

Southfield Primary School

Banbury Road, Brackley, Northamptonshire NN13 6AU

Inspection dates

22–23 March 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Senior leaders' plans for improvement are not yet precise enough or sharply focused.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, not enough pupils reach their full potential, especially those who are most able.
- Teachers do not assess pupils' work with enough accuracy. This means they do not plan lessons at the right level of challenge so that all pupils make the progress expected of them.
- Pupils do not make fast enough progress in reading and mathematics in key stage 2.
- Not all teachers in charge of subjects or other areas of the school are driving improvements forwards quickly enough.
- Some pupils do not come to school frequently enough, or concentrate well enough in lessons.
- The quality of teaching and learning is not yet consistently good. Teachers' checks on how well pupils are doing during lessons and the quality of guidance that pupils receive vary considerably between classes.
- Pupils do not always understand the meaning of the books they have read.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to develop reading and mathematics skills in other subjects.
- Teaching of mathematics does not yet provide sufficient challenge and opportunities for pupils to deepen their mathematical understanding.
- Adults do not always ensure that provision in the early years is challenging enough to meet the children's needs, particularly for the most able and in writing.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders have improved the quality of teaching and raised pupils' achievement since the previous inspection.
- Safeguarding arrangements are robust so that pupils are kept safe.
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of after-school clubs, especially in music and sport.
- Pupils make good progress in key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment at the end of this key stage is above average.
- Pupils are polite and are well mannered towards each other, staff and visitors. They say they are happy at school and feel safe and cared for. As a result, incidents of bullying are rare.

Full report

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - all middle leaders develop the skills to drive improvements in the aspects of the school for which they are responsible
 - senior leaders sharpen the guidance provided to teachers on how to improve their practice, providing them with suitable training and development activities
 - senior leaders include specific measures of success and arrangements for monitoring in plans for improvement, so that the governing body can hold them fully to account for the rate of improvement achieved.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and accelerate pupils' progress by ensuring that all teachers:
 - check frequently on pupils' learning during lessons and provide additional support and challenge when required
 - use more accurate assessment information to provide suitably challenging work for all groups of pupils, especially for the most able
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to improve their skills in reasoning and solving mathematical problems
 - listen to pupils read more frequently and develop their skills in comprehension
 - develop the key skills of reading and mathematics through other subjects
 - raise pupils' aspirations of what they can achieve to improve their attitudes to learning and level of concentration in lessons.
- Improve provision in the early years by:
 - providing the children with more opportunities to develop their skills in writing, both inside and outside the classroom
 - improving the quality of the learning environment and the range of resources that are available for children to use, particularly for the most able.
- Work more closely with parents to reduce persistent absence, especially for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The governing body and senior leaders have overseen improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement since the previous inspection. Nevertheless, they have not yet ensured that pupils make consistently good progress in the early years and in key stage 2, especially in reading and mathematics.
- The school's self-evaluation is too generous and does not clearly explain the extent to which the actions taken by leaders and teachers have secured better achievement by pupils. Leaders believe that many aspects of the school's work are better than they are; inspection evidence does not support the school's assessment that it is a good school.
- The school's improvement plans are not sharply focused on the key areas that need improving, particularly in mathematics. Measurable milestones and timelines to assess the impact of leaders' actions are not precise enough. As a result, improvement plans are not sufficiently focused to help the governing body check on the school's rate of improvement.
- Leaders have strengthened their checks on the quality of teaching, which include scrutiny of teachers' planning, consideration of the quality of work in pupils' books and observations of learning in lessons. Leaders' evaluations of teaching are not precise enough, however, to help teachers to improve their practice sufficiently. Consequently, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching remain and these are reflected in pupils' varied rates of progress.
- The school lacks systems to ensure that teachers' assessments of pupils' learning are accurate and reliable, particularly in reading and mathematics. As a result, some teachers do not plan work that moves pupils' learning on quickly from what they already know and understand. This includes the provision in the early years. Inaccurate assessment also means that leaders' checks on the progress of individual pupils are not secure.
- Newly appointed subject and other middle leaders have worked enthusiastically as a team and have rapidly developed positive and supportive relationships with each other. They check the quality of provision and pupils' attainment and progress in their area but are still developing their skills in using this information to determine what improvements are needed in teachers' practice. The impact of their work on raising standards is at an early stage, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Senior leaders have ensured that the curriculum for writing has improved, but weaknesses are still evident. Teachers are providing pupils with more opportunities to undertake extended writing. Opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in other subjects are limited, however. Teachers also provide too few opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their mathematical skills across the curriculum, or to develop their reasoning skills in mathematics.
- Leaders encourage pupils to make healthy choices and have developed the curriculum to provide greater opportunities for physical activity. Pupils enjoy a wide selection of after-school clubs, including netball and basketball. Effective use is made of the additional funding for physical education and sport.

