



## “Believing is Achieving”

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Dear parent/carers

I am pleased to write to you to inform you of the outcome of our recent Ofsted Inspection and pleased to share some of the comments with you. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in November 2014. The school was inspected by one Ofsted Inspector and one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI). The headline is that the school continues to be a good school. In the final meeting with Governors and the Senior Team, the Lead Inspector told us that Shepwell is a friendly school with a calm and welcoming atmosphere and had continued to make good progress since our last inspection and was now on the cusp of outstanding. As this was a short inspection, we do not receive a formal report. Instead, the Ofsted inspector accompanied by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools has written a detailed letter. A copy of this letter can be found on the school's website ([www.shepwellschool.co.uk](http://www.shepwellschool.co.uk)) and on the Ofsted website.

In his letter, Mr Field says:

- The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have achieved this by accurately identifying the priorities for improvement and consistently delivering them.
- Leaders and governors have a detailed knowledge of the school and through precise self-evaluation have created a sustainable development plan for the continuing success of the school.
- Pupils feel confident and make progress.
- Leaders work with pupils, parents and carers, referring schools and external agencies to develop successful transition induction plans for new pupils.
- The detailed knowledge and precise level of planning that is undertaken mean that pupils' attendance increases significantly after starting at the school.
- The successful review of how home and hospital tuition is delivered has enabled more pupils to access specialist teaching provision and to make good progress.
- Pupils who access home tuition have over time increased their learning either by physically attending school or by accessing learning via the innovative robot project that the school is piloting.
- The staff team consistently build positive relationships with pupils that focus on what pupils can do rather than what they cannot do.
- Pupils are able to engage successfully in learning and social activities.
- The environment that has been created is one where pupils are valued and listened to. There is an active school council and pupils know that they can make suggestions for improvements by using the suggestion boxes or talking to staff.
- British values are an integral part of school life and all pupils who responded to Ofsted's survey stated that the school encouraged them to respect people from other backgrounds and treat everyone equally.
- The behaviour of the pupils and their conduct around school are excellent and reflect the values that the school instils in them.
- Teachers use their strong knowledge of their subjects and pupils to pitch learning at the most appropriate level and frequently provide opportunities for challenge for the vast majority of pupils. Over time, this means that pupils make good progress and all pupils successfully transition to college or, where appropriate, back to their mainstream school.
- Leaders have worked hard to tackle the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. This is particularly the case in relation to improving the overall quality of teaching and encouraging pupils to make good progress, and in the effective deployment of other adults in lessons.
- Staff are confident in using the school's systems and procedures to report concerns and are provided with feedback on any concerns they raise. They are trained in line with their role and know how to escalate concerns, if necessary. All incidents are recorded accurately and the safeguarding lead ensures that all incidents are fully followed up and responded to.
- The school's arrangements to safeguard and promote the well-being of pupils are clear and highly effective.
- The curriculum reflects the safeguarding needs of the pupils and the local community and, as a result, pupils know how to keep themselves safe.
- All pupils who responded to Ofsted's survey stated that the school encouraged them to look after their emotional and mental health.
- Pupils know how to raise a concern and get support. The designated safeguarding leader demonstrates a detailed knowledge of pupils' welfare needs and fully understands their role and the responsibilities of all staff.
- It is evident from records and discussions that staff have the necessary expertise and knowledge to keep pupils safe.
- Child protection records are of a good quality and are securely stored.
- The compassionate approach to pupils and their families is reflected in the planning for improvements in attendance that methodically takes into account pupils' health needs and support required for parents and families.
- Every available option is used to improve attendance and access to learning, including seeking the support of external agencies, using the legal framework and introducing the innovative robot project that enables pupils to access learning and feel part of the school community. The latter is also enabling pupils to return to school more promptly when their health allows.
- All pupils who responded to Ofsted's survey say the school helps support their well-being and they told inspectors that staff listen to them and that they feel valued. This is one reason why many pupils who previously had poor attendance, or were school refusers, now attend school so regularly and happily.
- Inspectors observed aspects of good autism practice throughout the school. This included task boards, timers, visual schedules, visual prompts, safe spaces and clear language that supported pupils' understanding.



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I'm sure parents will agree with me that this is a very strong report. Inspectors continue to be extremely impressed with the educational experience that is a hallmark of our school and everyone at the school will continue to work tirelessly to deliver the very highest quality service for all of our pupils. Governors consider this report another remarkable achievement and a wonderful result for everyone – pupils, staff and parents.

Unfortunately, the school will be closed on **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019** for staff 'Team Teach' training. I apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

I will take this opportunity to remind you that we break up for half term on **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2019** and pupils return to school on **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2019**. May I remind you that in my letter dated 9<sup>th</sup> April 2019 I informed you that pupils who attended the Houses of Parliament Trip will leave school at 12.20pm (with the exception of those pupils who had the day off following the trip to catch on sleep). All other pupils will leave at the normal time.

On behalf of all staff, I would like to wish you a relaxing ½ term holiday.

Kind Regards

*Stephen Pritchard-Jones*

Mr. S Pritchard-Jones  
Headteacher

A Short Stay School (medical)  
Home & Hospital Tuition Services  
Bilston Lane, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 2QJ



Headteacher: Mr S Pritchard-Jones  
Telephone: 01902 632 719  
[www.shepwell.co.uk](http://www.shepwell.co.uk) Twitter: @ShepwellSchool

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