

# Southfield Primary School

Pastures Way, Luton, Bedfordshire LU4 0PE

## Inspection dates

29–30 June 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher leads the school with determination. She provides effective leadership, and is ably supported by senior leaders.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The actions they have taken have increased pupils' outcomes. Consequently, the school has improved considerably since the previous inspection.
- Governors are resolute about pupils achieving well. They have acted swiftly to advice from the local authority to improve their practice. Governors now rigorously check the school's performance and hold leaders more stringently to account.
- Support for vulnerable pupils and their families is effective. Leaders know the pupils and their families well and support them to get the help that they need.
- Leaders and governors monitor the impact of the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, well. This ensures that these pupils make good progress across the curriculum.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, at breaktimes and when moving around the school. They are polite, work hard and want to do well.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders keep detailed records and pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet.
- Subject leaders have improved teaching in their areas of responsibility but need to make better use of assessment information to check the progress and attainment of pupils and so that they rapidly address any underachievement.
- Teaching is consistently good and meets the needs of most pupils. As a result, most pupils make strong progress across a range of subjects and so are well prepared for secondary school. However, the most able pupils could do even better, particularly in mathematics, so that more of them attain the higher standards.
- Some pupils do not take enough pride in their work because not all teachers share the same high expectations to ensure that pupils consistently write neatly and present their work well.
- The early years provision is a stimulating environment for learning. Children make strong progress from their starting points. However, leaders have identified that opportunities for writing, particularly for boys and the most able children, are not as plentiful as they could be to ensure that they are well prepared for Year 1.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management further by ensuring that all subject leaders make better use of assessment information to identify individuals or groups of pupils who need additional support so that all pupils make at least good progress.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that all teachers consistently:
  - provide opportunities for the most able pupils to complete more challenging tasks, particularly in mathematics
  - set high expectations for the quality of pupils' presentation and handwriting in their work.
- Improve the quality of provision in the early years further by providing more regular opportunities for children, particularly boys and the most able, to develop their writing skills both inside and outside the classroom.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Since her appointment, the headteacher has developed a leadership team which has worked relentlessly to raise standards, improve the quality of teaching and promote good attitudes to learning among pupils. As a result, standards and pupils' behaviour have improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have correctly identified the most important priorities for improvement to ensure that teaching improves quickly and pupils make strong progress.
- Leaders set high expectations for the staff they recruit. Staff are only appointed if leaders believe that they can provide the best possible quality of learning for the pupils of Southfield Primary School. As a result, effective teaching is making a positive difference to the progress pupils make.
- Leaders focus on providing pupils with consistent approaches to teaching where 'no one is able to opt out.' Monitoring of lessons includes checks to ensure that staff are meeting leaders' expectations and where they are not, training, support and challenge are provided, which results in further improvement. Teachers and teaching assistants value the regular feedback and training they receive and use these to improve outcomes for pupils.
- The leadership of teachers' performance management has been improved significantly since September 2016. Teachers are now set challenging targets for pupils' progress and their leadership responsibilities. Individualised training reflects the outcomes of the leaders' monitoring and successfully helps teachers to improve their practice.
- The curriculum is broad and engaging. In addition to English and mathematics, history, science, art and music are taught well. The school makes good use of its art room and a specialist teacher to enable pupils to make strong progress in art and music. The curriculum is enhanced by visits and visitors, including, for example, an Egyptian workshop and a visit to the Space Centre.
- Leaders promote equality of opportunity and this contributes to a harmonious and friendly school. Leaders develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural growth well. The school's values, such as fairness and honesty, are promoted through assemblies, in the curriculum and during playtimes. Pupils say that spiritual, moral and social development includes: 'Remembering the fallen in war and the school's values, displayed in the foyer.' British values are linked to school values and include fairness, resilience, harmony and tolerance.
- Displays and the school environment reflect the range of cultures and religion in Britain. Success in sport is praised with a trophy cabinet, and pupils' work is celebrated on the school's website. A 'Kindness Tree' is used to commend when pupils have successfully demonstrated the school's values.

