

Sidemoor First School and Nursery

Perryfields Road, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B61 8QN

Inspection dates

11–12 June 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- There has not been sufficient improvement to secure an appropriate quality of education for the school's pupils. Leaders are not demonstrating the capacity needed to remove the school from special measures.
- Turbulent leadership and staffing have meant that there has been a lack of sustained improvement to the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils since the previous inspection.
- Leaders do not have a clear view about the strengths and weaknesses in teaching.
- Governors do not hold leaders to account for the school's performance effectively. The newly formed governing body does not interrogate leaders' work thoroughly.
- Leaders do not have an understanding of what they want pupils to learn. This means that it is difficult for leaders to evaluate what needs to improve to provide pupils with a better experience of school.
- Teaching does not enable pupils with different abilities, including those who are most able, to make sufficient progress.
- Teachers do not ensure that reading books are well matched to pupils' reading ability. Standards in reading are low.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' achievements are not accurate in all year groups.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not make the progress they are capable of in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children do not make strong progress through Reception.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are well cared for. They usually show positive attitudes towards their learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are taught well in extra classes.
- Children get off to a good start in Nursery.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is effective.
- Pupils are kept safe. They know what to do if they are concerned or anxious.
- Pupils conduct themselves well at all times of the school day.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment, including in the early years, by ensuring that teachers:
 - work with senior and middle leaders to develop accurate assessment of pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics
 - use this accurate assessment information to ensure that expectations of what pupils can achieve are raised and work is well matched to pupils' needs
 - assess pupils' reading skills rigorously and use that knowledge to ensure that all reading material is accurately matched to pupils' abilities
 - consistently implement the agreed school-wide strategies.
- Secure substantive senior leadership as soon as possible.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders clarify the rationale for the Sidemoor curriculum and subsequently design and implement a curriculum model with reading at its heart
 - leaders at all levels gather and analyse evidence about teaching and use this information to help to identify how each teacher can improve their practice
 - leaders and governors clarify what disadvantaged pupils with different abilities are capable of achieving and subsequently check that their progress is sufficient.
- Improve governance by ensuring that leaders are held to account effectively, notably for the learning of pupils with different abilities and needs.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders do not demonstrate the capacity to secure an acceptable standard of education for pupils at Sidemoor. Since the previous inspection, there has been a succession of different senior leaders at the school. Consequently, sustained effective leadership has not occurred.
- The two interim headteachers, appointed by the local authority from the start of the spring term, have not had sufficient time to evaluate the school's performance and make effective change. There is likely to be a new leadership structure in place from the start of the new academic year. Parents and carers are concerned about current and future leadership.
- Leaders at all levels have yet to establish the rationale for their curriculum. This means that it is difficult for them to evaluate if the curriculum is supporting pupils well in their learning. For example, it is not clear when pupils should be introduced to new skills and knowledge or when these will be revisited.
- Leaders have not ensured that disadvantaged pupils receive effective teaching. Consequently, they do not make sufficient progress. A spending plan has been designed and implemented. However, this has not been evaluated and so leaders are not clear about the impact of spending and if and when changes should be made.
- There are early signs that teaching is improving. Leaders with responsibility for writing and mathematics have supported teachers in starting to design sequences of lessons. This work is in its early stages and so it is difficult to determine the impact on pupils' learning over time.
- Leaders have supported teachers in helping them accurately record pupils' attainment. In Year 2, there is clear evidence that teachers are accurately recording how well pupils are securing skills and knowledge. In other year groups, accuracy of assessments remains inconsistent.
- Current senior leaders recognised the need to improve the way staff evaluated pupils' academic achievements. Despite some improvement in recent months, pupils with different abilities do not receive effective teaching in a range of different subjects because teachers are not tailoring work to the needs of pupils well enough.
- Subject leaders, who have worked in the school for several years, value the support of the local authority. They had begun to acquire the skills they need to enable them to lead their subjects effectively. This support has not been sustained as it has been interrupted by leadership turbulence. Consequently, subject leaders are unable to have the impact they should.
- The leadership of the provision for pupils with SEND is effective. The coordinator monitors the teaching of this group of pupils frequently and uses information gleaned to identify where further improvements can be made. As a result of effective small-group teaching, these pupils are making good progress this year.
- The provision for pupils' SMSC development is effective. Pupils appreciate different cultures and different ways of living. Their visits to places of worship help them to

understand the importance of living in a multicultural society.

- Leaders make good use of their primary school physical education and sport funding. Funding is used to employ sports coaches who ensure that pupils engage in regular physical activity. This includes the offer of a range of extra-curricular sporting activities. School staff also benefit from working with the coaches.
- Leaders should not appoint newly qualified teachers to the school.

