

Inspection of Southfield Primary School

Banbury Road, Brackley, Northamptonshire NN13 6AU

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 January 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils who attend Southfield Primary School describe their school as being a kind and creative place to be. They like learning during lessons, learning new things and being with their friends. The oldest pupils enjoy taking responsibility for helping younger pupils at lunchtime. Pupils feel safe in school because they know that the adults will take care of them.

Leaders and staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and of how well they learn. Pupils benefit from learning the new things teachers have planned for them across a range of subjects. However, the school's curriculum is not consistently well planned and taught in all subjects. Where this is the case, pupils are not learning as well as they could.

Pupils typically behave well in class and around school. They understand the three new school rules and why it is important to be 'ready, respectful and safe'.

Pupils do not think that bullying really happens at this school. They are confident that if it did happen an adult would deal with it for them.

Parents speak highly of the school. Almost without exception, they would recommend the school to others.

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

Leaders and staff have acted with determination to improve the quality of education that pupils receive at this school.

Leaders introduced a new approach to teaching phonics just a few weeks ago. Teachers are following the approach, but it is too early for it to be securely implemented. Phonics is taught right from the start of the Reception Year. Teachers give pupils books to read that are matched to the sounds they have learned. Beyond learning to read the words on the page, the plans to develop pupils' reading skills lack detail. As pupils become more confident readers, they have mixed opinions about reading. However, many pupils enjoy reading, describing a book as 'a portable adventure'.

There is some variability in how well mathematics is taught. It is taught well in the early years, where children learn about patterns before they develop an early grasp of numbers. However, there are some inconsistencies in the teaching of mathematics in other classes. Sometimes teachers use assessment well to provide the right level of challenge for pupils, but this is not the case in all classes.

In other subjects, leaders have written plans that set out what they want pupils to learn and the order in which they will learn it. Teachers are following the plans and pupils can remember some of what they are taught. Some curriculum plans,

including for the early years, need to be refined and consistently well taught. This is so that pupils can learn as well as they should across the full range of subjects.

Teachers check frequently, through quick quizzes, what pupils have remembered from previous lessons. Pupils say that this helps them to have the most useful information at their fingertips when they are ready to learn something trickier. However, there is not a clear assessment strategy in place for teachers to check what pupils remember in the long term.

Teachers have high expectations of how well pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities will learn. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) knows the pupils well. Teachers provide these pupils with the support they need.

Pupils behave well in lessons, at breaktimes and around school. Leaders have introduced a new set of three school rules. Pupils find them easy to remember. They understand why it is important to be 'ready, respectful and safe'. Pupils listen to their teachers and typically do what they are asked without fuss.

Leaders want pupils to be responsible and respectful citizens. Pupils can attend the local Remembrance Day parade or raise money for local charities. Some experiences have not been available due to the restrictions of the pandemic. However, some pupils are looking forward to their residential trips later this year. Pupils enjoy the experiences leaders provide, but they do not always remember what they are taught. They do not talk confidently about British values, for example. The programme for pupils' personal development is not planned precisely enough to ensure that pupils gain the best from it.

Senior leaders are considerate of staff's workload and well-being. Staff appreciate this and consider themselves to be a supportive staff team. The training that senior leaders have provided has enabled subject leaders to be able to fulfil their responsibilities.

Governance has improved. Governors do not simply accept what they are told by leaders, but ask carefully considered questions to hold leaders to account. They have a secure understanding of the current strengths and remaining weaknesses in the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff know the potential signs of abuse to watch out for and know how to raise any concerns they may have. They are aware of the potential risks and issues in their local area, such as county lines. Staff have specific training about these aspects of safeguarding. Leaders call on the expertise of external agencies where this may be beneficial to a pupil or their family.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. They learn about stranger danger and how to cycle safely on the road, for example. They understand the potential risks of using modern technology.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The approach to teaching phonics has only recently been introduced. It is not consistently well implemented. The curriculum for developing pupils' reading after they have learned to decode the words lacks detail. Pupils are not learning to read as soon, or as well, as they could. Leaders should make sure that the approaches to teaching reading are fully in place so that pupils learn to read fluently and confidently.
- Leaders have made sure that there are curriculum plans in place for all subjects. However, some plans, including those in the early years, have not been sufficiently refined so that pupils can learn, and remember, the most important things. Leaders should refine the curriculum plans, including for the early years, so that pupils can deepen their knowledge in all subjects.
- There is no school-wide approach to assessment across all subjects. Teachers do not reliably know what pupils have learned in the long term. Leaders should implement a clear strategy to assess what pupils have learned.
- The plan to promote pupils' personal development is underdeveloped. Pupils do not recall parts of the curriculum that promote their spiritual development or develop a deep understanding of British values. Leaders should make sure that the programme for pupils' personal development is carefully planned and embedded.

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	139030
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10209006
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	148
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Natalie Garrett
Headteacher	Matt Green
Website	www.southfieldprimaryschool.org.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	15 and 16 June 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school's most recent inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 took place in July 2019. The school was judged to be inadequate at that time.
- The school does not make use of any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors completed deep dives into reading, mathematics, science and history. They looked at curriculum plans with leaders, visited lessons, examined pupils' books and spoke with teachers and pupils. They examined the plans of a range of

other subjects and discussed the implementation and assessment of the curriculum with leaders.

- Inspectors met with several groups of pupils. They spoke informally with pupils in class, and they observed their behaviour at playtime and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors spoke with the SENCo and the early years leader. They held discussions with the headteacher and with three governors, including the chair. They also met with the chief executive officer and school improvement director of The Warriner Trust.
- Inspectors examined the single central record of vetting checks. They examined a range of documentation, including that related to the safeguarding of pupils. They discussed the arrangements for safeguarding with senior leaders.
- Inspectors also examined the school improvement plan and leaders' evaluation of the work that the school does.
- Inspectors visited the school's breakfast club.
- Inspectors took account of the responses from the staff survey and the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They spoke with parents as they brought their children to school in the morning.

Inspection team

Di Mullan, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Hazel Henson

Her Majesty's Inspector

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