

Southfield Primary School

Banbury Road, Brackley, Northamptonshire NN13 6AU

Inspection dates

10–11 July 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and governors have not recognised or addressed the school's significant weaknesses. They do not have an accurate view of the school's overall effectiveness.
- Leaders have not ensured that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Not all pupils understand tolerance and equality.
- Staff do not have the skills to manage incidents of poor behaviour. Too often, pupils' attitudes to learning are not positive.
- School improvement planning is not sharp enough, nor its implementation monitored well enough, to raise standards.
- Senior leaders do not support middle leaders to enable them to raise standards in their subject or area.
- Teachers plan to teach all subjects in the national curriculum. However, weak teaching means that pupils make poor progress. Since 2016, less than half of all pupils have achieved the combined standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is not strong. Their expectations of what pupils should be able to achieve are too low. Assessment information is not accurate.
- Teachers do not develop pupils' reading and writing skills effectively. In mathematics, they do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to problem-solve and reason.
- Teachers do not have the skills to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or disadvantaged pupils effectively. These pupils make particularly weak progress.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' presentation and handwriting are too low.
- Early years staff do not have the knowledge or skills to enable children to make the progress they should. Their expectations of what children should achieve are too low.
- Safeguarding is effective. However, the school's records for safer recruitment and safeguarding are not accurately kept.

The school has the following strengths

- Attendance has improved. There are now very few pupils who are disadvantaged by persistent absence.
- Teaching in art is a strength. Pupils' high-quality artwork is celebrated around the school.

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 leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders' plans for school improvement focus on the school's weaknesses
 - senior leaders and governors monitor carefully school improvement strategies to ensure that they are well embedded across the school
 - leaders and governors use the additional funding for pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils effectively to raise standards for these pupils
 - senior leaders support middle leaders to enable them to bring about improvements to their subject
 - senior leaders and governors regularly check pupils' safeguarding records and staff safer recruitment records, making sure that they are accurate and up to date
 - senior leaders take responsibility for providing a curriculum that prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain and promotes equality and tolerance.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers use accurate assessment information to plan carefully pupils' next steps in learning
 - teachers have high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve
 - teachers undertake the professional development necessary to improve their subject knowledge and to raise their understanding of what pupils of different ages should learn
 - teachers and teaching assistants have the knowledge and skills to support pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils effectively
 - teachers develop pupils' grammar and punctuation in their writing
 - teachers promote and develop pupils' love of reading
 - teachers provide pupils with opportunities to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics
 - teachers have high expectations of pupils' presentation and handwriting, particularly for boys.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by ensuring that all staff:
 - have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and manage poor behaviour and bullying effectively, including in the early years
 - promote positive attitudes to learning

- promote equality and tolerance in all aspects of the school’s work.
- Improve the early years by ensuring that:
 - teachers have high expectations of what children should be able to achieve
 - adults have secure subject expertise to develop children’s knowledge and skills effectively.

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 spending 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

- Since the last inspection, leaders have not acted with enough urgency to address the school's weaknesses. They have not recognised the decline in pupils' behaviour or the poor standard of education pupils receive, including in the early years.
- Leaders' expectations are too low. They do not take responsibility for the weak progress pupils make. Too many pupils leave the school having not made the progress that they should.
- Leaders' evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the school is inaccurate. They have an overly optimistic view of the how well the school is performing. Leaders have been too inward-looking and have not ensured that staff have a realistic view of what effective teaching and good behaviour look like.
- The school's plans for improvement do not address the school's significant weaknesses.
- Leaders carry out monitoring activities. However, as their view of the school is not accurate, their precision in providing feedback to staff is poor. Teachers do not know what they need to do to improve their teaching and, in some instances, are not aware that improvement is necessary.
- Professional development is infrequent and not strategically planned. When staff training does happen, it is not shared effectively with other staff. Actions for improvements are implemented too slowly and with little rigour.
- Leaders have not ensured that the school's assessment information is accurate. Teachers' assessments are often overgenerous and do not reflect how well pupils are achieving. Leaders have not provided staff with sufficient training to enable them to assess pupils' knowledge accurately.
- Subject leaders have not been provided with enough time or support to implement and establish school improvement strategies.
- Leaders have been too slow to recognise the weaknesses in English. Improvements in this area have been weak and not delivered with enough urgency or impact.
- There have been recent improvements to the teaching of mathematics. However, leaders have not ensured that these changes have been implemented with enough rigour or urgency to ensure that all pupils make strong progress. The approach is not being used consistently across the school to provide appropriate challenge for the most and least able pupils.
- Leaders have not checked the impact of the pupil premium funding on raising standards for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have continued with strategies aimed at raising attainment, despite there being little evidence to show impact on the progress these pupils make.
- The leader for pupils with SEND has a good understanding of the support that pupils should receive. However, leaders have not ensured that staff have the required skills to provide pupils with appropriate support. The training provided for staff is not frequent enough, nor its implementation checked carefully enough, to ensure that these pupils

get the help and support they need to make progress.

