

# Smallwood Primary School and Language Unit

Smallwood Road, Tooting, London SW17 0TW

## Inspection dates

9–10 May 2018

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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Outcomes are too low. Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is below national averages at the end of key stages 1 and 2.
- Governors are keen for the school to improve. However, they have not been effective in holding leaders to account. They have overseen a decline in the school's effectiveness.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities requires improvement. Leaders have not ensured that pupils' needs are identified quickly enough within the main school.
- Roles and responsibilities at all leadership levels are not clearly defined. As a result, it is not clear who should be held to account.
- The teaching of reading does not consistently meet the needs of different groups of pupils well enough, including the most able.
- Pupils' attendance is too low. Pupils who are regularly absent are at a disadvantage because little is done to support them to catch up.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has a clear vision and plans in place to move the school forward. She is building an effective senior leadership team.
- New systems for assessment have been implemented and understood by leaders. Teachers are beginning to use this information to plan for the needs of individual pupils.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders work effectively with external agencies to support pupils and their families.
- Pupils' work shows that they are making progress over time. This is particularly evident in aspects of mathematics and in pupils' development in writing.
- Early years is well led. Teachers have good subject knowledge and provide purposeful activities that engage the children. As a result, children in early years progress well.

## Full report

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

- Strengthen all aspects of leadership, including governance, by:
  - ensuring that leaders at all levels continue to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding to carry out their roles effectively
  - providing clarity about roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability, so that leaders, staff and governors understand precisely who is responsible for what
  - carefully monitoring the newly implemented systems to inform the school's own self-evaluation and future school improvement planning.
- Improve outcomes for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities by:
  - improving leadership of this provision in order to effectively assess pupils' needs
  - ensuring that this group of pupils have access to good-quality teaching consistently.
- Continue to develop strategies for improving progress in reading by:
  - providing frequent opportunities for pupils to read texts appropriate to their ability
  - setting clear expectations of how often pupils will read
  - ensuring that phonics is consistently well taught.
- Ensure that pupils are not disadvantaged by low attendance by:
  - improving attendance for all groups of pupils
  - reducing the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school
  - providing pupils with the opportunity to catch up when they have been absent.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- The headteacher and leadership team work successfully together. They are determined to improve the school and are beginning to provide clear direction. While their evaluation of the school is not accurate, they know what needs to be achieved in order to continue the journey of improvement. Senior leaders are realistic about the challenges that lie ahead.
- Leaders have recently started to track the progress of pupils, including that of groups, closely. They use the information generated to identify pupils for additional support. However, the actions taken by school leaders to raise the quality of teaching, and consequently pupils' outcomes, have not yet had the desired impact.
- The needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities within the main school are not always identified. As a result, additional support is not provided. Teachers are not consistently confident about how to meet the needs of this group, and plans for increased accountability are at the early stages. Action plans lack focus about when key actions will be achieved. The leadership of the language unit is strong. As a result, the needs of individual pupils are met.
- The pupil premium strategy does not clarify the barriers that disadvantaged pupils face and what actions leaders will put in place. However, this group of pupils do make progress in line with that of their peers. Leaders are beginning to track this group and analyse interventions to ensure that they are making a difference.
- The school uses the primary physical education and sport funding to provide swimming lessons for Year 1 pupils. Leaders do not monitor the impact of the funding and do not know whether it is making a difference to pupils' academic and physical development.
- Training and professional development for staff, at all stages of their career, are priorities for leaders. Staff speak highly of the training opportunities. Middle leaders spoke of their increased responsibility for using assessment data and monitoring groups.
- Leaders have secured improvements in pupils' behaviour by reviewing the effectiveness of the behaviour management policy and taking action accordingly. The new system is in the early stages. Some parents and carers, staff and pupils have expressed some concern over how consistently it is applied.
- The curriculum offers a breadth of opportunity for the pupils, supported by specialist teaching. During the inspection, pupils were engaged in a variety of subjects, including music, art and French. Learning in these areas is effective. The curriculum is supported by educational visits and after-school clubs. These include clubs, for example, for basketball, netball, computing and 'Smallwood's Got Talent'.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective in preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities of living in modern Britain. Pupils understand British values such as the concepts of tolerance and respect. They spoke about these confidently. They understand the importance of equality of opportunity and that there is much to learn about different cultures. A range of faiths are taught

