque in his honour.
- Leaders and staff work tenaciously to ensure that families and pupils who need extra support get the help they need. Through this work, and their focus on improving attendance, they ensure that pupils are well supported to succeed.
- Pupils are friendly and polite and relate well to one another, in a school that is free

from discrimination and intolerance. Pupils respect each other and enjoy learning about different faiths, beliefs and cultures. This reflects how well the school promotes pupils' social, moral and cultural development.

- Pupils say they feel happy and safe at school and parents who responded to the online survey, Parent View, agree. Pupils trust the adults in school and say that their concerns are taken seriously. They say that instances of bullying are rare and staff act swiftly to resolve any issues. Pupils learn strategies to cope in difficult situations and say they feel well equipped to keep themselves safe and happy.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to say safe when using the internet. They appreciate fully why they should not give personal information when using the internet or social media.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite, confident and welcoming. They behave well in class and understand that if they misbehave, it not only affects their learning but that of others.
- Behaviour on the playground and while pupils move around the school is good. Pupils respect each other and adults, illustrated by the way they open doors for each other or step aside for adults to pass.
- Pupils like the school's behaviour policy, which they consider to be fair and equitable. They understand the sanctions in place if they misbehave and appreciate the rewards, such as house points for good behaviour and learning.
- Parents and staff agree that behaviour is good and that it is a reflection of the positive relationships, mutual respect and care that exist between pupils and adults. One parent commented 'My child loves every single day. She trusts her friends and teachers. Children behave well and are so polite.'

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2016, outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics were in line with those seen in other schools nationally. However, disadvantaged pupils and the most able did not make as much progress from their starting points as other pupils nationally. Some current Year 6 pupils are making accelerated progress, particularly in reading, but this is not the case in other year groups.
- Progress in pupils' reading is improving. New initiatives, combined with targeted support where needed, are helping pupils to develop their confidence and fluency to read a range of texts.
- In writing, pupils are beginning to edit their work, use a wider range of punctuation and develop more complex sentences. However, because writing over time has not been taught as well as it should, writing across the curriculum continues to be inconsistent.
- In mathematics, pupils' basic arithmetic skills are improving. However, opportunities for pupils to apply these skills in problem-solving and reasoning are not consistently

provided. As a result, pupils do not demonstrate the ability to use their skills across a range of contexts.

- Disadvantaged pupils do not do as well as they should in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders' recent efforts to accelerate the progress of these pupils is helping in some classes. However, this is not consistently the case. Pupils who have special educational needs and/ or disabilities are making good progress in almost all year groups. Recent changes in the way the school provides support to these pupils have resulted in accelerated progress, particularly in reading and writing. Almost all are now making the same progress as other pupils.
- Procedures for identifying most-able disadvantaged pupils have been recently strengthened. As a result, the provision for these pupils is improving and more of them are making better progress.
- The most able pupils do not make as much progress as they should. Consequently, although they join the school working at the highest levels, they do not consistently achieve the same high levels by the time they leave Year 6. Although there have been some improvements in meeting these pupils' needs, and there are signs that they are making more progress, these improvements are not happening consistently across the school.

School details

Unique reference number	116107
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10033073

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	290
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Butler
Headteacher	Marc Parnell
Telephone number	02380 447448
Website	www.sholing-jun.co.uk
Email address	info@sholing-jun.southampton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–28 February 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is an average-sized junior school with 10 classes and is growing in size year on year. Currently, there are three classes in each year group in Years 3 and 4 and two classes each in Years 5 and 6.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, as is the proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school has a breakfast club and after-school club managed by the governing body.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited all classes, accompanied by members of the leadership team, to observe pupils' learning. Shorter visits to classrooms were undertaken to gather evidence about the school's curriculum.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, members of staff, pupils, a group of parents, members of the local governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of documentation, including that relating to attendance and behaviour, school improvement planning, assessment information, monitoring of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings, local authority reports and school policies relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read from Year 3 and Year 6, and met formally with a group of pupils to discuss their learning, behaviour and safety. Inspectors evaluated pupils' books, displays of pupils' work and the school's assessments of the progress made by pupils.
- The inspectors took into account the views of 86 parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as meeting a group of 15 parents.
- The inspectors took account of 113 responses to the pupil questionnaire and 25 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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