

Inspection of Somersham Primary School

Church Lane, Lower Somersham, Ipswich, Suffolk IP8 4PN

Inspection dates: 15–16 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love to learn in this happy school. Learning time is rarely disrupted by poor behaviour because pupils enjoy their lessons. The school's values are well known to the pupils. Pupils demonstrate perseverance within their learning, and they are polite and respectful. The emphasis on 'live, learn and laugh' is evident throughout the school.

Pupils are very positive about the school and their teachers. Teachers are passionate about what they teach and inspire pupils to learn. They plan exciting activities, trips and visits linked to the topic work. Pupils talk about what they have learned with enthusiasm and interest.

Pupils behave well in class and at breaktimes. Older pupils enjoy helping and spending time with younger children. They read with them and help them to use the play equipment. Parents value the nurture provided by staff. They are happy with recent improvements. Most say that behaviour is good. A very small number of parents shared concerns about bullying. Pupils told us that they feel safe. Bullying is rare but is dealt with well by teachers if it happens. Pupils are confident that adults will deal with their concerns if they are worried.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leadership, including governance, has been significantly strengthened since the arrival of the executive headteacher. With experienced and committed staff, she is ensuring pupils develop into confident, happy and independent learners. Staff value that their own well-being is considered, and that leaders match skills and experiences to job roles so that staff have the biggest impact on pupils' achievement.

The 'curriculum drivers' support pupils' personal development and experiences well. Pupils attend a variety of lunchtime clubs and after school clubs. Visitors, such as authors, are invited into school, and trips enhance pupils' learning. Nurture provision is strong, and pupils talk warmly about the specific care and support they receive.

The teaching and learning of cultural diversity are planned well. Pupils know that 'people are different but equal', and they say that they would welcome any pupil into the school. Most are aware of different religions and cultures but do not know enough detail.

Improvements in reading are helping pupils to achieve well. Phonics is taught effectively. Pupils, including those who find reading difficult, use the skills to help them to read difficult words. Throughout the school, pupils talk knowledgeably about their favourite authors and stories. They gain a good understanding of how books are written, in order to engage readers.

Pupils become confident writers from Reception. They routinely apply their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills well. Teachers show pupils how to use 'powerful vocabulary', and they expect them to use the words in their own work. However, this is not yet securely built into curriculum plans, and it is not taught consistently enough across the school.

Pupils' mathematical understanding has improved. Pupils build on their skills and are becoming more confident at tackling problem-solving tasks. Small group work is helping pupils catch up.

In mathematics, pupils present their work well and record it accurately. However, not all teachers have high enough expectations of the presentation of pupils' work across subjects. Some workbooks are scruffy and handwriting untidy.

In subjects such as physical education and history, lessons are appropriately planned to build on pupils' skills. In history, pupils are able to discuss how to use different sources and know the significance of fact and opinion. Pupils can confidently order important events, for example from the Stone Age to Anglo Saxons, and events relating to the 'The Space Race'. The new curriculum plans are being implemented well, so that pupils build on skills that are logically sequenced. However, knowledge is not always understood deeply enough. In addition, pupils cannot talk well enough about how past events have impacted on the current day.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Training for staff is well targeted. Skilled adults provide good support for the pupils. Teachers plan activities that ensure the pupils achieve well. Pupils with complex needs are sociable, confident and work happily in class.

Children in Reception work alongside those in key stage 1 and move from formal to 'free-flow' activities seamlessly. This has improved transition to key stage 1 and has developed confident learners. Teachers have high expectations of what the children can do. Children have exciting activities to choose from. They engage with purpose, interest and awe. We observed children using hammers and nails confidently to attach leaves onto a beanstalk. Children in Reception are prepared well for Year 1.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders give the well-being of pupils high priority. They ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children. Training ensures that all staff understand potential risks to pupils from radicalisation and 'county lines'.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when working online. The family support worker and leader of SEND ensure pupils' needs are identified early and that the most vulnerable pupils receive timely support so that they can achieve as well as

they can. Records of behaviour are well documented and followed up by leaders appropriately.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some aspects of the writing curriculum are not yet fully embedded. Leaders need to plan precisely the vocabulary they want pupils to learn so that they can extend and deepen their understanding of language across all subjects over time.
- Not all teachers have high enough expectations for how pupils present their work. Some work is not presented well enough. Teachers need to ensure that pupils take pride in their work, particularly their writing, so that it is neatly presented across all curriculum subjects.
- Leaders' plans for subjects such as history do not always deepen pupils' knowledge well enough. Curriculum plans need to link across year groups and subjects better so that pupils gain knowledge at a deeper level to enable them to make better sense of the world around them.
- Pupils do not have a full enough understanding of cultural diversity. Leaders need to make sure that curriculum plans help pupils know more about, and can talk confidently about, the different cultures that make up modern Britain.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	124609
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10121359
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	94
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Barbara Newson
Executive Headteacher	Emma Burgess
Website	www.bramsomfederation.net
Date of previous inspection	19–20 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Information about this school

- The school is federated with another local school, Bramford Primary School. The executive headteacher and governing body are shared across both schools.
- Most pupils come from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- During the inspection, we met with the executive headteacher, head of school, the special educational needs coordinator, the family support worker and teachers from all year groups. Inspectors also spoke to several groups of pupils to talk about their learning across the curriculum. The lead inspector met with three members of the local governing body, including the vice-chair of governors. She also met with a representative from the local authority.

- We did deep dives in the following subjects: reading, writing, mathematics, history and physical education. With the exception of history, we spoke to leaders of these subjects. We visited lessons, spoke with pupils and teachers, listened to pupils read and looked at pupils' work and documentation to understand the quality of education.
- We looked at the school's systems and processes for checking adults' suitability to work with children. Inspectors spoke with teachers, pupils, mid-day supervisors and parents to check safeguarding arrangements.
- We considered the 22 parent responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 20 responses to Ofsted's free-text survey. The lead inspector spoke with staff and pupils to gain their view of the school. She also spoke with parents on the playground at the beginning of the day.

Inspection team

Cindy Impey, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sally Nutman

Ofsted Inspector

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