

Somerles Infant School

Wigmore Lane, Luton, Bedfordshire LU2 8AH

Inspection dates

21–22 February 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Leaders are entirely committed to providing the best education for all pupils. Leaders meticulously monitor the progress of all groups of pupils ensuring that no pupil falls behind.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide outstanding leadership. All staff, particularly newly qualified teachers, speak extremely highly of the support they receive.
- Systems for assessing pupils' progress are thoroughly embedded into all aspects of teaching and learning. This ensures that pupils, particularly the most able, are challenged well to make exceptional progress from their starting points.
- All subject leaders make a significant impact on improving the outcomes in their subjects. Those new to the role are currently working to refine their assessments.
- The teaching of phonics is of a high quality. Phonics attainment at the end of Year 1 continues to be above the national average.
- By the end of Year 2, the proportion of pupils attaining at the higher level in reading, writing and mathematics is significantly above that of pupils of the same age nationally.
- Staff model the school's strong ethos of high expectations well.
- Pupils behave impeccably in and out of lessons. Their enthusiasm for learning is testament to the high-quality teaching they receive.
- Teaching assistants are extremely effective. They are highly skilled and have a positive impact on the outcomes of all pupils.
- The curriculum is broad and inspiring. Pupils are taught a wide range of skills across all subject areas and take part in high-quality experiences that support and deepen their learning.
- The early years environment is stimulating and exciting. Children get off to a flying start. A higher than national proportion of pupils achieve a good level of development, which prepares children well for Year 1.
- The accuracy of the information about children when they join the early years classes is a current area for development.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of pupils' development are exemplary. The school's values shine through all aspects of school life.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that subject leaders new to their role make good use of assessment information to improve pupils' outcomes in all curriculum subjects.
- Develop stronger links with pre-schools to ensure that the information shared about children is as accurate as it can be.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher's outstanding leadership has created a strong values-based culture, which is intrinsic to school life. Pupils are highly respected by adults and are continually recognised and rewarded for 'living the values'. As a result, pupils are caring and happy individuals, who aspire to be the best they can from the day they start at Someries Infant School.
- The deputy headteacher, responsible for overseeing the progress pupils make, demonstrates an unwavering commitment to ensure that all pupils make the progress they should from their starting points. Those who may be at risk of not making the progress they should are identified quickly and swift action is taken to support pupils to make good or better progress.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher ensure that monitoring and assessment systems are rigorous. Their attention to detail, in assessing the progress pupils make, enables teachers to plan work matched to individual needs precisely.
- The headteacher's commitment to develop leaders from within the school has led to a highly motivated and reflective workforce. Newly qualified teachers spoke with passion and enthusiasm about their future leadership aspirations, adding that, with the support they received, they could not have had a better start to their teaching careers.
- English and mathematics are led exceptionally well across the school. Pupils' skills are developed across all subjects. While newer subject leaders identify that continuing to develop assessment in other curriculum subjects is a key priority for the school, they are already making a significant impact on outcomes in their subjects.
- The pupil premium grant is spent well and, as a result, disadvantaged pupils make better than expected progress.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is tracked closely. Funding is used exceptionally well to provide specialist support and to ensure that staff are fully equipped with the skills to support pupils' needs, such as speech and language needs.
- A strong culture of British culture and values permeates the school, supported by a range of opportunities throughout the curriculum.
 - Pupils have regular opportunities to debate issues at an age-appropriate level in 'my big voice' lessons.
 - The school parliament is elected under a democratic process during the school's general election and pupils take their responsibilities seriously.
 - Interesting artefacts on display around the school reflect moments of historical importance with displays such as 'Luton through the years'.
 - Displays and class books showcase pupils' learning about different religions and other cultures.
 - Pupils have a good understanding of life outside of their immediate community.

- The sports premium funding is used well to enhance the teaching of physical education (PE) and increase pupils' participation in sporting activities. Teachers develop their skills well alongside a sports specialist. Key stage 1 pupils take part in the 'Golden Mile', which challenges pupils to improve on the number of laps they can complete around the school grounds. Training for the new subject leader has enabled him to deliver a number of training sessions to staff and, as a result, teachers deliver the PE curriculum well.