and pupils talk confidently about different religions.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors have not effectively held senior leaders to account and the lines of responsibility have not been clear. Until recently, they have not accurately recognised the weaknesses in school.
- A recent audit of governance highlighted areas for improvement and governors recognise that change is necessary. With the support of a consultant, governors have identified key points for development. This includes a more strategic focus and distribution of responsibilities.
- Governors are becoming increasingly aware of the strengths of the school and the necessary areas for improvement. They demonstrate some understanding of the school's work. For example, they are aware that pupils' outcomes are inconsistent throughout the school.
- Governors have recently shared responsibility for the performance management of the headteacher. This aspect is also supported by an external adviser.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Systems for recording concerns, in particular referrals to external agencies, are robust. It is clear what actions are being taken when a child is at risk. Reports provided for meetings with external agencies are fit for purpose. Planning to support pupils who need intervention is clear. The designated safeguarding leads share a good understanding of the needs of the most vulnerable pupils and their families.
- Leaders and governors ensure that all necessary checks on staff are carried out. They also make sure that training is undertaken within the required intervals. They check that staff understand the key principles of what has been learned through regular meetings. Staff are aware of their roles in the identification of risk, for example with regard to the 'Prevent' duty and female genital mutilation.
- Pupils said that they know how to be safe, including on the internet. The majority of parents said that their children are safe in school.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

## **Requires improvement**

- Pupils do not consistently make good progress in reading. This is because at times they are not able to decode the words in the text. In addition, at times, staff expectations are too low and the most able pupils are not challenged.
- Some of the pupils who read with inspectors did not have their reading books with them. It is not clear what the expectation is for pupils to read regularly. Some pupils have phonics knowledge, but they do not consistently use it. Some pupils guess at the text, miss words out or add words. Misconceptions are not routinely identified or rectified.

- The approach taken to teaching phonics has been reviewed. The school's assessment information suggests that, as a result, the proportion of pupils likely to reach the expected standard in the Year 1 screening check will increase significantly this year.
- The level of challenge presented to some pupils does not allow them to achieve as well as they could. Teachers do not have an understanding of what constitutes learning at greater depth. At present, the emphasis across subjects is on pupils reaching the expected, rather than higher, standard.
- Shortly after her appointment, the headteacher identified the need to provide additional training for teaching assistants. As a result, all teaching assistants have developed improved support for pupils across the school.
- The school has successfully implemented a new assessment policy. The use of a new electronic tracking system is helping to assess and monitor achievement. This information is used to identify gaps in learning during pupil progress meetings. Actions are then taken to support those who need it.
- In some cases, teachers' secure subject knowledge supports learning for pupils. This was particularly evident in an art session. The teacher was skilful in getting pupils to relate to the vocabulary from an earlier English lesson. Pupils were developing a good level of descriptive language while discussing their art.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- All parents, pupils and staff who responded to their respective Ofsted questionnaires expressed the view that the school keeps pupils safe. However, some pupils felt that on occasion, pupils were bullied. They said that they have learned how to deal with bullying incidents. They are confident that teachers will help them.
- Pupils listen well during whole-school assembly sessions. Pupils and staff share ideas about the school's values. Pupils are confident to share their ideas and respect the views of others.
- Pupils and staff have positive working relationships in the language unit. As a result, pupils are confident that their needs will be met.
- Pupils are confident and polite, and show respect for each other. They like the purposefully zoned playground, which enables them to choose from a variety of activities at playtime. During these times, pupils will invite adults to play with them. It works effectively.
- Pupils also engage with each other well at the breakfast club. They are able to develop social skills in a safe environment.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.

- Parents, pupils and staff have expressed concerns about a lack of consistency in the approach to managing behaviour. Workbooks show times when learning has been missed due to poor behaviour.
- Pupils are generally positive about the school and enjoy attending. However, some pupils are disadvantaged by being absent from school. They are not supported to catch up on their return and this limits progress. Not enough is done to support the pupils and their families to improve attendance.
- In most classes, pupils behave well and there is little low-level disruption. Some pupils spoke confidently about how to build their own 'learning power' and how they used tools to support this. For example, a screwdriver reminded pupils to persevere. In some classes, pupils sit sensibly, but they are not keen to develop their own learning.
- Pupils move around school sensibly and the majority of pupils respond to teachers' instructions swiftly.
- Pupils spoke confidently of the support for their emotional well-being and whom they could talk to if they had a concern.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- In 2017, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was too low. This was evident for all pupils at the end of key stages 1 and 2, including disadvantaged pupils. Not all pupils are fully prepared for the next stage in their learning.
- Progress within the language unit is evident from very low starting points. However, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities within the main school do not achieve well and progress is limited.
- Pupils' progress is not consistent. In 2017, progress in reading was in line with national averages. However, progress in writing and mathematics was below national averages. The school's current data indicates improvements in progress, particularly in writing.
- In-school data shows that the progress of disadvantaged pupils is in line with that of their peers. However, this level of progress will not support them to catch up.
- Pupils who need intervention to meet the standard in the phonics screening check have been effectively supported. As a result, an increase in the proportion of pupils reaching the standard this year is predicted.
- Pupils' work, across a range of subjects, demonstrates positive progress. Strong progress is evident for pupils in writing, particularly for those who had low starting points.
- In some classes, high-quality texts are used to motivate and engage readers.
- Progression in skills related to number and problem solving is evident in mathematics. Challenge for some pupils in reasoning activities is appropriate to their needs.