- Leaders use the primary physical education (PE) and sport funding well. Sport apprentices work alongside teachers and model techniques. This is improving teachers' knowledge and skills so that they deliver good teaching in PE lessons. The school takes part in competitive sports within the West Area Partnership of schools. This also provides pupils with opportunities to attend sports clubs which have a high take-up of pupils. The PE leader has plans to increase participation in physical activity further in the next academic year.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make good progress from their individual starting points. This is as a result of the pupil premium funding being used effectively. Staff ensure that as well as their academic needs, their social, personal and emotional needs are met too, breaking down any barriers they have to learning. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, achieve well.
- Funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well spent. Leaders have an in-depth understanding of the needs of each pupil and work tirelessly to help them succeed. Support is arranged that enables pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to access learning with their peers, but also promotes their independence. As a result, these pupils make good progress and are better prepared for the next stages of their education.
- A high proportion of parents say that the school is well led and managed. Several commented on the rapid improvement since the appointment of the current headteacher. As one parent said: 'Since the new headteacher has been in place, I feel the school has improved 100%.' This view is echoed by staff. For example, one member of staff said: 'The new headteacher has made a huge difference to the school and we are now working as a motivated and committed team.'
- The headteacher has introduced robust systems to check how well pupils are learning by completing detailed analysis of assessment information, observing lessons and looking at pupils' work. Senior leaders use the school's chosen assessment system to check how pupils are progressing and to identify where teaching needs to improve so that pupils can make more rapid progress. However, subject leaders' use of assessment information to check on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress could be improved, so that they act more quickly to address any weaknesses in provision.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors have quickly responded to the findings of a review of their governance. They have changed the way they work so that they are better informed and now provide more effective challenge to school leaders.
- Committees and governor roles have been reorganised and new governors have been recruited to provide a wider set of skills to the governing body.
- Governors access regular training from the local authority so that they are better informed about their responsibilities and constantly improve their leadership skills. Governors have also learned from effective practice elsewhere. For example, the chair of governors has observed governing body meetings in other schools where there is strong governance.

- Governors monitor the school's progress against the priorities in the school's improvement plan by completing regular visits and evaluating the information provided about pupils' progress. As a result, governors know the school well and provide effective challenge to school leaders about the impact of their work to raise standards.
- Governors robustly monitor safeguarding. The governors' welfare committee evaluates how well the school is keeping children safe and checks that staff take their responsibilities for safeguarding pupils seriously so that pupils are well looked after.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Appropriate checks are made to ensure that staff are suitable to work with pupils. Staff receive regular training and know what to do if they have concerns about a pupil's safety or welfare.
- Leaders know the school community well and use this knowledge, alongside the information in the school, to ensure that vulnerable pupils are monitored closely. Leaders act swiftly to provide support for such pupils, working with outside agencies when needed.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are kept in a safe and secure environment and are appropriately supervised.
- Safeguarding records are detailed and well organised.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in English, mathematics and other subjects have increased significantly since the previous inspection. As a result, standards are now good and improving across the curriculum.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good. They make lessons interesting and engaging and use what they know about individual pupils to meet their needs well.
- Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Training has been provided to change their practice so that they are more focused on promoting pupils' independence rather than providing too much support. Individual support for pupils with the greatest need is effective because teaching assistants know these pupils well and work for them is well planned.
- The questioning skills used by teachers and teaching assistants is a strength. Open questions are used to encourage pupils to extend or improve their answers. For example, in Year 1, questions were asked to encourage pupils to describe what they could see so that they could write descriptions of a heron with more detail.
- Feedback is provided in line with the school's policy and has improved since the previous inspection. There are many examples where pupils make effective use of feedback to correct errors or improve their work. Pupils said that 'mistakes are valued' and teachers used examples of errors when supporting pupils to improve their work, particularly when writing.