Governance of the school

- Governors bring a range of skills to the school. They are passionate and enthusiastic, and provide effective support and challenge to school leaders. They are able to talk extensively about the school's journey since the previous inspection and the excellent work of leaders and teachers to improve outcomes for all pupils.
- Governors know the staff and pupils well; they have an open and honest relationship with senior leaders. Teachers attend governors' meetings to share the work they are doing and governors' visits focus on specific aspects related to school development, particularly the welfare of vulnerable pupils.
- Communication between the school and governing body is extremely efficient and the 'Governor Hub' provides an effective means to ensure that all governors can carry out duties collaboratively. Documents and task sharing are held centrally and securely enabling a smooth allocation of policy revision and governor duties.
- Governors are strongly committed to improving the lives of the pupils and ensure that additional funding, such as the pupil and sports premium funding, is spent wisely to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as other pupils nationally.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff know the pupils well and have all completed the relevant safeguarding training, which includes awareness of radicalisation.
- Leaders are extremely vigilant at identifying vulnerable pupils and families. The school's family worker has had a significant impact on developing strong and effective relationships between home and school. Staff report and record concerns strictly in line with the school's safeguarding policy.
- The designated senior leaders for child protection work exceptionally well as a team to support vulnerable pupils. They know the pupils well and are meticulous with their monitoring. Every detail is cross-referenced and is supported by a chronology of conversations, actions, meetings and outcomes. The team members work effectively with external agencies to provide the best support they can and are unwavering in their commitment to the welfare and the progress vulnerable pupils are making in all areas of learning.
- The school's single central record and employee files contain all statutory information and all adults have undergone the necessary checks to be suitable to work with children.

- Through assemblies and discussions, staff challenge any stereotypical views and successfully help pupils to increase their knowledge and understanding of current social issues.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers are highly motivated and committed to self-improvement. The requirement for all pupils to make as much progress as they can is at the centre of teachers' practice. They are skilled at planning teaching so that new learning builds upon what pupils already know.
- Teachers regularly review their own teaching practice and welcome support and advice from school leaders. They accept, without question, that it is their responsibility to ensure that all pupils receive the best teaching to make the most progress they can.
- Teaching assistants are extremely skilful and, therefore, have a good impact on the progress pupils make. They are particularly effective at supporting pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, while still enabling them to do as much as they can without too much help.
- The 'closing the gap team' provides small-group support, when needed, which tightly focuses on the needs of each individual pupil. The team is highly skilled in supporting pupils to achieve the best they can. As a result, many pupils make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers assess the teaching and learning of English and mathematics of all pupils routinely. They adapt activities daily so that learning is maximised.
- Teachers use assessment information for mathematics extremely well to plan activities that challenge all groups of pupils. Teachers help children make sense of concepts, achieve fluency and deepen their understanding through carefully structured questions, exercises and problems. There are many opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to meaningful problem-solving tasks.
- Pupils write for a range of purposes across the curriculum and their work is displayed creatively throughout the school. Each piece of work is highly individualised; pupils are proud to see their work valued.
- Pupils are even more motivated to write with enthusiasm once they have experienced the hi-tech 'Immersive Learning Centre' which leads to pupils, boys in particular, producing good-quality writing. Inspectors saw pupils in Year 1 highly engaged in a writing task about the seaside. In the room, they experienced the seaside through sights and sounds that created a vision of the beach, sea and promenade. Pupils, particularly the boys, were able to generate a plethora of ideas which they confidently shared with their classmates. This led to them independently constructing descriptive and appropriate sentences.
- The teaching of reading and phonics is strong throughout the school. Children make good progress due to the excellent teaching of phonics across the school starting in early years.
- Subjects such as geography, history and science weave seamlessly through the curriculum. The 'prime learning challenge' question ensures that these links are strong.