### Early years provision

### Good

- Early years is well led. The early years lead has a clear vision. This is supported by

clarity about her role and an understanding of her responsibilities. She ensures that all staff understand the high expectations and the need for high-quality teaching.

- Teachers' strong subject knowledge leads to children achieving well. This is particularly evident in phonics, when staff model effective strategies to decode words. Staff are quick to identify and correct misconceptions.
- A rich and stimulating environment encourages children to work independently, improve concentration levels and develop social skills. Frequent opportunities are available for children to practise and reinforce phonics through mark-making activities.
- In guided reading, books are well matched to the children's skills and knowledge. Reading aloud is effective in developing their language skills.
- Children behave well. They respect the staff and are keen to please them. They respond positively to the well-established routines. Working relationships between children and staff are warm and positive.
- Staff work as a team and are deployed well to promote the welfare of children. They understand and adhere to the school's safeguarding procedures, and concerns are referred to the designated safeguarding lead in a timely manner.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the provision in early years. They appreciate the effective support to ensure a smooth transition into Nursery and from Nursery into school. They see the school as a happy place for their children 'to flourish'.
- In most cases, staff have high expectations of what children can achieve. As a result, children are effectively prepared for Year 1. When children need the intervention of external agencies, for example for speech therapy, this is swiftly provided.
- Work in children's books shows that they make good progress. This is supported by the school's data, which shows an upward trend. Leaders carefully monitor the progress of individuals and groups of children. This includes those who are in receipt of the pupil premium funding, who achieve in line with their peers.
- Children in the language unit are purposefully engaged in age-appropriate activities. They were keen to talk to inspectors and share their learning.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has been below national averages. However, the school's own current data suggests that outcomes will continue the upward trend, improving significantly this year.
- Despite strong progress made by the children generally, some who are capable of exceeding the expected standards are, at times, given limited opportunities to excel.

## School details

Unique reference number	101021
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	10047543

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	426
Appropriate authority	Board of governors
Chair	Mr Harry Cowd
Headteacher	Mrs Fiona Loudon
Telephone number	0208 672 6024
Website	<a href="http://www.smallwood.wandsworth.sch.uk">www.smallwood.wandsworth.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@smallwood.wandsworth.sch.uk">admin@smallwood.wandsworth.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	19 March 2014

## Information about this school

- The headteacher joined the school in January 2017.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about pupil premium or the primary physical education and sport funding on its website.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is above that found nationally. The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is slightly above that in schools nationally.
- Pupils are taught in single-year classes from Year 1 to Year 6. There are two classes in each year group. In early years, there are two Reception classes. There is a Nursery.



- The school runs a breakfast club and a range of after-school activities.
- The school has a 40-place language unit, which consists of four vertically grouped classes.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 45 lessons, some jointly with the headteacher and senior leaders. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and attitudes in classrooms, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes.
- Individual pupils and different groups of pupils spoke with inspectors to discuss their learning and views of the school. Inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed their reading with them. The inspectors also looked at a large sample of pupils' work across subjects and year groups.
- A range of documents was considered, including the school's improvement plan, self-evaluation documentation, information about pupils' progress and attendance, behaviour logs and safeguarding arrangements.
- Five representatives from the governing body met with inspectors. In addition, inspectors held meetings with school staff. Inspectors met with middle and senior leaders. They also met with the attendance lead and the lead for early years. The lead inspector met with two designated safeguarding leads.
- The inspectors took account of the views expressed in the 83 online responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and contributions from parents who contacted Ofsted directly. In addition, they gathered the views of several parents during informal meetings at the school.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 40 staff who responded to the inspection questionnaire. The 75 responses to the pupil questionnaire were analysed.

## Inspection team

Donna Chambers, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paula Farrow	Ofsted Inspector
Nasim Butt	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sarah Murphy-Dutton	Her Majesty's Inspector

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