

Inspection of Sundorne Infant School and Nursery

Corndon Crescent, Sundorne Road, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY1 4LE

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 November 2021

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?

Staff have pupils' needs at the forefront of everything they do and are committed to the school's motto of 'Grow together, achieve together'. Wider learning experiences outside the classroom support pupils' mental health and well-being very well. For example, pupils benefit from positive learning experiences in outdoor learning sessions. The 'daily mile' helps to keep pupils active and healthy. The improvements in the teaching of English and mathematics have enabled pupils to make better progress. Leaders are continuing to develop these subjects to make this progress even stronger.

Pupils behave well and understand the school's rules of 'ready, respect, safe'. The majority of pupils follow these rules. Staff skilfully support pupils who find it difficult to manage their behaviour. This enables pupils to learn and play in a calm environment. Pupils' and staff's respect and tolerance towards everyone means that this is a very welcoming and inclusive school.

Pupils feel safe in school. Their positive relationships with adults mean that pupils readily share any concerns and know that staff will help them with their problems. Pupils understand what bullying is and what to do if it happens. Parents and pupils say staff sort out any problems with bullying very well.

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

In September, leaders introduced a new approach to the teaching of phonics. This has already been very successful. Teachers follow the programme consistently, and the effective teaching is helping pupils, right from the early years, to learn phonics sounds quickly. Teachers check if pupils have remembered the sounds. They provide more support for pupils who need extra help so that they do not fall behind. Teachers provide pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) with more specific support to help them learn the sounds. This support is particularly successful and is helping pupils with SEND to make stronger progress in reading.

Teachers promote the love of reading very well. The 'reading spine' exposes pupils to a wide range of high-quality texts from the early years through to Year 2. Pupils enjoy story time and participate enthusiastically in these sessions. However, other reading activities, such as guided reading sessions, are less effective at developing pupils' wider reading skills, such as comprehension. Some teachers do not match the reading activities well enough to pupils' abilities. As a result, some pupils are not making as much progress in reading as they should.

Subject leaders have developed detailed curriculum planning based on the school's learning themes, such as 'where in the world'. This planning sets out the knowledge and skills pupils must learn in a logical order. Leaders have made sure that the foundations of all learning start right from the early years and develop progressively through to Year 2.

Teachers use the curriculum planning well. They check carefully what pupils have remembered, take care to explain new vocabulary and then help pupils to learn new things. This is helping pupils to make strong progress across the curriculum. For example, children in the early years explore the use of programmable toys so that they develop the skills they need to be ready for the computing curriculum in Year 1. However, until recently, teachers have not always paid sufficient attention to making sure that pupils form their letters correctly or neatly. This means that pupils' recorded work is sometimes presented poorly. The approach to teaching handwriting has now changed to address these issues more effectively.

The mathematics curriculum is well sequenced. Support and training for teachers has helped to improve their teaching. Pupils learn basic number skills well. Gaps in their learning that have arisen during the pandemic have been closed successfully. However, opportunities for pupils to develop and explain their mathematical problem-solving and reasoning skills are less well developed. This means that pupils do not make as much progress as they could in mathematics overall. Leaders know this and have started to look at further ways to improve this area of mathematics.

The school is highly inclusive. The provision for pupils with SEND is very effective. Teachers skilfully adapt the curriculum so that these pupils can access learning in all subjects. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) ensures that more specialist support is sought and provided where needed so that pupils with the most complex needs are also fully included in all the learning. Consequently, pupils with SEND make strong progress.

Pupils' personal development is particularly well supported. The whole school is a close-knit community where staff and pupils care for one another. The school provides pupils with exceptional pastoral care, which helps to develop their confidence and resilience. Pupils benefit from musical, sporting and creative activities that support their academic learning. The outdoor learning opportunities are very effective at supporting pupils' academic learning across a range of subjects.

The strong governance, senior leadership and development of the federation have driven significant improvements across the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding leaders are highly skilled. They have successfully implemented rigorous safeguarding procedures that are keeping pupils as safe as possible. All staff are very vigilant to any signs that pupils may be suffering from harm, and they report concerns immediately. Leaders follow up any concerns quickly. They also provide families with a wide range of support to help them keep their children safe in the community.

Teachers are very effective at teaching pupils about keeping themselves safe, both inside and outside school. As a result, pupils have a strong understanding of any potential dangers and how to protect themselves from them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The teaching of early reading and phonics is effective. However, additional sessions to teach reading, such as guided reading sessions, are not fully developed. Some of the activities are not matched well enough to pupils' abilities. As a result, pupils do not make as much progress as they could in reading. Leaders should ensure that all reading sessions are closely matched to pupils' needs and abilities to enable them to make even stronger progress, especially in developing their reading comprehension skills.
- The mathematics curriculum is well sequenced. However, opportunities to develop pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills are not as effective as they could be. Consequently, pupils' overall mathematical development is not as strong as it should be. Leaders should ensure that teachers provide pupils with more effective problem-solving and reasoning opportunities to further improve and progress their mathematics knowledge and skills overall.
- The recent change to the school's approach to teaching handwriting is not yet embedded. As a result, pupils' handwriting is underdeveloped, and many pupils do not form their letters accurately. Leaders should ensure that the teaching of handwriting is prioritised. Teachers should ensure that pupils form their letters accurately to improve their handwriting.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	123395
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10201026
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	275
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Jones
Executive Headteacher	Stephanie Peters
Head of School	Lisa Jones
Website	www.haughmondfed.net
Dates of previous inspection	1 and 2 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school makes use of one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the deputy headteacher (who is also the reading and early years leader), the SENCo, the key stage 1 leader, the computing, mathematics, and geography leaders and other subject leaders. Inspectors also met with class teachers and teaching assistants. The lead inspector met with five members of the governing body.

- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into reading, mathematics, geography and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors looked at curriculum planning and spoke to leaders about their subjects. They conducted joint lesson visits with leaders, including to the resource provision, spoke to pupils about their work and wider school experiences and looked at a range of pupils' work. Inspectors also reviewed work in English, physical education, science and personal, social, health and economic education.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of safeguarding information, including the school's safeguarding policy, spoke to staff and pupils about safeguarding and looked at how pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. The lead inspector spoke to the safeguarding leaders about the reporting and recording of any safeguarding incidents.
- Inspectors took account of the parent free-text comments and the responses on Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also considered the responses to the pupils' and staff's surveys.

Inspection team

Ann Pritchard, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Janet Tibbits	Ofsted Inspector
Donna O'Toole	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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