Governance of the school

- Governance is not effective.
- The newly formed governing body began its work at the start of this calendar year. Governors have not had sufficient time to clarify their ambition for pupils and the Sidemoor community.
- Not all statutory duties are met. Governors do not do enough to hold leaders to account for the school's performance. For example, governors are yet to satisfy themselves that pupil premium funding is used effectively.
- The governing body does not use its schedule of meetings and work effectively. This is because there is not a coherent strategy to enable them to check school performance. This includes the extent to which teachers are enabling pupils to reach the standards they are capable of.
- Governors ensure that the school administers its safeguarding duties effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff supervising pupils throughout the school day ensure that there is a vigilant culture. They look out for any pupils who may be anxious or worried. If any concerns do arise, pupils are supported appropriately.
- Leadership ensures that staff are well trained. This means that staff know what signs to be aware of and how to respond should they become concerned.
- Despite leadership turbulence, staff and governors have ensured that pupils are kept safe at Sidemoor.
- Staff, pupils and parents express positive views about pupils being kept safe at Sidemoor.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent, both within and between year groups. This is because teachers do not implement agreed strategies provided by subject leaders. Consequently, as pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, move through the school, they do not secure key skills and knowledge that will enable them to tackle new learning effectively.
- Teachers do not make their expectations clear to pupils. In a writing lesson, for

example, pupils were not clear what they needed to include in their writing to make it successful. Typically, expectations are too low. This leads to pupils, including the most able, not producing work that reflects their capabilities.

- Teachers do not make effective use of assessment information. This means that pupils of different abilities are not challenged effectively in their learning. This is illustrated by adults asking questions of very able pupils which are too easy.
- Adults' questioning of pupils is often superficial. Teachers are not keen to seek out pupils' misconceptions and ask subsequent questions which tease out the reasons for this.
- Pupils do not secure effective reading skills, such as prediction and inference. This is because the teaching of reading is ineffective in year groups other than Year 2. Staff do not take the time to identify specific needs of individual pupils and subsequently teach accordingly. Some pupils are asked to read books which are not well matched to their reading ability.
- Owing to staff and leadership turbulence, a coherent approach to the setting of homework is not evident. It is not clear how homework is supporting pupils in acquiring and consolidating knowledge.
- Pupils receive positive feedback about their learning. This has led to improved behaviour in classrooms as pupils are keen to learn. However, pupils are capable of attaining much higher academic standards.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have used their phonics training to ensure that different groups of pupils are taught the skills for decoding words. As a result, phonics teaching is effective. This is an isolated example of training which has seen some sustained impact on teaching.
- Pupils with SEND are well taught during intervention activities. Here, teaching assistants support pupils well in overcoming their particular barriers to learning.
- In recent months, pupils' writing is demonstrating more accurate application of grammar and punctuation skills. This means that pupils are better able to convey their ideas through their writing. Expectations are still not high enough, however, as too many pupils are not writing to the standards expected in each year group.
- The teaching of mathematics is stronger in key stage 2 than in key stage 1. Older pupils have more frequent opportunities to practise their reasoning skills. This means that these pupils are better prepared in tackling unfamiliar mathematical problems.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils understand the importance of working and playing together well at school. As a result, pupils respect each other when learning in classrooms and at other times of the school day.
- Pupils show positive attitudes to their studies, including taking part in physical activity. This helps promote their physical well-being.

- Pupils know who to go to if they have any worries. Staff deal with such incidents appropriately in a timely manner. Such provision supports pupils' emotional well-being effectively.
- Pupils understand the importance of learning and playing safely when online. They are able to articulate potential dangers clearly and know what to do should they become concerned.
- Bullying incidents are rare. When they occur, staff ensure that they are resolved satisfactorily for all parties concerned. Consequently, repeated behaviour is not seen.
- All pupils, including those with SEND, are supported well in their transition into the next schools. This is thanks to Sidemoor staff working effectively with Year 5 colleagues in other schools. Pupils look forward to their new schools, remaining advocates of Sidemoor.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school at all times. Supervising staff expect pupils to demonstrate good behaviour. Pupils step up to these expectations well.
- When pupils are not supervised, they show good self-discipline in managing their own behaviour. This illustrates the effective work in improving behaviour since the time of the previous inspection.
- Disruption in lessons is rare. Occasionally, pupils become fidgety when teaching does not engage them well. On such occasions, the learning of other pupils is not disturbed.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are able to talk about improvements since the last inspection. For example, older pupils recognise how behaviour has improved.
- Parents express mixed views about how the school manages behaviour. Staff recognise that pupils' behaviour has improved over the past two years. There have been fewer significant behavioural incidents this year when compared with previous years.
- Pupils are punctual at the start of the school day and to lessons after breaktimes. They attend well.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Despite small improvements this year, pupils are not making the progress needed in order for them to reach the standards expected for their age.
- Leaders are not confident in analysing progress as teachers' assessments in all year groups, bar Year 2, are not accurate. In Year 2, school leaders and local authority advisers have worked with staff to ensure that there is secure evidence for the assessments made. This year, pupils in Year 2 are unlikely to attain standards close to national expectations.
- Pupils' work shows that they are not demonstrating age-related skills in writing and mathematics. This year, more pupils are securing key skills than was the case previously. However too many gaps in pupils' knowledge, resulting from weak teaching

over time, remain.

