

Inspection of Sandhill Primary School

Dearne Street, Great Houghton, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S72 0EQ

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 November 2021

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?

This school is improving. Since the current trust took responsibility for the school, things have been moving in the right direction. The quality of education in mathematics, reading and English is now much better. In these subjects, pupils achieve well. However, there is still work to do in other subjects. Pupils do not know enough in subjects other than English and mathematics. Leaders are ambitious and have high expectations, but pupils still have gaps in their knowledge.

Behaviour is also improving. Generally, the school is calm and pupils behave well. There are still times when learning is disrupted by poor behaviour. This is much less common now. However, some parents and pupils are still concerned about this. Bullying is rare. Pupils say that adults respond swiftly to any concerns they have. Most pupils say that they are happy and that they feel safe.

All of the foundations are in place for further improvement. The changes that leaders have made have already had an impact in some areas. For example, children in the early years do well. Teachers focus on developing children's vocabulary and spoken English. This has had an impressive impact on children's understanding. Children do well as they learn to read. They clearly enjoy being at school.

The focus on pupils' personal development is strong. If pupils need extra pastoral support, they receive it. 'Incredible me', a programme developed by the trust, helps pupils to control their emotions, make friendships and improve their behaviour.

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

Leaders are working hard to improve the quality of education at school. They are having a positive impact. New leaders focused on improving reading, English and mathematics first. This has worked. The curriculum is well planned, and pupils build on their knowledge step by step in these subjects.

Phonics is a good example of this. Teachers are clear about the sounds, words and texts pupils should be able to read by the end of each term. When children in the early years are learning to read, they are given books which match the sounds that they have been taught. This helps them to read accurately and with growing confidence and fluency. Any children who are in danger of falling behind are given extra practice every day. Teachers are skilful and well trained in the teaching of phonics. The picture in mathematics is similar. It is clear what pupils should know and when. Teachers deliver the mathematics curriculum well. Pupils now achieve well in this subject.

Plans for other subjects are now ambitious. However, current pupils are not achieving as well as they should. They know too little about subjects other than English and mathematics. Leaders know this and are now focusing their attention on ensuring that pupils know more and remember more in subjects such as geography, music and religious education.

However, curriculum plans in the early years have already had a strong impact. There is a strong focus on developing children's vocabulary. Adults purposefully help children to develop their speaking. Adults know the children well. They know what sparks the interests of individual children. Adults also know what children need to learn next. Adults make sure that children build on their understanding and knowledge. Children develop their confidence and their social skills well.

Leaders and staff carefully consider pupils' wider development. They are keen to nurture all pupils' talents and interests. Leaders want the 'Three Rs' to be at the heart of the school. They want pupils to have respect, to be responsible and to be ready to learn. Leaders plan lots of opportunities for pupils to develop these attributes. Examples include work on mental health week, climate change and respecting and celebrating difference. Pupils can attend a variety of clubs, including Lego and arts and crafts, and a variety of sports after school. The curriculum develops pupils' understanding of different cultures, religions and types of family.

Leaders think carefully about how they can support pupils with special educational needs and/or difficulties (SEND). They give extra help to these pupils. Leaders focus on these pupils' social or behavioural needs, as well as any additional help in English and mathematics. Pupils with SEND study the same subjects as other pupils. They also know too little in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Pupils' behaviour has improved. They attend school regularly. Pupils, generally, have positive relationships with teachers and other pupils. However, parents and pupils reported that there are still too many instances of poor behaviour that disrupt learning. Some pupils do not focus fully in lessons.

Leaders are improving this school. The trust is supporting them well. Leaders are already having an impact. Leaders know their school well and what the next steps are. Even as the school develops, teachers say that leaders take account of their workload. However, subject leadership is underdeveloped in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors make sure that safeguarding is a high priority. Staff receive regular training on safeguarding. They are fully aware of their responsibilities and take them seriously. Leaders and staff are vigilant. Safeguarding concerns are dealt with thoroughly. Leaders make sure that appropriate safeguarding checks are in place for adults working at school.

Specifically, the systems in place to identify any pupils or families that may be vulnerable or may need extra help are strong. Records are detailed and show that any concerns are followed through promptly. This helps to ensure that pupils and families get the support they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum plans are ambitious in all areas of the curriculum. However, the impact of this is variable. Some plans are new. Currently, pupils do not know enough in subjects such as geography, music and religious education as they should by the time they leave school. Leaders know this. Leaders need to make sure that pupils develop detailed knowledge and skills across the curriculum and, as a result, achieve well.
- Pupils' behaviour has improved. However, a few pupils disturb learning in classrooms and some pupils lack focus in lessons. Leaders need to ensure that pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning continue to 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 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

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| Unique reference number | 141917 |
| Local authority | Barnsley |
| Inspection number | 10200694 |
| 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 | 258 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | William Ward |
| Headteacher | David Hickey |
| Website | www.sandhillprimary.org.uk/ |
| Date of previous inspection | 20 and 21 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. |

Information about this school

- The school became a member of the Every Child Matters Multi-Academy Trust in April 2020.
- The school does not use alternative provision for any of its pupils.

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 the chief executive officer and spoke with the chair of the board of trustees. Inspectors also met with the executive headteacher, the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator, middle leaders and a range of teaching and support staff. An inspector spoke with representatives of the local governing body.

- Inspectors evaluated the quality of education by looking closely at the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and physical education. Here, inspectors met with the curriculum leaders for each subject, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally, to discuss their views on behaviour. Inspectors also met with different members of staff and support staff, to gauge their views on how well pupils behave and conduct themselves. Inspectors spoke to some pupils who have received sanctions in the past.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding. Inspectors looked at the school's policies relating to safeguarding, met the designated safeguarding lead and considered records of the vetting checks the school makes on its staff.
- Inspectors looked at other information about behaviour, attendance and extra-curricular activities that support pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents in their responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, as well as the free-text responses. They spoke to some parents that came to drop off their children.

Inspection team

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