In Year 2, the question, 'How was life different at the time of the Great Fire of London?' linked perfectly across a range of subjects. Pupils designed houses; identified and compared the uses of different materials used to build a Tudor house; learned about the history of the fire service; were taught how to locate London landmarks from aerial photos; and produced a video animation depicting the great fire of London.

- Leaders have invested in technological resources with a strong sense of purpose to improve the quality of teaching. Pupils benefit from the range of electronic resources in the 'Immersive Learning Centre', for example. Staff benefit from evaluating their performance by reviewing recordings of their teaching and the impact on pupils' learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The school's 'values-based' approach is central to the school's ethos. Throughout the curriculum, pupils are encouraged to become confident discoverers, explorers and creators who live the school's values, such as honesty, excellence, cooperation, courage, inspiration and friendship.
- Pupils are respectful, thoughtful and polite. Their conduct in and out of lessons is exemplary.
- Pupils enjoy being given responsibilities, whether as a play leader or a member of the school parliament, and take their roles very seriously. The award system recognises and values pupils' hard work and moral understanding, and gives them a sense of achievement.
- Pupils are taught well about different cultures and diversity. They are taught to respect each other, and to value everybody. Their strong sense of equality shines through in the way they work and play together. One pupil said about children with disabilities that, 'it doesn't matter what they have, you still treat them the same'.
- The school has a strong culture of safety. Year 2 pupils have all completed first aid training, which gives them a good insight into how they can make a difference to the safety of others.
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe when using the internet. The 'stop, get off, and tell' approach is a mantra that pupils know well. They are able to articulate clearly the dangers of talking online and they know how to protect themselves when using the internet.
- Parents are extremely positive about the work the school does to promote positive values. One parent commented, 'We are very proud that our son attends such a lovely school. The positive values and learning ethos that the school promotes, has a positive impact on both his school and home life.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Incidents of poor behaviour are rare and almost never repeated. Pupils do not recognise bullying as being an issue at the school but would know who to speak to if they have concerns.
- Staff model good behaviour and pupils learn from them. Dinner times are a friendly and orderly affair for all involved. Staff line up in the dining hall with the pupils and midday supervisors direct staff and pupils to the tables. The manners menu, on the dining tables, reminds pupils of appropriate behaviour at meal times.
- The deputy headteacher works closely with the school's family worker to provide support to pupils and families who need it. This has resulted in strong relationships between parents and school and improved attendance for vulnerable pupils.
- The clear corridors and tidy and clean classrooms show that pupils are proud of their school and that they respect school property.
- Pupils enjoy school and have extremely positive attitudes to learning. They become confident and independent learners ensuring that they are well prepared for the next stage of education.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning. They are keen to participate in class discussions and they are keen to improve their work. Pupils take pride in their work and present their work well.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils make substantial and sustained progress from their various starting points. By the time they leave key stage 1, a significantly high proportion of pupils have made good and outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2016, attainment for pupils at the end of key stage 1 was higher than the national average, for all groups of pupils, in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving at greater depth was significantly above the national average.
- Pupils' work and the school's own information shows that pupils who are disadvantaged make good and better progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The achievement of disadvantaged pupils throughout the school is at least in line with, or exceeds, other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Current pupils are making good and better progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Systems for assessing the progress pupils make are tightly focused on identifying gaps in pupils' skills and understanding. This is remedied through structured support systems which ensure that pupils make good and better progress. Pupils' work, lesson observations, and the school's own information, show that pupils, particularly the most able and the most able disadvantaged pupils, make rapid progress.
- Pupils in Year 1 continue to perform above national expectations in the phonics screening check. Current evidence suggests that pupils are on track to exceed national expectations at the end of the academic year. Children in Reception who read to inspectors are confident readers, using their phonics knowledge well to read unfamiliar