- Disadvantaged pupils with different abilities are not making the gains required in order for them to reach the standards they are capable of. In reading, for example, over the past few years, too few pupils have attained the expected standards at the end of Year 2.
- The most able pupils are clearly capable of working at higher standards. However, too few are currently demonstrating such proficiency. This is because teachers do not expect these pupils to frequently produce work at a high standard.
- Owing to weak teaching since the previous inspection, too many pupils need to catch up in their learning in reading, writing and mathematics. There are signs that some pupils are beginning to make faster progress. However, the pace of improvement is not quick enough.
- Pupils do not make strong progress in reading. Improved phonics teaching has led to pupils acquiring secure phonics skills. However, pupils are yet to apply these decoding skills well in their day-to-day reading, which prevents them from reading fluently. As a result, reading attainment remains weak.
- Last year, an improved proportion of pupils achieved the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check when compared with the national average. This year, children in the early years and in key stage 1 are continuing to secure word decoding skills.
- At the end of Year 4, pupils are not well prepared academically for their move into their next schools. This is because they have not secured key skills required in order for them to access the full range of subjects taught in Year 5.
- Pupils with SEND are making good progress this year in most year groups. However, too few are yet to reach the attainment expected for their age as there is too much ground to for them make up.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- There is better provision in the early years when compared with key stages 1 and 2.
- When children first arrive in Nursery, they begin to make strong progress. This continues through the Nursery Year. As a result, they are well prepared for their transition into Reception.
- Teaching in Reception is not consistently strong. Adults do not spend enough time on teaching skills that matter most. For example, children who require the most support in their reading are not listened to frequently.
- Children behave well. They listen carefully to adults and follow instructions appropriately. This, coupled with well-presented indoor and outdoor environments where children know where to find different resources, enables children to learn and play confidently.
- The lack of current early years leadership, together with staffing changes in Reception, has weakened the capacity to drive sustained improvement. It is not clear if current assessment of children's progress, including those who are disadvantaged, is thorough

enough to be sufficiently accurate. Moderation activities with current senior leaders are supporting staff in making their judgements.

- Last year, a similar proportion of children attained an overall good level of development when compared with the national average. Overall, looking at children's work through the course of this year, children make better progress through the early years than in other year groups. Most children are ready for their learning in Year 1.
- Safeguarding is effective in the early years. Children learn and play safely in both the indoor and outdoor environments. Relationships between adults and children are strong. A site inspection is carried out every day, with any identified issues acted on quickly.
- Parents are welcomed into the school to see how teaching helps children secure important skills and knowledge. Parents are encouraged to join in with some lessons, which helps them gain a sense of what it is like for their child to learn through play in the early years.
- When staff become aware of a child who is struggling in their learning, they are quick to seek guidance to see if the child requires more specific teaching. If this is the case, then external agencies, including speech and language therapists, will suggest the changes that need to be made.

School details

Unique reference number	116664
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10088443

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

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	336
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sara Baber
Headteacher	Sarah Perrett and Justin Stokes (interim headteachers)
Telephone number	01527 872 271
Website	www.sidemoorfirst.co.uk
Email address	office@sidemoor.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 May 2017

Information about this school

- Sidemoor is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is below average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is well above average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is similar to the national average.
- The early years is made up of a part-time Nursery provision and two Reception classes. There are two classes for each year group in Years 1 to 4.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of leadership and staffing changes. Currently, there are two interim headteachers in post. These appointments were made by the local authority.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in every year group. They visited 15 lessons, three of which were observed jointly with the interim headteachers.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, the chair of the governing body and other governors, and representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors met frequently with the interim headteachers. They also met with a range of other school leaders.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their reading. They listened to pupils of different abilities read.
- Inspectors examined work in pupils' books from a range of subjects.
- The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation written to support school improvement. This included minutes of governors' meetings and information about pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors took account of 73 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. They spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's website.

Inspection team

Jeremy Bird, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Dawn White	Ofsted Inspector
Anna Smith	Ofsted Inspector

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