

Inspection of Shirley Warren Primary & Nursery School

Warren Crescent, Southampton, Hampshire SO16 6AY

Inspection dates:	1 July, and 8 and 9 July 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Requires improvement
Personal development	Requires improvement
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum. It aims to give pupils the knowledge and skills they need to succeed. However, pupils experience a variable quality of education. Staff do not implement the curriculum consistently well. Therefore, pupils do not achieve as highly as they should, as reflected in the school's published outcomes at the end of Year 6 in 2024.

This friendly school welcomes and accepts everyone. Many pupils join partway through the school year, some unable to speak English. These pupils benefit from peer support from the 'young interpreters'. This helps new pupils make friends and feel part of the school.

Many pupils live up to the school's core values. They show 'respect' by holding doors open for others and using good manners. However, a minority of pupils lose focus in lessons and disrupt the learning of others. Despite this, pupils know that staff care for them and will help them if they have any worries.

The school raises pupils' aspirations during 'into university' sessions. Here, pupils get the chance to learn about future careers. However, pupils would like more opportunities to take on responsibilities and make a positive contribution to school life.

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

Many factors have negatively impacted pupils' learning over time. These include staffing instability and the legacy of a weak curriculum. The school recognises this. It knows that key areas still need more work and has already made some positive changes to the curriculum design and early reading.

Since the previous inspection, the school has put in place a coherently sequenced curriculum. It sets out what pupils should know and remember as they progress through the school. However, the quality of curriculum implementation is too variable. For example, some staff do not check that pupils have understood new knowledge and skills before moving on in lessons. This means that sometimes, pupils develop gaps in their knowledge. Others lack the expertise to adapt learning effectively, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Consequently, some pupils, including those with SEND, do not learn the intended curriculum as well as the school expects.

From the early years and beyond, some pupils do not develop basic writing skills, such as holding a pencil or forming letters correctly. Teaching does not always address these issues. This develops into inconsistencies in handwriting and slows the pace at which pupils become fluent writers. In contrast, the school prioritises early reading. It places a sharp focus on communication and language. In the early years, staff encourage conversation to develop children's use of newly acquired 'topic' words. Staff teach the phonics programme well. They provide effective support for pupils who fall behind. The Year 1 phonics screening check reflects pupils' success in learning to read, with published

2024 outcomes in line with national expectations. Older pupils read challenging texts, such as Shakespeare, and use ambitious vocabulary. Many become confident in reading with accuracy and fluency.

The school identifies pupils with SEND swiftly. Through the specialist 'Nest' provision and dedicated pastoral support, the school offers targeted support for pupils with social and emotional needs. The number of suspensions is falling sharply as a result of the school's work. Most pupils respond well to the school's expectations of behaviour. Classrooms are mostly orderly. However, some staff do not apply the behaviour approach consistently, including at social times. Consequently, some pupils do not behave well enough.

School leaders monitor attendance closely. They know who is absent from school and why. Early signs of improvement are beginning to appear. The school recognises that this work needs to continue so that pupils' attendance improves further.

The school does not provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to contribute positively to school life and the wider community. This limits pupils' personal and character development. Despite this, pupils learn effective strategies to support their mental health and well-being. They take part in clubs and enjoy swimming lessons. Through assemblies and the books they study, pupils have a mature understanding of discrimination, such as racism, and why laws are important. They know the importance of treating others equally, including those with protected characteristics.

Governors fulfil their statutory duties and understand the school's priorities. Most staff enjoy working at the school. Many value the consideration given to their workload. However, some staff and parents and carers hold mixed views about the school. For instance, staff would like more support in managing pupils' behaviour. Work remains to ensure that all stakeholders buy into the school's vision for improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school does not implement the curriculum consistently well. There is variability in how well staff adapt learning and check what pupils know and remember. As a result, pupils develop gaps in their knowledge and do not achieve as well as they should. The school should ensure that approaches to adapting the curriculum and checking what pupils know and can do are applied effectively so that pupils gain the important knowledge they need.
- The school does not prioritise the teaching of early transcription, including handwriting, with sufficient rigour. This hinders the quality of pupils' writing. The school should ensure it implements a consistent approach to developing important writing skills so

that pupils gain the necessary knowledge and skills to become proficient writers.

- The school's expectations of behaviour are not securely embedded. As a result, a small minority of pupils do not live up to the school's expectations for behaviour, including at social times. The school should implement the behaviour policy consistently so that its expectations are understood by all, and pupils behave well in lessons and at social times.
- The school has not fully achieved its aims for developing pupils' wider personal and character traits. This limits the chances for pupils to make an active and positive contribution to school life. The school should ensure that it equips pupils with the skills and qualities to support their wider personal and character development.
- The school's ambitious vision for improvement has not been fully realised. This leads to inconsistencies in how well the school's aspirations are followed and negatively impacts some pupils' learning. The school should ensure that its work to embed consistent approaches continues, so that its vision is clearly reflected in shared values and day-to-day practice.

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

Unique reference number	116262
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10341428
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	425
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nicole Jones
Headteacher	Zoe Newton
Website	www.shirleywarren.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	15 and 16 November 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school joined the Bridge Education Trust in March 2023. The Bridge Education Trust is a cooperative trust comprising a federation of six schools in Southampton.
- Changes to leadership have occurred in recent years. The current deputy headteacher took up post in September 2024.
- The school has on-site Nursery provision for two- to four-year-olds. It is managed by the governing body.
- A breakfast club operates on site under the management of the school.
- The school has an internal specialist provision for a small number of pupils with SEND.
- The school currently uses one unregistered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form

provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- The inspection started on 1 July. It was paused in line with [Ofsted inspections and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence](#) policy. Inspectors returned on 8 and 9 July to complete the inspection.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other senior leaders and school staff. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, history and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to some pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors met the designated safeguarding lead; checked the single central record of adults working in the school; took account of the views of 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 considered a range of school documentation, including the school's self-evaluation document, external reports on the school and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at lunchtime. They spoke with pupils and staff about behaviour.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff to discuss how the school supports their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors spoke with some parents at the start of the school day. They considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Dale Burr, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jason Philipsz

Ofsted Inspector

Radhika Woodruff

Ofsted Inspector

Jason Edge

His Majesty's Inspector

Heather Barraclough

His Majesty's Inspector

Lizzie Jeanes

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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