

Inspection of Shaftoe Trust Academy

Haydon Bridge, Hexham, NE47 6BN

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 June 2022

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Shaftoe Trust Academy are welcoming, kind and embrace difference. They quickly make friends and feel, 'There's a space for everyone at Shaftoe!'

Pupils know and 'live' the school values, from the classrooms to the walled garden. Pupils learn and play alongside each other harmoniously. Their behaviour in and around the school is exceptional. Pupils say that bullying never happens in their school. They like and trust the staff and know that they are there to help them when they need it.

Pupils' sense of justice, fairness and equality is strong. They feel safe in school. They discuss and explore current issues and are able to share their views with confidence. By the time pupils are ready to leave the school, they are articulate, well rounded and compassionate.

Staff and governors have high expectations and aspirations for pupils. This starts from the day that children join the school. The youngest children get off to a flying start. They talk with excitement about their learning. They are keen to talk about their growing knowledge of the world, artists and numbers. As pupils move through the school, they continue to achieve well.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of after-school activities. They enjoy trying out new sports and activities, such as kickboxing, being 'world warriors' and developing their archery skills.

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

Leaders and governors have high ambitions for all pupils. They describe their vision as, 'What we give our children, will be what the village becomes.' The determined leadership of the headteacher, with the support of the trust, has brought about much change. Leaders ensure that the school keeps getting better.

This school is a 'reading school'. Pupils are exposed to a wealth of books in all areas of the curriculum. Books are carefully chosen to help develop pupils' reading skills and their knowledge of the world. Leaders are determined that all children learn to read from the start of Reception. Teachers deliver phonics lessons expertly. Reading standards are high.

Leaders have developed a detailed and ambitious curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Leaders provide appropriate support so that pupils with SEND can access the same curriculum as their peers. Parents of pupils with SEND are positive about their children's experiences at Shaftoe Trust Academy.

Teachers review and revisit knowledge so that important learning is not forgotten by pupils. Pupils develop a good understanding in all subject areas. One said, 'You learn new things every day at Shaftoe.' The quality of their work in books and on displays around the school is high. Leaders have not fully sequenced some subject content in the mixed-age classes. This means that expectations of what pupils should be able to do and remember at particular points are not consistently clear. In some foundation subjects, assessment systems are in their infancy. Teachers do not always know exactly what pupils know and can do so that they can build on prior learning.

The curriculum for children in the early years is exceptional. Leaders have carefully planned the expected knowledge and skills so that children are successful across areas of learning. The exciting activities chosen for children in the early years classrooms allow them to practise what they are learning to do independently. Children are proud to show what they know, can do and remember.

The school values thread through all aspects of the day. Pupils develop mature viewpoints and are exceptionally well prepared for life outside of school. Leaders carefully choose books to share with pupils during assemblies to encourage discussions around inclusivity. As a result, pupils discuss sensitive topics with confidence. Pupils are kind and inclusive. The school's personal, social and health education curriculum has been planned to ensure that pupils learn how to stay safe and healthy. This includes helping older pupils to prepare for adolescence, secondary school and the changing online world.

Pupils develop their social and moral skills through fundraising for a range of charities. They are currently developing their understanding of money and trading by taking part in a competition to grow their own small businesses in school. Leaders raise pupils' aspirations through exposure to a variety of professions.

Pupils' behaviours and attitudes are exemplary. Pupils expect high standards of themselves and each other. They say that poor behaviour is rare. Some pupils are chosen as 'behaviour ambassadors'. They make sure all children are included and have someone to play with. Leaders consider playtime well to ensure that pupils can enjoy less structured time together. The play areas have a range of games and equipment available to pupils. Playtimes are a hive of activity. Attendance is high. Pupils want to be in school and enjoy all that is on offer to them.

Governors of the school support and challenge leaders effectively. They visit the school regularly to check the impact of the decisions leaders make. Governors know the strengths and priorities of the school well. Members of the trust ensure that they receive the information that they need to assure themselves that the school continues to improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that a culture of safeguarding pervades throughout the school. Staff understand the signs to look out for that might mean that a child or family may need extra help or support. Leaders know pupils and families well. They work effectively with other professionals to keep pupils safe. The trustees and local governors make checks to ensure that the safeguarding arrangements are strong.

Pupils feel safe. They know that they can share worries with adults and that they will help them in any way that they can.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not fully established systems to assess the content taught and remembered in some foundation subjects. Teachers do not consistently know precisely what pupils know and remember from their taught curriculum. This makes it difficult for teachers to produce clear next steps for pupils. Leaders should review how foundation curriculum content is assessed so that information is used to help pupils embed their knowledge more securely.
- Leaders have not fully sequenced some underlying knowledge and skills in foundation subjects. This means that teachers do not always have a sharp understanding of specific expectations for different-age pupils in the mixed-age classes. Leaders should revise curriculum planning to ensure that expectations are made clear so that pupils are challenged appropriately.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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

Unique reference number	145412
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10227644
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	120
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Margaret Stephenson
Headteacher	Julie Phazey
Website	www.shaftoe.wiseacademies.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of WISE Academies. The school joined the trust in September 2018 as a sponsor-led academy.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school has a Nursery.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and design and geography. Inspectors spoke to leaders about the curriculum and met with teachers from the lessons visited. Inspectors looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils.
- Inspectors listened to a range of pupils from different year groups read.

- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator, members of the local governing body, trustees and the trust chief executive officer.
- Inspectors looked at the single central record and spoke to leaders, teachers, governors and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the responses made by parents and the free-text responses via Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and the responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

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