- The school's curriculum includes the subjects in the national curriculum. However, the quality of teaching in the wider curriculum is weak, and coverage in some subjects, such as geography, is minimal.
- Leaders have not promoted equality and tolerance. Some pupils express views that are at odds with British values. Some pupils and adults reinforce gender stereotypes.
- Leaders develop some aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education well. Pupils are involved in promoting recycling around the school. They learn about different religions and visit different places of worship. They carry out fundraising for national events. However, as pupils have a lack of understanding of equality and tolerance, their moral and social development is weak.
- Leaders know how they have spent the physical education (PE) and sport premium. This includes purchasing outdoor gym equipment and support from a school sport coordinator. However, leaders do not know if funding has increased pupils' involvement in exercise. There is currently no leader for PE and sport.

Governance of the school

- Governors' understanding of the weaknesses of the school is not precise enough. While governors review the school's plans for improvement, they have not checked carefully that actions have been implemented or are raising attainment for pupils. They have been too accepting of the information that senior leaders have provided for them.
- Governors do not know how the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND has helped to support these pupils. They are not aware that these pupils frequently do not make enough progress. They have not checked why actions to support disadvantaged pupils are repeated, despite there being no evidence to show that these are making a difference.
- Recent changes to the governing body have meant that the capacity for improvement has declined. The governing body does not understand the actions required to drive improvements.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that staff have a good understanding of how to pass on concerns about pupils. Staff receive a wide range of training in national and local issues, and staff are aware of the risks that pupils may face.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the needs of families and provide support when appropriate. When cases meet the local authority threshold for involvement, leaders refer cases quickly.
- While staff at all levels use the school's online system to record concerns they have about a pupil's welfare, sometimes, leaders have not carefully recorded the actions they have taken following referrals or incidents. Some pupils' records are incomplete.
- Leaders ensure that all safer recruitment procedures are completed. However, they

