

Inspection of Sheering Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

The Street, Sheering, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire CM22 7LU

Inspection dates:	29 and 30 April 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Requires improvement
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and most enjoy attending school. They know their 'AWESOME' school values well, which they choose with staff and parents. Each half-term, the focus is on a new value. Pupils who show this value are named in the roll of honour in the weekly celebration assembly. Pupils know the importance of these values and how these should be demonstrated in daily school life.

Pupils' behaviour has improved over the past year. Staff have increasing expectations of what is and is not acceptable. However, this is not yet consistent, and low-level disruption is not addressed consistently well. The school's strategies for managing behaviour are not fully effective in reaching some pupils. A few pupils do not demonstrate the respect that they should to each other, staff or equipment. Although the school has high expectations for pupils' achievement, these are not being realised currently.

Pupils benefit from holding many roles and responsibilities throughout the school. Older pupils act as prefects and take pride in setting the example for younger pupils. They help to reinforce the expectations of the school for the younger pupils to follow. The school council has made positive improvements to the play equipment that pupils can access during playtimes.

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

The new curriculum is broad and balanced. The school has ensured that the key knowledge it wants pupils to know and remember is clearly identified. Some aspects of the curriculum are well taught to ensure that the pupils focus on this key learning. However, in other subjects this is not the case, and activities do not link to this knowledge. Therefore, pupils do not have the knowledge needed to develop their ideas.

In contrast, in the early years, well-designed activities support children's learning well. Staff provide effective support and guidance to develop children's understanding. Children fully embrace the activities on offer. They play together happily and enjoy sharing their learning with each other and adults. Children in the early years achieve well and are well prepared for Year 1.

Reading is a priority of the school. Phonics is taught effectively due to the high-quality training that staff receive. Pupils' learning is regularly checked and any pupils that need more support with phonics receive it. This includes the older pupils. As a result, pupils achieve well in phonics. Pupils find reading calming. They have access to a wide variety of books and can discuss the appeal of certain authors over others. Pupils enjoy listening to the teachers read and the different texts that they expose them to.

The school has clear processes in place to identify any pupils who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Effective guidance ensures that staff know how to meet pupils' needs. When needed, the school draws on the support and advice from external agencies.

Behaviour is improving throughout the school since a new behaviour policy was introduced. However, it is not being consistently applied, so some pupils do not meet the school's expectations of behaviour. Pupils' learning is sometimes disrupted by the behaviour of others. Attendance has improved. Most of the pupils who were regularly absent are now attending more frequently. This is due to the school working closely with parents and supporting pupils to overcome any barriers that they might have to attending school.

Pupils' physical and mental well-being are prioritised as part of the school's personal development programme. Pupils can identify their emotions and are developing strategies to help them manage their feelings in suitable ways. Pupils benefit from a wide range of sporting opportunities, including events and competitions. Pupils enjoy showcasing their talents and interests in the annual 'Brittaine's Got Talent'.

Some aspects of the leadership are not fully effective. The school's strategic priorities and planned improvements are not clear. Governors are beginning to consider a wider range of information to inform their view of the school. However, oversight and accountability are not sufficiently robust. Staff are well supported with their workload and well-being. They receive professional guidance to support their practice.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum in key stage 1 and 2 is not delivered as consistently and effectively as intended. Teachers do not provide activities that help pupils remember and apply important knowledge in these subjects. This means that pupils do not know important subject knowledge and do not have the understanding that they should. The school should ensure that the staff have the skills that they need to effectively set activities that emphasis this key knowledge so that pupils know and remember it.
- The school's new behaviour policy is not fully effective. This means that pupils are not always ready for their learning and can be disrespectful and disruptive to others. The school should ensure that staff implement the behaviour policy consistently well and in the way that leaders intended.
- The school's strategic priorities and planned improvements are not clear. This means that some aspects of the school are not improving in a timely way. This also limits how well governors can hold leaders to account for the progress and impact of their work to improve the school. The school needs to strengthen these aspects of strategic leadership and governance.

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	115099
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10378454
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	84
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Steve Townsend
Headteacher	Lorna Brittain
Website	www.sheering.essex.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	24 and 25 January 2023, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- This is a Church of England primary school in the Diocese of Chelmsford. The school had an inspection of its religious character, under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, in December 2017. The school's next section 48 inspection will take place next academic year.

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 educational 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 lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body. The lead inspector also spoke with the school effectiveness adviser from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector also spoke to those responsible for the early years foundation stage, SEND, behaviour, attendance and personal development.
- 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.

Inspection team

Katie Devenport, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lesley Stevens

Ofsted Inspector

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