

Inspection of Sandbrook Primary School

Stavordale Road, Moreton, Wirral, Merseyside CH46 9PS

Inspection dates: 14–15 January 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to Sandbrook. They feel safe here.

Pupils are sensitive and respectful towards others in and outside school. They behave well, although some lose concentration in lessons. Attendance is improving but is not as good as it should be. There is some bullying in the school, but pupils say this is dealt with quickly and effectively.

Pupils enjoy taking part in visits to art galleries and musical concerts. They regularly work on a range of interesting projects with experts who visit the school. They also enjoy the sporting activities available to them and make full use of the school's extensive grounds.

The headteacher has high ambitions for the pupils. She has been unwavering in her resolve to bring about improvement. The current staff work very effectively together. Although there are few of them, they have a wide range of skills and experiences. They have pooled these together to review and improve what is on offer in the school.

Standards in the early years and key stage 1 have been in line with or better than national averages over time. At key stage 2, pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics remains below that of other pupils nationally.

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

Under the determined leadership of the headteacher, staff work very closely together. They have reorganised the curriculum to ensure that all subjects are taught in a logical way. This is leading to clear improvements. However, frequent changes of staff mean that the curriculum has not been taught consistently well. This has led to gaps in pupils' knowledge. Governors are very loyal and supportive of the school. However, they have not always challenged leaders in respect of the school's performance.

The teaching of reading is central to the school's work. As soon as they start school, children learn to identify letters and sounds. They quickly move on to reading words and sentences in books that are carefully matched to their developing knowledge. Historically, most pupils met the expected standard in the phonics screening check by the end of Year 1. Those who fall behind have extra help to catch up. Reading standards are rising across the school. In key stage 2, the number of pupils who meet the expected standard in reading has increased steadily over the last three years. This is now slightly above the national average. Teachers read regularly to pupils and introduce them to a wide range of different types of books. More pupils are now reading regularly at home.

There have been improvements in the range of vocabulary and styles of writing that pupils use. However, the presentation and handwriting in books are not as good as they should be.

The move to a new curriculum and additional staff training mean that in mathematics current pupils are learning and remembering more. This is because pupils' learning builds on what they already know.

Recent changes to the curriculum mean that pupils study the full range of subjects of the national curriculum. They have frequent opportunities to revisit what they have already learned. Pupils' work seen in art, geography and science shows that they are now learning more and remembering more across the curriculum. However, there are gaps in pupils' knowledge. They have difficulty in recalling what they have learned in previous years. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well and take part in the full curriculum.

Pupils behave well in and around the school. In lessons, most work enthusiastically. However, at times, some lose concentration. Leaders are working hard to improve pupils' attendance. This has been frustrated by pupil illness and holidays taken in term time.

Pupils' personal development is a strong feature of the school. Pupils learn to manage their emotions and to be sensitive to others. They contribute to the local and wider community through charitable work. They are also conscious of their role in protecting the planet. They learn to respect faiths, cultures and lifestyles that are different from their own.

Early years provision is well led. Many of the children start early years with considerable barriers to their learning, especially in language and communication. Staff have devised a well-thought-through curriculum which helps children to learn effectively. The children settle in quickly to daily routines and work with enjoyment and concentration. They soon get to grips with the early stages of learning to read, write and count. By the end of their time in the early years, most of them attain a good level of development. This prepares them well for the next stage of their learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe in school and on the way to and from school. They learn how to keep safe near roads, railways and water, and when using the internet and social media. The school checks carefully on the suitability of adults to work with pupils. All staff are trained to identify possible signs of abuse. They know exactly what to do if they are concerned about any pupil's welfare. The school works effectively with a range of services to support pupils and families who need extra help. The school site is secure and entry to the building is carefully controlled.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The governors are fiercely supportive of the school. However, they do not always have a sufficiently clear view of its strengths and weaknesses. There is a need to provide governors with the training and skills that will enable them to take a strategic overview of the school and to hold leaders more effectively to account for the quality of education that pupils receive.
- Frequent absences on the part of groups of pupils, including those with SEND, mean that pupils have gaps in their learning. There is a need to work further with parents and carers to ensure that attendance for all pupils improves to be consistently in line with the national average.
- The improvements to subjects other than English and mathematics are recent. They are not yet having a consistent impact on pupils' learning. There is now a need to consolidate the changes to ensure that all pupils learn more and remember more in every area of the curriculum.
- Pupils' attainment and progress in writing and mathematics in key stage 2 have been inconsistent, mainly due to instability in staffing. As a result, eleven-year-olds have not been adequately prepared for secondary school. The staffing situation at the school is now more settled. The changes in approach to writing and mathematics are making a difference. There is a need to build on these improvements to the curriculum to ensure that, at key stage 2, pupils' attainment and progress in these subjects improve.

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	105003
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10121957
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	99
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Vida Wilson
Headteacher	Claire Temple
Website	sandbrookprimary.eschools.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 October 2017

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the number of pupils has reduced from 142 to 99.

Information about this inspection

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

- During this inspection, we met with the headteacher and other senior leaders.
- We held meetings with teachers, support staff and subject leaders.
- We held a meeting with four governors, including the chair and vice chair of the governing body. We also spoke to representatives of the local authority.
- We spoke to pupils about behaviour and expectations in the school and observed behaviour around the school and in lessons.
- We considered the 12 responses to Parent View, the seven responses to the staff survey and the six responses to the pupil survey. We also spoke to parents as they brought children to school.
- We examined records in relation to safeguarding and met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss how pupils are kept safe in the school.

- As part of this inspection, we considered carefully how phonics and early reading are taught at the school. We also considered how the curriculum is planned in mathematics, geography, science, art and writing. During these activities we met with subject leaders and visited samples of lessons. We spoke to the teachers about the lessons they had taught and to the pupils about their learning. We also examined examples of pupils' books and listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

Aelwyn Pugh, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

John Shutt

Ofsted Inspector

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