

Sutherland Primary Academy

Beaconsfield Drive, Blurton, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST3 3DY

Inspection dates

17–18 May 2017

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| 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

- The principal, leaders and governors are ambitious people. Their constant drive for improvement has led to better teaching and pupils achieving well from their starting points.
- Effective teaching is resulting in strong rates of pupils' progress for most pupils in year groups and in a wide range of subjects.
- Other adults are skilled in supporting the learning of individuals and groups of pupils. They make sure that no pupil is left behind.
- The well-designed curriculum and extra-curricular activities provide pupils with memorable experiences that engage and enthuse them.
- Sometimes the work given to pupils is too easy or difficult, which means they do not learn as well as they could.
- The school's physical education (PE) and sports provision provides high-quality activities for pupils and supports their physical development very well.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are proud of their school and show respect to staff and to others. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning contribute to their good progress.
- The school provides excellent opportunities for pupils' personal development and welfare. Pupils help those less fortunate than themselves.
- Opportunities to extend pupils' spoken language through the use of appropriate questioning is, on occasion, missed.
- The governing body supports the school well. It is rigorous in holding the school to account for pupils' progress so that the school continues to improve.
- Children get off to a great start in the school's early years foundation stage.
- There is still more to do to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities attend the school as well as they can.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so that pupils make the best possible progress by:
 - making sure teachers provide work for pupils at the right level of difficulty for their individual learning needs
 - ensuring that questioning is used effectively to challenge pupils to think more deeply and develop their spoken language.
- Continue to work with families to improve the attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that they benefit from the education that the school provides.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal, senior leaders and governors are ambitious for the Sutherland Primary Academy and have a shared goal to enable all pupils to 'Reach for the Stars'. They are focused and determined and therefore have created an environment in which pupils are able to achieve their potential.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and identifies what needs to be done to improve the school further. There are suitable procedures for checking the progress and attainment of individuals and groups of pupils to help them perform as well as they can. Any pupils at risk of falling behind are quickly identified and given extra support to help them keep up with other pupils.
- Teachers are held to account for the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make in their classes. The leadership team regularly monitor teaching and cross-reference these observations with checks on pupils' work. They mentor and coach staff effectively to develop their skills and improve their teaching practice.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a high priority for leaders and is evident in the warm and caring relationships that are prevalent throughout the school community. Pupils are well supported pastorally and academically. One pupil proudly commented, 'We all treat everyone with respect and kindness.'
- The school is successful in promoting British values through its own core values, which include respect, tolerance, kindness and honesty. Pupils understand democracy. For example, pupils elect their school councillors. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The curriculum has been well planned to enthuse and excite pupils in their learning. For example, pupils enjoy learning about 'Where is the best place for Sunny the meerkat to live?' and 'The Vikings'. The topics effectively develop pupils' interests and ensure that they acquire knowledge in a range of subjects. Pupils greatly enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities. They include choir, Spanish, performing arts and knitting. These activities nurture pupils' interests and develop their skills well.
- The pupil premium grant for disadvantaged pupils is used well. Each pupil is identified, his or her needs assessed and funds used to give additional support. They also receive assistance for educational visits and events. As a result, these pupils are progressing well in their learning.
- Special educational needs funding is effectively used to support pupils' needs. The work of the special educational needs coordinator is successful in ensuring that the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are met, and that they are well supported. As a result, nearly all these pupils make good progress from their starting points
- The effective use of the physical education (PE) and sport premium funding is a considerable strength of the school. As a result of strong and dedicated leadership, and detailed record keeping, pupils make significant gains in their fitness levels. The school now provides a much wider range of sporting opportunities and inter-school

competitions, and pupils participate in after-school clubs such as tennis, rowing and tag rugby. Consequently, pupils develop healthier lifestyles and improved physical well-being.

- The school has drawn on the support of the Societas multi-academy trust. The combined capacity of leadership and curriculum expertise across the schools has strengthened provision at the school. For example, leaders and teachers work together to moderate their judgements about pupils' learning. This improves the accuracy of teachers' judgements and helps them better plan for pupils' learning.

