

Southwood Primary School

Keppel Road, Dagenham, Essex, RM9 5LT

Inspection dates 11–12 November 2015

Overall effectiveness **Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- School leaders and governors are sharply focused on improving teaching and pupils' progress. As a result, the school is improving rapidly and pupils' outcomes are better than at the time of the last inspection.
- Leadership and management are effective. Leaders are clear about what remains to be done to make the school outstanding and they are taking the right steps to bring this about.
- Pupils behave well and are enthusiastic about learning and helping others. They are polite and hardworking.
- Pupils feel safe at school and know how to stay safe in modern society.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Teachers are knowledgeable and provide clear guidance so that pupils can learn quickly.
- Attainment is rising in reading, writing and mathematics and pupils are making good progress across the school.
- Children in the early years provision learn quickly because their activities are purposeful and capture their interest well.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted strongly, enabling pupils to develop a clear understanding of British values such as tolerance and respect.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always check learning during lessons so that they can adapt work, especially for the most able, when pupils are ready to deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- The new middle leaders are not yet ensuring that remaining inconsistencies in teaching and learning across year groups are being tackled straight away.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that teachers always check learning during lessons so that they can adapt work, especially for the most able, when pupils are ready to deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Develop the roles of new middle leaders so that they ensure that remaining inconsistencies in teaching and learning in their year groups are tackled swiftly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The relentless drive of leaders and governors to develop the school is evident in the improvements made in teaching and in pupils' progress since the previous inspection. There is a clear expectation that all should do well and pupils, parents and staff all agree that the school has good capacity to succeed and is doing much better than in the past.
- The many changes and expansion in staffing have been managed well so that pupils' progress has not been adversely affected.
- Leaders are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and lead other staff well by demonstrating their own successful teaching. Members of staff say that they feel very well supported by leaders at the school and are inspired to do their best.
- Teaching and learning are being monitored carefully and purposeful training is provided for teachers to help them to develop further.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and supports good learning well. It has been redesigned to meet the more challenging expectations for pupils' attainment. It includes good opportunities for pupils to learn in class and when attending additional activities. A strong emphasis on valuing cultural differences and respecting others prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. For example, in assembly on Remembrance Day pupils showed respect for those who died serving the country.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted strongly, leading to pupils becoming sensitive towards, and listening to, the needs of others. There is a clear 'I can do it' attitude shared among the school community, leading to pupils being well motivated and keen to show mutual respect. Pupils respond well to the praise they receive for being helpful leaders.
- The special funding to help disadvantaged pupils is narrowing any gaps in attainment and these are closing quickly. Additional teachers provide extra support for these pupils and their progress is monitored rigorously.
- The school makes good use of the additional money for sports. Specialist teachers teach the pupils a wide range of skills. For example, during the inspection Year 6 were developing a range of methods of passing the ball without losing it to their opponents. The school has won several awards for sports and keeping pupils healthy.
- The local authority has provided good challenge for this rapidly improving school. Guidance and training have helped to support staff in improving pupils' progress.
- Parents are positive about recent changes in the school and typically make comments such as, 'the school has really progressed' and 'the school has improved over the past year'.
- The new middle leaders are developing their roles but are not yet ensuring that the remaining inconsistencies in teaching and learning within their specific areas of responsibility are tackled as soon as they arise.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governance is good. Governors are proactive in supporting and challenging school leaders. They are outward-looking and work with other schools to raise aspirations and share skills.
 - Governors monitor the school's work rigorously and are clearly focused on raising attainment and improving pupils' progress. They are knowledgeable about how teaching is improving and what remains to be done to make the school even better.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Care is taken to check that all staff and visitors are suitable to work with children, and training for all staff is kept up to date. Leaders work closely with parents to keep pupils safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and they clearly explain what pupils are to learn in each lesson. Effective use is made of teachers' specialist knowledge to teach subjects such as physical education, French, art and music. Leaders are particularly good exemplars of best practice, and their skills in supporting other teachers are used well.