have not checked that pre-employment checks are recorded consistently and accurately.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Teachers do not have the skills to plan learning which meets the needs of all pupils. Teachers set tasks which do not consistently match the intended learning. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment are not accurate. Teachers do not have the knowledge or skills to provide effective support to pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. The skills of some staff who provide support for these pupils are weak.
- Teachers do not have an accurate understanding of what pupils should be achieving at different stages of their schooling. Their expectations are too low. As the school's assessment information is not accurate, the work provided for pupils does not challenge them enough or help them to make sufficient progress.
- Teachers do not check carefully what pupils know. They do not check whether pupils have acquired or remembered the intended learning in a lesson.
- There is little expectation that pupils will use their grammar and punctuation knowledge when they are writing. Pupils' writing skills do not develop effectively over time and pupils do not make the progress in writing that they are capable of.
- Pupils are able to talk eloquently about the books they have read. However, the tasks set by teachers during reading lessons do not develop pupils' reading skills quickly enough, and teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve are too low. Teachers do not encourage pupils to read widely and often. There is not a strong culture of promoting reading.
- The teaching of phonics and early reading is effective for most pupils. However, improving the attainment and progress of the least able pupils is not a priority. The adults who teach these pupils do not have the skills to enable them to catch up quickly.
- The recent introduction of a new approach to the teaching of mathematics has ensured that teachers have a better understanding of what pupils need to learn. However, teachers are not using assessment information to provide appropriate challenge for the most and least able pupils. Opportunities for developing problem-solving and reasoning skills are inconsistent.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' presentation and handwriting are not consistent. The expectation of boys' presentation is noticeably lower than that of girls. The quality of pupils' work varies dramatically.
- The development of pupils' knowledge and skills in art is a strength. Specialist teaching provides pupils with a range of opportunities to practise using different media, such as collage, batik and clay. Pupils' work is displayed and celebrated throughout the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Too many pupils do not show positive attitudes to learning. When tasks do not match the learning or the expectation that adults have of pupils' behaviour is not high enough, pupils are easily distracted. Some pupils avoid answering questions and are not noticed by teachers. Teachers do not routinely challenge pupils about poor attitudes to work and too readily accept pupils' off-task behaviour.
- Staff do not promote equality. Leaders have not ensured that pupils are not indirectly discriminated against due to their gender. Pupils have a perception that boys behave less well than girls. Staff do not rigorously refute this gender stereotype and, in some instances, they reinforce it.
- Some pupils use homophobic and racist language. Leaders are unaware of these incidents. They are not reported, recorded or followed up by staff.
- Pupils report that bullying occurs often. They do not have confidence that staff will deal with incidents appropriately.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in certain situations. For example, they learn about keeping safe near water and on the roads, and how to stay safe online.
- Pupils know what healthy lifestyles are. They can explain why regular exercise and eating healthy foods are important. Nurture provision is provided for some pupils who require additional support to help them with their social and emotional needs. Pupils speak highly of the nurture support they receive. The leader for pupils with SEND is available for pupils to talk to when they have a concern.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Leaders have not ensured that the school's behaviour policy is applied consistently by all staff across the school. Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are not high enough and they make excuses for pupils' poor behaviour.
- In lessons, low-level poor behaviour is often unchecked, and teachers do not expect pupils to get back to the task in hand.
- Pupils are not always polite and courteous. Inspectors observed pupils being disrespectful and unkind to each other and to adults.
- Pupils do not always show self-control. Inspectors observed pupils jumping over tables, throwing resources and not following instructions.
- Some pupils' behaviour is poor and this is not challenged by staff. Leaders have not ensured that staff have the skills to help pupils to moderate their behaviour.
- Leaders carefully check the attendance of pupils. The school's rates of attendance are consistently above the national averages. The number of pupils who are disadvantaged by persistent absence has reduced significantly since the last inspection.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected combined standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 has been below the national average since 2016. In this time, less than half of all pupils have left the school at the end of Year 6 well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Typically, boys make weaker progress than girls in reading and writing. The proportions of boys achieving the expected standard in reading and writing by the end of key stage 2 were significantly lower than for girls in 2018.
- Pupils make particularly poor progress in mathematics. Since 2016 in key stage 2, pupils have consistently made much weaker progress than pupils nationally.
- While pupils have made stronger progress in reading than in mathematics, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard by the end of key stage 2 fell in 2018 to below the national average.
- By the end of key stage 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in writing was above the national average until 2018, where it fell to be similar to the national average. However, pupils' attainment in writing is sometimes not matched by their attainment in grammar, punctuation and spelling, which is often lower than in writing.
- Disadvantaged pupils make particularly weak progress. Since 2016, only a fifth of disadvantaged pupils have achieved the expected combined standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2.
- Pupils with SEND are not well supported. They do not make the progress they are capable of.
- At key stage 1, pupils' attainment is similar to the national average. The proportions of pupils achieving a greater depth of understanding were well above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics in 2018. However, when compared with attainment at the end of the early years, some pupils have not made as much progress as they should.
- Pupils' workbooks show that tasks set are not always well matched to pupils' next steps in learning. The school's assessment information is inaccurate and does not give a clear indication of pupils' attainment. The expectations of what pupils should achieve are too low. Pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable.
- In the wider curriculum, teachers' expectations of pupils are too low. Pupils' workbooks show that the development of pupils' knowledge in subjects such as religious education, history and geography is poor. The progress they make by the end of Year 6 is weak.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has consistently been in line with the national average. However, as the support provided for the least able pupils is poor, ambition for their attainment is low and they are unable to achieve as well as they might.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- Leaders' evaluation of the quality of education in the early years is inaccurate. They have not ensured that staff have the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of children. Staff do not have a secure understanding of the foundation stage curriculum.
- Most children join the early years with the skills typical for their age, and many with skills which exceed this. By the end of the early years, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is similar to the national average. Teachers' expectations of what children should achieve are too low, and many children do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- The quality of teaching and learning in the early years is poor. Teachers do not provide children with tasks that enable them to develop their knowledge. Children identified as the most able are not challenged enough to make strong progress.
- Teachers often plan activities which have limited outcomes and lack purpose. Adults do not know what the intended purpose of some activities is. Adults do not know how to develop children's understanding in different aspects of the curriculum.
- Adults do not have high enough expectations of children's behaviour. Behaviour is not always appropriate for the setting or task, yet adults do not routinely rein children in or explain what the desirable behaviour should be.
- Children new to the early years attend transition visits between the school's Nursery and Reception, and from external nurseries. Parents and carers attend induction meetings at the beginning of the year. They contribute to children's learning by sharing moments outside of school, using the school's online system. Parents feel their children settle well and they are kept informed about how well their children are doing.
- The children with SEND and disadvantaged children are identified by the class teacher. However, staff do not always have the skills to meet the needs of these children. The school's own speech and language therapist works effectively with children in the early years to support children who need development in this area.
- The requirements for welfare standards and safeguarding are met.

School details

Unique reference number	139030
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10087376

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	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lee Marland
Headteacher	Jane Cartlidge
Telephone number	01280 709 792
Website	www.southfieldprimary.co.uk
Email address	head@southfield-pri.northants-ecl.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 March 2017

Information about this school

- The school is a stand-alone converter academy. The governing body is the appropriate authority.
- The proportion of pupils with a first language not believed to be English is well below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in a number of lessons, sometimes in conjunction with the headteacher. Inspectors observed the teaching of early reading skills and listened to pupils read. Inspectors also talked with pupils about their school and looked at examples of pupils' work to gain a view of the impact of teaching over time.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, leader for pupils with SEND, subject leaders, teachers and teaching assistants. Inspectors also spoke with the chair of the governing body and one governor.
- Inspectors spoke with parents informally and considered the 54 responses to the online parent questionnaire, Parent View, and the 25 responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including: the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement; the most recent information on the achievement and progress of pupils; information relating to the safety and safeguarding of pupils; and the most recent data relating to the attendance of pupils. The lead inspector considered the range and quality of information provided on the school's website.

Inspection team

Helen Williams, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Emma Hollis-Brown	Ofsted Inspector
Moira Dales	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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