Governance of the school

- Members of the governing board are wholly dedicated to the school and to continuing its journey of improvement. They are enthusiastic, well informed and they have a realistic, strategic view of the school's long-term development. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses and what it needs to do to improve further. They understand how it compares with other schools, how well different groups of pupils achieve and the quality of teaching. Governors bring to their roles a wide range of relevant experience and expertise, which they use well to challenge school leaders on every aspect of school life. Governors ensure that systems to manage the performance of staff, including the principal, are rigorous. They check that objectives match the needs of the school while supporting staff in their own development. Governors ensure that action is taken if teaching falls below the required standard. Governors have a good understanding of school finances, including how the pupil premium, special educational needs and PE and sports funding is spent.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The principal has ensured that all staff and governors have read and acted upon the latest guidance on keeping children safe, including the dangers of extremism and radicalisation. The school works very well with its key partners to ensure that all pupils are safe and cared for well. The school helps parents and carers understand the importance of adopting safe practices such as using the internet safely.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching has improved and is now good. This is because of well-targeted and effective training and support for teachers and other adults. Consequently, different groups of pupils are making good progress from their various starting points.
- Pupils with different abilities read fluently and with understanding to the inspectors. They used their phonics skills well to pronounce unfamiliar words accurately and could answer questions about key characters confidently. Pupils enjoy reading stories such as 'Viking Adventure' and non-fiction books from an early age.
- Pupils enjoy the varied opportunities to grapple with real-life problems in mathematics. In a key stage 2 lesson, pupils were highly engrossed in calculating with money when ordering from a food menu. They made accurate calculations in spending the exact money for the task.

- Other adults provide effective support. They help pupils to deepen their knowledge by asking questions and giving clear explanations. For example, an adult helped a pupil to review his writing and then encouraged him to reflect on how it could be improved by using similes. This enabled the pupil to produce writing with more richness and depth.
- Teachers develop pupils' language and vocabulary skills well. In science, pupils use the words 'carnivore', 'herbivore', 'predator' and 'prey' to describe food chains. As a result, pupils are increasingly more able to express themselves well in technical language.
- On occasion, teachers do not use questioning effectively to encourage discussion and enable pupils to think more deeply.
- Sometimes, pupils are given work that is not at the right level for their starting points. Consequently, pupils' learning and progress slows down because the work is too easy or too hard for them.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupil's personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are confident learners, well equipped for their lessons and settle quickly to their work. Nearly all books are neat and tidy. Pupils enjoy helping each other when working together on tasks and activities. They rise very well to challenge and persevere even when they are finding it difficult.
- As a result of the bike safety classes and the swimming lessons that the school provides, pupils know how to keep themselves safe in other contexts. They have an excellent understanding of how to use the internet safely and what to do to avoid the potential dangers when using social media.
- Pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and the importance of hygiene and a balanced diet. Exercising regularly and drinking plenty of water is also promoted. Pupils are encouraged to take part in multi-skills sports at lunchtime.
- Pupils learn to take responsibility and consider their role in society. They raised funds to help build a primary school in the Gambia, collecting £3,000 from a book sale and other activities. Pupils regularly donate to charities, such as Red Nose Day and Children in Need.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of the different forms bullying can take, including those relating to race and gender. They say that it is rare but if they ever have any concerns, there is always an adult on hand to help them.
- The breakfast club is popular and this ensures that pupils get to school on time. It is well organised and gives pupils a nourishing start to the day in a calm, sociable environment.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are keen to learn and show positive attitudes to their work. They appreciate the support of their teachers and one pupil said, 'Teachers

are kind and help us to get going if we get stuck.’ On a few occasions, some pupils become distracted and lose interest when the activity they are doing does not fully engage them.

- Pupils play well together. At lunchtime, they show good manners and readily tidy up after they have eaten. Pupils are taught to take responsibility for their own behaviour, and to remedy the consequences of any mistakes they may make.
- Pupils appreciate the ‘golden rules’ and enjoy gaining stamps for good behaviour, which contribute to a reward at the end of term.
- The school keeps thorough records of any incidents of poor behaviour. These show the effectiveness of the procedures for improving behaviour. Records of individual pupils reveal a significant reduction in poor behaviour over time.
- The efforts made by leaders to promote regular attendance have been successful in raising overall attendance to the national figure. Leaders are working with families to reduce further still the absence of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes have improved since the previous inspection. In 2016, most Year 6 pupils made better progress in writing and similar progress from their starting points in mathematics compared with other pupils nationally. Their progress in reading was not quite as secure. This is because a minority of middle-ability pupils did not make the progress they should have. The combined attainment of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics was below that of other pupils nationally. However, this was because the large majority of pupils had below expected starting points when they entered key stage 2. Most pupils’ progress was secure, from their starting points, at the end of key stage 1. Pupils in Year 6 leave with the necessary skills for secondary school.
- Work in pupils’ books and school records show that the large majority of pupils in year groups are making good progress across the curriculum. Progress in key stage 1 is fastest and the majority of pupils are reaching the expected standards. In key stage 2, standards continue to rise this year with increasing numbers of pupils working at the expected and higher standards.
- Above-average outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check show that pupils make a good start in understanding the sounds that letters represent. Pupils are confident readers. Younger pupils are able to identify the key features of a story. Older pupils have favourite authors, such as Michael Morpurgo and Jill Murphy.
- Pupils’ knowledge and skills in other subjects show good progression through the school. Pupils in key stage 1, for example, classify animals into carnivores, herbivores and omnivores and develop skills in using an atlas. Across the school, the study of famous musicians and artists inspires pupils to appreciate different types of art and music, develop skills in these subjects and produce their own compositions.
- A successful focus on the teaching of mathematics has accelerated pupils’ progress rapidly. Pupils have a good understanding of mathematical operations and apply them well in solving practical problems. Pupils’ achievement in writing has improved because leaders have reviewed the way in which they teach writing with more focus on the