- The range of after-school clubs is a strength of the school. These include gardening, morris dancing, sewing, junk modelling and orchestra. Pupils can learn to play the guitar, the violin and the ukulele. This is indicative of the school's positive support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders are making sensible use of additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders have reviewed the support for these pupils and, as they were not making the progress they should, a new special educational needs coordinator has been appointed. The progress that these pupils make is now checked more rigorously.
- Pupil premium funding is being targeted effectively to support disadvantaged pupils. However, the difference between disadvantaged pupils' progress in reading and mathematics and that of other pupils nationally is still too wide. The headteacher has reviewed the use of the funding and plans to provide more bespoke support for individual pupils.
- The school received useful support from the local authority to help them accurately assess pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 1. The local authority agreed with teachers' assessments of standards in reading, writing and mathematics in 2016.
- Support from an external consultant has helped leaders with their plans for improvement. Documentary evidence showed how the consultant was guiding leaders to consider a range of evidence when evaluating how much progress pupils have made.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has correctly identified areas of improvement for the school. Minutes of its meetings show that governors ask key questions that challenge leaders to hold them to account. Governors follow up questions with monitoring visits to obtain further information.
- The governing body has a secure understanding of how the school has used additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, for those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for primary physical education and sport. Governors understand the impact of this funding on pupils' achievement.
- The safeguarding governor meets with the headteacher regularly and checks that school safeguarding procedures are in place. All governors understand the governing body's responsibilities for keeping pupils safe and have received up-to-date training.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The designated safeguarding lead ensures that all staff receive up-to-date training and are aware of how to identify concerns and report them. Training on risks in the community, such as extremism and female genital mutilation, have been a particular focus recently. Staff keep a close eye on attendance and make daily checks for pupils who are absent from school. Staff secure support from other agencies when needed.
- The large majority of parents are confident that the school's systems keep their children safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment varies across year groups and subjects. Teaching has not been effective in ensuring that pupils make good progress from their starting points, particularly in reading and mathematics. Teachers do not use assessment information well enough or regularly enough to ensure that tasks are set at the right level. This means that pupils do not move on quickly enough in their learning.
- In some classes, teachers have not established routines to ensure that pupils can move on to the next stage in their learning. This also slows learning as pupils waste time waiting for direction from their teacher when they finish a section of work, rather than knowing what they should do next and moving on to it.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high enough throughout the school to secure good progress for all pupils, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching does not challenge pupils well enough, including the most able, to develop and deepen their knowledge, skills and understanding. In tasks where pupils are expected to complete their work independently, pupils' interest wanes and they sit passively; occasionally, this can lead to instances of low-level disruption.
- The teaching of mathematics has been a recent priority for the school and a new approach and policy have been implemented. These are not yet fully in place and pupils' progress remains inconsistent. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are not yet high enough, particularly for the most able pupils. Progress in mathematics is stronger in key stage 1 and in the Reception classes than it is in key stage 2.
- The teaching of reading is inconsistent but is improving. Some teaching is weaker and teachers do not match work accurately to pupils' needs. For example, lower-ability pupils in Years 1 and 2 were observed reading books that were not pitched at their ability level and teachers were not developing pupils' comprehension skills well enough. Other teaching is stronger and teachers make effective use of questioning to extend pupils' thinking. As a result, pupils in these lessons are able to understand the texts they read and make appropriate deductions.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make inconsistent progress from their starting points. Some pupils are catching up with their classmates, but leaders and teachers have not yet ensured that the provision for these pupils is consistently strong enough to enable gaps in learning to close.
- Teachers mostly deploy teaching assistants well to ensure that pupils make better progress, but occasionally they do not make the best use of the adults in their class. Consequently, pupils' learning is not being consistently well supported.
- Improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in writing in key stage 2 has been a key priority for the school. As a result, pupils make faster progress in writing than in reading and mathematics. Teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to write at length in English than previously. Leaders have not focused enough on providing opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their key literacy skills in other subjects.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils do not consistently show good attitudes to learning and this slows the progress they make. This is because teachers' presentation of learning, at times, lacks challenge or is not delivered in a way that captures pupils' interest. Consequently, pupils lose concentration and become easily distracted.
- Many pupils show positive attitudes to learning, however. They work well with others and listen respectfully to adults. Most pupils often work hard and take pride in their work and books. However, standards of presentation are inconsistent throughout the school.
- Pupils' personal development is not supported well enough because too few pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of different faiths and religions. Some pupils showed a lack of interest in widening their knowledge and understanding of different cultures, faiths and religions. Inspectors observed pupils engaged in an assembly on Christianity, however, where pupils were learning how Christians pray.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and happy in school and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Pupils learn how to stay safe online and not to share their personal details. In an assembly on Pablo Picasso, pupils were learning about self-belief and taking risks. Pupils were encouraged to take a risk, to stand up and juggle in front of the school. This resulted in pupils confidently discussing safe and unsafe risks.
- Pupils confirm that instances of bullying are very rare and they show a good understanding of the various forms that bullying can take. Pupils are confident that staff will deal with incidents of bullying should they arise. Pupils spoke confidently about how they could go to their teachers for help.
- Teachers help pupils to understand the importance of staying healthy and active. Pupils benefit from after-school sport clubs and additional opportunities for physical education and sport. They also run a mile a day and do this with enthusiasm and enjoyment.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in lessons and around the school. On some occasions, however, particularly when teaching does not engage or challenge them, pupils' behaviour in lessons is not as good as it should be and this results in some disruption to learning.
- Overall attendance is close to the national average but persistent absence for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is too high. Leaders, including governors, have taken action to reduce absence and, as a result, attendance of these pupils is improving.
- The majority of parents who spoke to inspectors, or who responded to the online