- Reading activities make use of texts which engage boys. Staff use targeted questions to ensure that all pupils, and particularly boys, gain a deeper understanding of the texts they read. Teachers and teaching assistants adapt tasks so that all pupil groups can access them.
- Pupils are encouraged to read at home using the school's 'Read Every Day' (RED) reward scheme, where pupils win prizes when they reach targets. The school's chosen approach has resulted in a greater number of pupils reading regularly at home.
- The teaching of phonics is well structured and carefully planned. Pupils who read with inspectors demonstrated a secure grasp of phonic knowledge which they applied well to decode new words.
- Writing is taught effectively across the school. All pupils develop their writing skills across the curriculum and have the opportunity to write with a clear purpose, for example, developing descriptive language using similes and metaphors in Year 4 stories, and written observations of a water investigation involving forces in Year 5 science.
- Homework is set regularly and pupils say that they enjoy the tasks. Parents agreed that homework is appropriate for their child's age.
- The promotion of improved handwriting and presentation can be seen in pupils' books across the curriculum. Pupils are motivated to write with a pen and can explain what they need to do to achieve this. Most teachers have high expectations but a few do not insist that pupils present their work well and therefore some pupils do not take enough care or pride in their work.
- In mathematics, the focus on improving pupils' arithmetic skills has been successful. Pupils complete calculations confidently and accurately. Leaders have also recognised the need to place a greater emphasis on developing reasoning skills and problem solving. This is leading to pupils applying their arithmetic skills to solve problems more confidently. Nevertheless, opportunities to offer more challenging work, particularly for the most able, are not always provided, and so the progress of the most able pupils is not as rapid as it could be.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils say that they feel safe in school.
- Staff and governors are successful in ensuring that the school provides a safe environment in which pupils can flourish. As a result, pupils are friendly, confident and sociable and enjoy their learning.
- Pupils said that they enjoy lunchtimes. Lunchtime activities provide pupils with the opportunity to play games led by adults or use equipment in their own play. There are also areas where pupils can sit quietly.

- Pupils know how to stay safe in and out of school, including when online. Pupils explained that they have lessons which help them to understand what to do if they are worried by what they see when they access the internet.
- In lessons, pupils discuss their ideas and confidently contribute their points of view. A notable example was in a Year 6 lesson, where pupils constructed a letter to argue their views about an asylum-seeking boy based on the book 'Refugee Boy'.
- Leaders ensure that vulnerable families are well supported. For example, family support workers help parents to complete forms to access external support and services, and they assist some parents to access foodbanks.
- Most parents who responded to the Ofsted's questionnaire, Parent View and the school's own questionnaire and those who met with inspectors, agreed that staff give pupils' personal development and welfare a high priority. One parent commented that since the appointment of the headteacher: 'The school feels friendlier and my children are happier than they have ever been.'

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Leaders, teachers and support staff set high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond quickly to instructions and this enables almost all lessons and assemblies to run smoothly without disruption.
- Southfield Primary School is a calm environment where pupils move around the school sensibly and safely, showing courtesy and politeness to each other and to adults.
- Leaders and staff know the pupils well and provide effective support for pupils with identified behavioural needs. As a result, these pupils access learning in lessons and rarely disrupt the learning of others.
- Almost all pupils are keen to learn and work hard in lessons. There are a few occasions when low-level misbehaviour results from activities that are not sufficiently challenging or where there are unclear expectations from teachers.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is and what to do if they have concerns. Pupils and most parents say that bullying is rare and when it happens it is dealt with effectively so that it stops. Senior leaders act quickly to address the very few incidents of bullying, derogatory language or racist comments.
- Pupils' attendance at the school is in line with national averages. Senior leaders use a wide range of strategies to promote attendance, including work with outside agencies, careful tracking of pupils, certificates for high attendance and promotion of good attendance through social media. The school's family support workers support families to improve their children's attendance through drop-in sessions at school and home visits. As a result, attendance has improved for some of the most vulnerable pupils.

## Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Children typically enter the school in the early years with low skills for their age and make good progress. The proportion of children who achieved a good level of development was in line with the national average in 2016. A slightly smaller proportion of children achieved a good level of development in this year's assessments but they made good progress from their various starting points.
- Year 1 phonics screening results were above the national average in 2015 and 2016 and provisional results show that the proportion of pupils who met the required standard in 2017 is lower than it was in 2016 but in line with that for 2015.
- The school's assessment information indicates that Year 2 pupils' attainment in recent assessments is similar to the school's 2016 results for writing and mathematics. Pupils' attainment has increased in reading as a result of good progress from the beginning to the end of key stage 1. Pupils in this cohort have made good progress from their starting points.
- Since the previous academic year, outcomes for pupils have improved considerably in key stage 2. The school's assessment information and pupils' workbooks show that a far higher proportion of pupils are meeting the standards expected for their age. This is because of improved teaching and learning and higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. The current Year 6 cohort is well prepared for secondary school.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make strong progress from their starting points in key stage 1 and key stage 2. This is resulting in increasing proportions of these pupils meeting the standards expected for their age and achieving the higher standards across the curriculum. In almost all year groups, disadvantaged pupils make more rapid progress than other pupils because of the carefully planned use of teaching assistants and additional teachers in lessons.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make strong progress because of the high-quality support they receive in lessons from staff and because of a personalised curriculum that meets their needs.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because staff accurately identify their additional needs and how these can best be met. The school's special educational needs coordinators carefully measure the impact of intervention programmes to ensure that they make a positive contribution to pupils' progress and adapt or change them where they do not.
- Outcomes in subjects other than English and mathematics are also good. Pupils' work in their topic books is detailed and well presented. Pupils have frequent opportunities to complete investigations in science. Progress can be seen in books and on display and is particularly strong in science, history and art.
- All groups of pupils, including the most able, make strong progress. However, on occasions, the most able pupils are capable of doing even better. They are not always given work that is sufficiently demanding and teachers do not always extend their thinking or move them on to the next task quickly. This is particularly the case in mathematics.