content and quality of themed writing. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are being developed well.

- The most able pupils typically make good progress, because teaching engages them in suitably stretching tasks. Consequently, they are increasingly demonstrating higher-level skills of critical analysis and evaluation in English and mathematics.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged are making good progress from their starting points. This is due to the help they receive in class and through tailored support and interventions according to need. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils have access to all the opportunities at school, such as clubs and trips. As a result, differences between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally are decreasing.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years are well led by an effective leader. Children make good progress from their often low starting points. The majority of children reached a good level of development last year. Children are ready for the transition into Year 1 by the time they leave Reception.
- Additional funding is used effectively to identify any early needs that children may have. This includes screening for any speech and language needs. The number of disadvantaged pupils can vary from year to year in early years. This group of children are well supported and make good progress from their starting points.
- The learning environment has a vast array of stimulating experiences and resources for children to choose from. For example, a child used play dough to represent the life cycle of the butterfly. She had the egg, the caterpillar, the leaf, the cocoon and the butterfly, and was able to explain to the adult each part.
- Outdoors, staff have crafted a range of learning activities that develop children's physical skills well. Children have good opportunities to ride tricycles and scooters and this helps them to develop balance and coordination. The space is also used very well to widen their understanding of counting, number and sometimes to promote their writing skills.
- Every opportunity is used to check children's understanding. Children enjoyed estimating how tall the teacher was. Before, they had estimated how many cubes made up the teachers' height. The teacher then involved all the children in counting up to 81 cubes. Children were then able to identify who was closest and then the next closest in the correct order.
- The development of children's early reading skills is given good attention. For example, a child used his phonic knowledge to sight read and occasionally blend to read words in his reading book 'Sam and the Baby Bug'. With good guidance and direction from adults, children make good progress in early writing skills. On occasions, tasks given to children are not sufficiently demanding enough to challenge them to make even more progress.
- Parents are kept well informed about children's progress. Parents regularly contribute information to children's assessment files. These capture and celebrate children's special achievements at home. Parents that inspectors spoke to are very happy with

the early years and the updates they receive from staff.

- Welfare requirements are met and children are safe. Children exhibit good behaviour and cooperate with one another very well. They are also inquisitive. During the inspection, children were keen to engage with inspectors and share their learning.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 138548 |
| Local authority | Stoke-on-Trent |
| Inspection number | 10032570 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 478 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Kathy Niblett |
| Principal | Garry Boote |
| Telephone number | 01782 594 133 |
| Website | www.sutherlandprimary.co.uk |
| Email address | gboote@sutherlandacademy.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 31 March–1 April 2015 |

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Early years provision is full time in Nursery and Reception.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. A below-average proportion of pupils are in receipt of an education, health and care plan.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. The school's deprivation indicator is above average.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

- The school became an academy in August 2012.
- There is little mobility within the school. Very few pupils join 'in year'. Most pupils stay at the school throughout their primary years.
- The school has received external support from the Societas multi-academy trust, which it is planning on joining in the future.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum standards expected nationally for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time. They observed learning in lessons. These included joint observations with the principal and deputy principal. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors looked at examples of pupils' work and talked to them about their learning.
- Inspectors talked to parents as they brought their children to school and examined their responses to the online free-text survey for parents.
- Inspectors took account of the 25 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. They also considered the school's own surveys of parents' views.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the chair of governors and members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and school leaders.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including: the school's own information on pupils' current and recent progress; planning of work in different subjects; leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning; and records relating to behaviour, attendance and the safeguarding of pupils.

Inspection team

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Steve Nelson, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Benetia Mounsey | Ofsted Inspector |
| Janis Warren | Ofsted Inspector |
| Bamber Loizou | Her Majesty's Inspector |

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