

# Inspection of a good school: The Sherwood School

Abbotts Road, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 1JP

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Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 2023

## **Outcome**

The Sherwood School continues to be a good school.

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

This is a school where pupils are happy and where staff support their safety. Pupils' rights and responsibilities are at the heart of this community. Leaders empower pupils with a 'voice' to share their views. Pupils are encouraged to contribute positively to school life through the opportunities provided to them.

Leaders and staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning. Pupils rise to the expectations set for them and achieve well overall. Pupils and teachers jointly agree class charters. These outline the expectations for behaviour and learning. Staff use these class charters effectively to foster a calm and orderly classroom environment. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They explained that there is little or no bullying. If incidents do occur, they are dealt with effectively.

Leaders foster a supportive and an inclusive school culture by setting up pupil leadership teams. For example, pupil ambassadors work together to educate others about their rights. This creates an environment that values and promotes respect for each pupil. The school council participates in decision-making about school life. For instance, its suggestion led to hopscotch being introduced to the playground.

A wide range of clubs and activities are available. Pupils enjoy these and the opportunity to take part in new experiences.

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

Leaders have created a strong reading culture in the school. The teaching of phonics by well-trained staff starts straight away when children enter Reception. Pupils access a diverse range of books throughout the curriculum, from early years to Year 6. This plays an important part in developing pupils' love of reading. The books used to practise reading are carefully matched to the sounds pupils know. Staff assess pupils regularly to identify those at risk of falling behind. They help those pupils to catch up quickly with

additional, well-focused support. As a result, pupils become fluent and confident independent readers.

Leaders have put in place a curriculum which includes a wide range of subjects. The approach for all subjects matches the ambition of the national curriculum. It is also designed to meet the needs of the school community. For example, in history, the curriculum incorporates the study of a diverse range of significant individuals, such as an African Roman Emperor.

Through professional development opportunities, staff gain the knowledge and expertise they need to teach the range of subjects effectively. Staff place importance on expanding pupils' vocabulary through frequent conversations. This enables pupils to learn and apply a range of subject-specific words. It also supports them to deepen their knowledge and understanding. For example, in mathematics, children in Reception discussed which container held more liquid. They used words such as 'capacity', 'more than' and 'less than' with accuracy. Staff skilfully supported children to explain the reasons for their answers. This strengthened their mathematical knowledge.

In a few subjects, assessment routines do not enable teachers to identify accurately what pupils know and remember. Some checks on pupils' knowledge lack a clear focus on assessing the subject-specific content that pupils are expected to master. This limits teachers from being able to address pupils' knowledge gaps and misconceptions.

The curriculum is planned to develop pupils' knowledge logically. The early years curriculum provides children with the foundations they need for their learning in all subjects. For example, children gain a strong knowledge of number through a range of well-thought-through activities. This knowledge and understanding are then recapped and built on effectively in subsequent year groups.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They identify the specific needs of pupils with SEND quickly. Teachers use a range of strategies and resources to ensure that these pupils receive the support they need to access the full curriculum.

Leaders have embedded a systematic, consistent behaviour approach across the school. Staff understand pupils and their individual needs. Pupils are respectful and supportive of each other, and low-level disruption in class is rare. Even when pupils find work difficult, they show resilience and determination to overcome the challenges they face. These positive attitudes help them to achieve well.

Leaders provide pupils with a range of enrichment opportunities. Every pupil is taught to play a musical instrument. Pupils commented that it helps them express their emotions. 'Police Cadet' lessons teach pupils about personal safety and the importance of being a responsible citizen. Assemblies on rights and responsibilities inform pupils about British values and global issues. Equality and diversity are a key part of the school's ethos. Pupils learn about the importance of respecting different beliefs, views and identities.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive. They highlighted leaders' care and consideration of their workload and well-being. Staff feel valued and trusted. They appreciate the opportunities provided to help them develop their careers further.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained and know how to spot signs that may indicate that pupils are at risk of harm. They know and follow the school's internal procedure for raising and responding to concerns. Leaders work closely with a range of external agencies. They ensure that they secure the help that pupils and their families may need to support their safety and well-being.

Leaders complete all pre-employment checks in line with statutory requirements prior to staff starting work at the school.

Pupils are taught about how to stay safe, for example when using the internet. They have trusted adults with whom they can talk should there be anything that worries them.

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

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

- In a few subjects, routines used to check pupils' knowledge and skills are not firmly established. As a result, teachers are not able to identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge as accurately as in other subjects. This means pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should continue to develop their approaches to checking pupils' understanding in these subjects, so that teachers have the information they need to provide timely and effective support to pupils who do not understand and remember key subject content.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 in November 2017.

## 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](#)' 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>	102646
<b>Local authority</b>	Merton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10255517
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	328
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing</b>	Jane Savill
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andriana Loizou-Samouel
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.thesherwoodschool.co.uk/">www.thesherwoodschool.co.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	14 to 15 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school runs its own breakfast club and after-school club.
- Leaders do not use any alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with all senior leaders, a number of teaching and support staff, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also considered other subjects.

- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for school improvement.
- The inspector looked at the effectiveness of the school's work on safeguarding by reviewing the record of pre-employment checks for staff, speaking to staff, governors and pupils, and meeting with the safeguarding team.
- The inspector took account of the views of pupils, parents and staff, as gathered through discussions and Ofsted's surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Karen Kent, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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