- A particular focus on strengthening pupils' spelling, grammar and use of vocabulary is having a positive impact on the quality of pupils' speech and writing. For example, in Year 6 pupils extended their knowledge of how to use similes, rhyming words and metaphors when writing their poetry.
- Teachers form good relationships with pupils and manage their behaviour in a firm but friendly manner. Their enthusiasm motivates pupils to want to learn. For example, in Year 1 pupils were excited by the mini drama before rewriting the story of 'The Three Little Pigs'.
- The use of assessment has been developed well since the previous inspection and most teachers follow the school's marking policy well. Teachers make sure that, in literacy and numeracy in particular, pupils have time to take note of the advice they have been given. This impacts positively on the progress they are now making.
- Members of staff support disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs well. They are patient and encouraging and provide activities that engage pupils' interests.
- Teachers plan work for the various ability groups within their classes or sets. Occasionally, they do not check up quickly enough during a lesson that pupils, especially the most able, are making sufficient progress in deepening their knowledge and understanding and adapt work accordingly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils say that they feel safe at school and they know what to do if they have any concerns.
- Pupils know how to stay safe, including when using the internet.
- Pupils say that the rare instances of bullying or unkind behaviour are dealt with quickly by members of staff. They understand that bullying can take many different forms.
- Pupils have good opportunities to learn about similarities and differences between people. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils shared their likes and dislikes and learned to respect differences of opinion.
- Pupils keep healthy by taking part in exercise and competitive sport. They benefit from the good support of learning mentors if they need additional emotional support.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are attentive in lessons and cooperate well with each other on the playground and in lessons. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and support each other with various tasks such as by being effective play leaders, peer mediators or by serving on the school parliament.
- Pupils are happy and confident and take great pride in their appearance. They understand the good behaviour code and are keen to 'stay on green' for behaving well.
- Tolerance and respect are shown between pupils and towards adults. Pupils have a good awareness of British values.
- Rates of attendance are rising and are broadly average this year. Pupils are positive about school and most absences are due to genuine illness or parents choosing to take term-time holidays against the school's advice.
- Members of staff, parents and pupils are all pleased with behaviour at the school.
- Disruption in class is rare. Occasionally, pupils are less attentive and take less care with their work, when it is not developing their knowledge and understanding sufficiently.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- Half the children start school in the early years provision working below the levels expected for their age. Pupils of all abilities are making good progress over time in all year groups and, as a result, attainment is rising across the school and is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Few pupils demonstrated writing above the expected levels by the end of Year 2 in 2015. This year a good proportion of pupils in Years 1 and 2 are showing more advanced skills in writing than is expected for their ages.
- In 2015, few boys achieved more than the expected level in mathematics by the end of Year 6. School

assessments and pupils' work show that there is no longer a particular difference between the attainment and progress of girls and boys within school.

- The gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils at the school and others nationally are closing rapidly. Remaining gaps in all subjects show that disadvantaged pupils are a term or less than a term behind their peers, across year groups.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Their needs are identified swiftly and they are given the right work to move learning forward in most lessons.
- Pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language are supported well by staff and other pupils and make good progress.
- The most-able pupils do well over time, although there are occasions within lessons when learning slows because they are not being challenged enough to deepen their knowledge and understanding.

Early years provision

is good

- Children, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress across the early years provision. They enjoy a wide range of purposeful activities indoors and outside and are supported well in their learning.
- Teachers and other members of staff work well with individuals and small groups and ask effective questions that help to move the children's learning forward. For example, in the Nursery children were expected to explain what certain words meant in their story.
- The language-rich environment helps children to develop their speech and listening well. For example, in the Reception classes good use is made of poetry, rhymes and stories to share new vocabulary. Children are encouraged to speak in full sentences during discussions.
- The calm atmosphere in the Nursery and Reception classes, and the clear expectations set by staff, enable children to gain confidence and behave well. Children feel safe at school because their personal development is supported effectively. Children are clear about school routines and are engrossed in their learning.
- Strong leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage has ensured that previous weaknesses in the literacy skills of boys and number skills of all children have been successfully tackled.
- There are close links with parents to help improve the children's knowledge and understanding. The recent workshops on 'how to help your child' have been greatly appreciated by the parents. Children's learning is checked thoroughly and progress is regularly shared with the parents.
- Occasionally, some of the activities available for children to work at on their own provide insufficient focus to extend their learning.
- Children are prepared well for Year 1 because the proportion working within the expected levels rises to the large majority by the time they leave the early years provision.

School details

Unique reference number	131845
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	10007293

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	604
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jamie Goate
Headteacher	Scott Halliwell
Telephone number	020 8270 4915
Website	www.southwoodprimary.co.uk
Email address	office@southwood.bardaglea.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 June 2013

Information about this school

- Southwood is much larger than the average-sized primary school. It is expanding in size and now has three classes in each year group up to Year 4, and two in Years 5 and 6. There is a Nursery and three Reception classes in the early years provision.
- Pupils come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, and speak a wide range of languages. While there is a well above average proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, few are at the early stages of acquiring English.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is above average. This is additional funding for disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- There have been many changes on the teaching staff, including among senior staff, since the previous inspection. Almost half of the teachers have joined the school since that time. The headteacher was appointed in September 2014.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in 28 lessons, 10 jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with leaders, other members of staff, pupils, a member of the local authority and members of the governing body.
- The inspection team took into account the 41 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and held informal discussions with a number of parents. Surveys completed by 21 members of staff were scrutinised.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including the school's own information about how well pupils are doing, planning documents and checks on the quality of teaching. Inspectors also looked at the school development plan and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gulcan Asdoyuran	Ofsted Inspector
Frances Hawkes	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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