questionnaire feel that their children are safe, happy and well behaved in school.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Published information on pupils' attainment and progress shows that, historically, pupils have made insufficient progress from their different starting points, especially in key stage 2. There are positive signs of improvement this year, but pupils are currently not making consistently good progress throughout the school.
- In 2016, all groups of pupils in Year 6 made significantly slower progress through key stage 2 than other pupils made nationally in reading and mathematics. Although pupils' attainment in these subjects, as well as in their grammar, punctuation and spelling, was broadly in line with the national average for pupils reaching the expected standard, some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Their slower progress means that not enough pupils reach the higher standard in mathematics, and no disadvantaged pupils reached the higher standard in reading or mathematics at the end of Year 6 in 2016.
- Most pupils in key stage 1, including disadvantaged pupils, reached above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics in national assessments in 2016. Pupils were well prepared to enter key stage 2. This was not the case for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, however. The school's data and inspection evidence shows that the majority of pupils currently in key stage 1 are making at least good progress from their different starting points.
- Throughout key stage 2, a legacy of poor teaching and assessment means that too few pupils make at least the expected progress by the time they leave the school. Pupils' work and the school's own assessments indicate that standards are rising, but progress remains inconsistent. Attainment is broadly in line with national averages and pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders are aware that the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, do not reach their full potential by the end of Year 6. This is because, throughout the school, expectations have not been high enough. Some pupils are receiving more challenging work, but work is not consistently pitched at a sufficiently high level to fully meet the needs of these pupils.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is improving, but still varies. The additional support given to pupils in key stage 1 has been effective, but less so in key stage 2. Differences in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally in writing and reading have been reducing at the end of Year 6, but disadvantaged pupils achieve less well than in mathematics. The progress of current disadvantaged pupils is still inconsistent across subjects and between year groups.
- In subjects other than English and mathematics, pupils' skills and progress are inconsistent between year groups and classes. This is because the new curriculum, which was introduced in 2014, has not yet been fully implemented throughout the school.
- The proportion of pupils who meet the expected standard in the phonics check in Year 1 is consistently above the national average. The school's data indicates that the large majority of current pupils are already meeting the national standard in phonics.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management of the early years requires improvement because the curriculum does not provide a broad range of interesting and demanding experiences. Activities do not fully meet children's needs and ensure that they make sufficiently rapid progress.
- Adults have not ensured that the classrooms in the early years provide a stimulating environment for children to learn. The lack of high-quality resources and materials, including displays, means that the school does not consistently provide the stimulation that encourages children's curiosity and learning.
- Children are suitably prepared for Year 1 because the proportion of children who achieve a good level of development is higher than that found nationally. From their starting points, however, which are typical for their age, or better, children's progress is more limited than it could be and too few children make good progress. In particular, teachers do not challenge the most able pupils sufficiently. The early years leader has recognised that provision does not yet enable all children, including the most able, to make the faster progress of which they are capable.
- Over the last three years, published assessment results show that the proportions of children achieving a good level of development have been above the national average. However, some weaknesses have been evident in boys' writing. Standards in boys' writing have declined from above the national averages in 2013 to below the national averages in 2016. Provision in the early years does not support pupils' development in writing as well as it could because opportunities for children to develop their writing skills are limited.
- Leaders are not making use of the early years additional funding that is available to support the learning and development of disadvantaged pupils. Despite this, disadvantaged children typically secure a good level of development by the time they leave the Reception Year.
- Not all children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve a good level of development or achieve national standards in reading, writing and mathematics. However, standards are rising and in 2016, more pupils reached national standards in mathematics and reading than previously.
- Children benefit from a caring environment. Relationships between adults and children are good and the children are happy at school. Children behave well, although, at times, they are too easily distracted from their work. They listen to adults and play well together.
- The quality of teaching in the Reception Year varies. Some sessions are well structured and adults plan activities that meet the needs of children. Adults provide guidance to ensure that children get the most from an activity and learn as the teacher intended them to. In other sessions, teaching is weaker, adults do not model learning well enough and do not intervene to move children's learning forward. In these sessions, tasks lack direction and challenge.
- Parents have positive relationships with staff and most are actively involved in supporting their child's learning.