words. Pupils in other year groups read widely and approach reading with enthusiasm. They are able to talk about authors they like and the books they enjoy.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided for extremely well and the support is highly effective. Pupils make good and better progress from their starting points.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Most children who attend the school's nursery enter Reception with skills broadly in line with their age. Some children arrive from other pre-schools with lower starting points and go on to make rapid progress at Someries Infant School.
- The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development by the time they leave Reception is above the national average. By the time children leave Reception they are ready for Year 1.
- The early years environment is exciting and inspiring. The outside area has been transformed since the previous inspection and children learn through a range of activities which stimulate inquiry and an inquisitive nature. The 'outdoor texture kitchen' allows children in Nursery and Reception to experiment with a wide range of natural resources to maximise learning experiences.
- In Nursery, as in Reception, pupils make good progress, particularly in personal, social and emotional development. Staff support children to be independent learners who are confident and eager to try new things. Children demonstrate excellent teamwork and focus intently when carrying out specific activities, as demonstrated by two children who had a clear sense of purpose when working together to make vegetable soup, one holding the vegetables, while the other cut proficiently with a knife.
- There are many opportunities for parents and carers to be involved with their child's learning. The home school book encourages a strong partnership which enables the school to gain a holistic view of each child. The school is able to gain valuable information about the learning of the child outside the school environment that helps teachers to plan activities to meet individual needs across all areas of learning.
- The teaching of phonics is of a high standard. All pupils make good progress from their starting points and the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, make rapid progress. Many parents value the opportunity to attend the school's phonics workshops so that they can support their children at home. The school provides ample information on the website and information packs so that parents are fully informed about how their child is taught.
- Children are able to apply their phonics skills in reading and writing. Children are excited to share their knowledge of 'tricky' words and offer sentences adding connectives and adjectives. Teaching focuses on ensuring that each lesson progresses children's knowledge and their ability to apply the skills they have learned. As a result, children make good progress in reading and writing.
- Staff in the early years provision are highly skilled and use questioning to ascertain what children already know and to gauge their interests. Detailed observations are carried out across all areas of learning showing a wide range of teaching and learning activities. Children enjoy selecting photos and work to be displayed in the class's 'Floor

Book' which is shared with parents and visitors.

- Emergent writing at the beginning of the year evolves into fully phonetic sentences very quickly. Children chant enthusiastically when asked what a sentence needs and are quick to point out to the teacher that it needed a capital letter, spaces and a full stop for the words to be a sentence.
- Children's work shows good progression in number. Children begin to test concepts by using a variety of resources to find things out. Children are encouraged to experiment and, as a result, they begin to build secure foundations to help them solve mathematical problems.
- Assessment is rigorous. The wealth of information gathered daily about children's learning is collated and analysed well. Teachers are able to see the next steps for children in their learning and plan activities accordingly. Leaders are currently developing their work with pre-schools to ensure that the information the school receives about children entering Reception is as accurate as it can be.
- Children are happy and chatty. They feel safe and parents agree that children get off to a flying start. One parent commented, 'my son has settled so well into Reception and has exceeded the progress we thought he would make'.

School details

Unique reference number	109583
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10023404

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paula Murgatroyd
Headteacher	Jenny Meara
Telephone number	01582 414545
Website	www.someriestinfants.co.uk/
Email address	admin@someriestinfantluton.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 July 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Someries Infant School is broadly similar in size to most schools of its type.
- The majority of the pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is lower than average.
- The proportion joining or leaving the school part way through the school year is lower than average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning across all classes.
- Most observations of learning were carried out jointly with the deputy headteacher.
- The inspection team held meetings with governors, a representative from the local authority and school staff, including senior and middle leaders.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at pupils' work including information on pupils' attainment and progress, and records of behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors scrutinised the monitoring of teaching, the management of teachers' performance, minutes of governing body meetings and the school's website.
- Discussions were held with pupils.
- Policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils were examined, including mandatory checks made regarding the recruitment of new staff.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about the books they enjoy.
- Inspectors took account of 46 responses to the online parental questionnaire, Parent View, and text responses from parents.
- The questionnaires completed by 22 members of staff were considered.

Inspection team

Cindy Impey, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ceri Evans	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Andrew	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2017