

Inspection of Sefton Park Infant School

Ashley Down Road, Ashley Down, Bristol BS7 9BJ

Inspection dates: 11–12 February 2020

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

The previous 'outstanding' judgement reflected the school's overall effectiveness in November 2008 under the relevant inspection framework at that time.

The new judgement of 'good' reflects the current inspection framework as well as any changes at the school since the last inspection.

The school has not been inspected for 12 years, which is longer than the five-year maximum interval between inspections. Changes in school effectiveness may have happened at any point in that period. The long time between inspections is because the law changed in 2011; it made outstanding schools exempt from routine inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children who attend Sefton Park Infants receive an education that enables them to become curious, confident and successful young learners. Experienced leaders have stood firm over the years in their belief that every child can shine when learning is interesting and relevant. Leaders create a strong, united workforce. They recruit like-minded staff who plan exciting and compelling learning experiences. They help children to develop a real love of learning.

Staff spot, nurture and develop pupils' talents. Beautiful artwork created by pupils is celebrated all around the school. Adults listen to children. They take notice of their ideas. Staff show high levels of trust and confidence in pupils to behave well and to help one another. This works very well. Many children learn to think for themselves. They learn to manage risks and to manage their own behaviour. There are few incidences of poor behaviour or bullying. There have been no exclusions for several years.

Staff in the early years classes have a deep understanding of how to plan learning that match children's needs and interests. Unique and innovative resources spark interest. Children cannot wait to explore their environments. They become absorbed in learning. Children in the early years, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve exceptionally well.

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

Children have an excellent start to their learning in the early years classes. Three-year-olds play happily and comfortably alongside their Reception-age peers. Staff have a solid understanding of the early years curriculum. They use this to create exciting learning environments in which children thrive. We saw children learning about sounds as they sang funny songs. We saw them learning about reading by playing with words using the 'ed-ending' box. We also discussed with children their understanding about the world around them, as they observed and talked about real eggs.

Positive learning experiences continue in Year 1 and Year 2. During assemblies, children learn about values such as respect and tolerance. Topics include 'essential questions'. These help children to think about important moral issues such as how we should care for and protect nature. Children are thoughtful, caring and polite.

The art curriculum is well thought out. Children observe and draw objects. They paint in bright colours on large canvas. Around the school there are pieces of art work created by children. Techniques such as mark-making are revisited so that by the time they leave, children have well-developed skills.

Some other subjects are not quite as well thought through. Improving the curriculum in key stage 1 has been a key priority for leaders and governors this year. Staff have a strong understanding of the knowledge that children need. But in some

subjects, the different parts of the curriculum have not been logically planned out across Year 1 and 2.

When this is the case, the details needed to make sure that children have the knowledge they should are sometimes missed. In history, for example, children learn only about the Victorians. This means that children do not learn as much as they should about what is the same and what is different about ways of life at different times in history. After a reorganisation of leadership roles in recent months, leaders are now developing these plans.

Teachers make sure that children gain the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. They are quick to notice anyone who starts to fall behind. For example, resources to support understanding of different sounds help children to catch up. Interesting reading areas encourage children to read. These areas bring stories such as 'The Three Bears' to life. Teachers know and understand the needs of children in their care. They plan activities that help children with SEND to meet their individual targets for improvement. Children, including those with SEND, achieve well.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a solid grasp of the school's strengths and the next steps needed to improve it even further. This strength in leadership contributes to the success of the school. For example, leaders have, quite rightly, been working to improve attendance. This is because for some time, attendance has been below that of other similar schools. Because of this focus, school attendance looks more positive this year. But a few pupils still do not attend school well enough. Although leaders check attendance during the year, lapses in pupils' attendance or punctuality are sometimes not acted on well. School attendance continues to be an improvement priority for leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. The designated safeguarding leader organises safeguarding training for staff and checks that they understand key messages. As a result, staff are vigilant and make sure that any concerns they have are reported quickly. The safeguarding lead works alongside a range of outside support agencies to make sure that families have all the support they need. She is not afraid to challenge and escalate concerns. Recruitment processes are secure.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Due to recent changes in the organisation of leadership roles, subject leader roles are still developing. Therefore, while it is true that children achieve well by the time they leave the school, the exceptional start made by children in the early years classes is not consistently continued across Years 1 and 2. Subject leaders

need to ensure that the intended curriculum is implemented well across the school and across all subjects.

- In some subjects in key stage 1 such as mathematics, science and art, the curriculum is well sequenced. This ensures that all aspects of the national curriculum are covered. Leaders need to review curriculum plans across all subjects to check that the intended curriculum is coherently sequenced.
- Although leaders check attendance information at times through the year, they do not check frequently. Therefore a few pupils have low attendance and/or punctuality. Leaders need to develop a system to ensure that attendance and punctuality are tracked carefully. This will help leaders to identify attendance issues and to act on them.

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	108960
Local authority	Bristol City of
Inspection number	10133433
Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sally Dore
Headteacher	Jan Lonsdale
Website	www.seftonparkschools.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 November 2008

Information about this school

- Sefton Park Infant School is federated with the adjoining junior school. The two schools operate separately under a single governing body and headteacher. Some senior staff have responsibilities across both schools.
- The early years classes include children aged from three years old.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

The previous 'outstanding' judgement reflected the school's overall effectiveness in November 2008 under the relevant inspection framework at that time.

The new judgement of 'good' reflects the current inspection framework as well as any changes at the school since the last inspection.

The school has not been inspected for 12 years, which is longer than the five-year maximum interval between inspections under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. Changes in school effectiveness may have happened at any point in that period. The

long time between inspections is because the law changed in 2011; it made most outstanding schools exempt from routine inspection.

- We met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team throughout the inspection. We had a meeting with a small group of governors. We spoke to a representative from the local authority on the telephone, to gather their views on the school.
- We talked to parents at the start of each day and looked at the responses on Parent View. We also met with a wide group of staff to gather their views of the school. We observed behaviour during different times in the day and talked to pupils at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- To inspect safeguarding, we talked to staff as well as leaders about the processes the school has to keep children safe. We looked at a range of school documents to do with safeguarding and attendance.
- To evaluate the quality of education, we did deep dives in mathematics, reading, art, history and science. This involved us talking to leaders, teachers and pupils. We also visited lessons and looked at pupils' workbooks and other types of evidence to show learning over time.

Inspection team

Tonwen Empson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Martin Greenwood

Ofsted Inspector

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