## Early years provision

Good

- Provision in the early years, which includes the Nursery and Reception classes, takes place within a stimulating environment. Staff plan interesting activities that sustain the children's interest inside and outside the classroom. Construction activities and the mud kitchens are particularly popular and children work together to solve problems, such as how to build a bus with enough seats from crates and planks.
- Staff interactions help children to develop play from their starting points and interests. Staff use effective questioning skills to encourage discussion with children and problem solving to deepen children's understanding. Adults introduce new vocabulary to develop children's language at every opportunity, for example by using mathematical terms such as 'heavier', 'lighter', and 'half' during role play in the shops in the Nursery and Reception classrooms.
- Children choose to complete class challenges. They listen to recorded sound messages and follow instructions to solve problems. This demonstrates that teachers are ensuring that children explore and investigate in their learning. As a result, children make decisions and solve problems independently.
- Reading has a high profile and children have access to a range of engaging activities to reinforce reading skills, such as using water pistols to hit sounds and words on a board and then reading them aloud.
- Early identification of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities results in well-planned support which enables them to make good progress. Similarly, children who speak English as an additional language are well supported so they quickly learn to speak English with considerable skill. During the inspection, children who had started school with no knowledge of English were keen to talk to inspectors about their learning. They were also able to read confidently to inspectors, using their phonic skills to read unfamiliar words.
- Staff make sure that children are safe, both indoors and outside. Routines support children to behave well. Staff carry out regular checks on all aspects of the provision and work closely with the school's special educational needs coordinators to address children's specific learning, emotional and physical needs.
- Records of learning include detailed and informative evaluations of each child's progress in all areas of development. Next steps are identified for each child and these inform planning for activities to meet their needs.
- Parents are provided with opportunities to contribute to assessments for their children and share home-school books at the start and end of each day. This means that they are well informed about the progress their children make and how they can support them at home.

- Despite the vast majority of children making good progress, standards in writing this year are slightly lower than the published results for 2016. The independent writing activities, inside and outside the classroom, are not sufficiently stimulating for many children and this means that they do not chose them often enough. Boys are more reluctant to choose writing activities than girls and this is reflected in their lower attainment. The most able children are not always provided with challenging activities to further develop their writing skills and this means that some could make better progress.

## School details

Unique reference number	109580
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10031357

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	408
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Matt Price
Headteacher	Sarah Pollard
Telephone number	01582 604876
Website	<a href="http://www.southfieldprimaryschool.co.uk">www.southfieldprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@southfield-primary.co.uk">admin@southfield-primary.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	9–10 July 2015

## Information about this school

- The school is a larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The early years provision is available part time for Nursery-aged children and operates full time in the Reception Year.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is slightly lower than the national average.

- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in each class. Some observations were completed with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and assessed the school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Inspectors looked through a range of pupils' work in different subjects and heard pupils read.
- Inspectors spoke to two groups of pupils and had discussions with other pupils around the school and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, met inspectors at the end of the school day and those who wrote to the inspection team.
- Inspectors made observations of pupils' behaviour at lunchtime, when pupils were moving in and around the school and during lessons.
- Meetings were held with staff, governors, senior leaders, a national leader of education who works with the school, and representatives from the local authority.
- Meetings were also held with the school's leaders of English and mathematics and the special educational needs coordinators.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation, including information relating to pupils' attainment and progress, leaders' evaluation of the school's performance and its areas for development.
- Inspectors looked at behaviour records, including records of bullying incidents.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding documentation and how this related to daily practice, as well as speaking with staff and pupils.

## Inspection team

Keith Pullen, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Joseph Figg	Ofsted Inspector
Lynn Lowery	Ofsted Inspector

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