School details

Unique reference number	139030
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10023069

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

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	294
Appropriate authority	The academy trust
Chair	Lee Marland
Headteacher	Jane Cartlidge
Telephone number	01280 709792
Website	http://www.southfieldprimary.co.uk
Email address	bursar@southfield-pri.northants-ecl.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	18–19 October 2016

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information on its website about the progress pupils make in reading and writing and how parents can request paper copies and further information from the school.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Southfield Primary and Nursery School is larger than most primary schools.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are lower than the national averages.
- The percentage of disadvantaged pupils is decreasing and is currently less than 10% of the roll. This is much lower than the national average for primary schools.
- The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is around 14%. This is higher than the national average for primary schools.

- For the last three years, the school has remained above the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading writing and mathematics. It has, however, met the Department for Education's criteria for a coasting school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 21 lessons. Lessons were observed jointly with a senior leader.
- The inspection team looked at pupils' books to establish the quality of their work and their progress.
- A range of other school activities, including playtimes, lunchtimes and assemblies, were observed. Inspectors also visited the breakfast club.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils in meetings, during lessons and informally at breaktimes. They listened to a selection of pupils reading.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior and middle leaders. They met with members of the governing body, including the chair. The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised, including the school's improvement plan, its self-evaluation, and the school's report on its use of funding to support disadvantaged pupils. The school's website was evaluated. Inspectors also considered information relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance. Inspectors looked at systems used to manage the performance of staff, and minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors analysed information on the performance of the school in comparison with other schools nationally and the school's own records of pupils' progress.
- Inspectors took account of 47 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and considered the responses made through the Ofsted free-text service. Inspectors took account of the school's most recent parental survey and spoke with parents at the start of the school day. The lead inspector met with two parents during the inspection. Inspectors also considered the responses of the one member of staff who completed the online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Helen Richardson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Stuart Edmonds	Ofsted Inspector
Christopher Wheatley	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