

Inspection of Somers Park Primary School

Somers Park Avenue, Malvern, Worcestershire WR14 1SE

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 July 2022

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

Ofsted has not previously inspected Somers Park Primary School as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at Somers Park Primary School. They value their education and build many happy memories during their time at the school. They are proud of their achievements and are eager to explain why their school is so special to them.

Pupils get on well together. They form strong friendship groups. They look after one another and go out of their way to include others in their play. This makes the school a happy and caring place. Bullying is rare. Pupils feel safe and trust adults to resolve matters quickly when friends fall out.

Adults know pupils very well. They have high expectations for each child and ensure that all pupils study a broad range of subjects. Most pupils are keen to learn and take an active part in lessons.

Leaders' work to develop pupils' talents, interests and character is exceptional. They think very carefully about pupils' interests and needs before arranging clubs, activities and educational visits. All pupils are encouraged to take part in these opportunities and the vast majority do.

Pupils are included in making important decisions. Some represent their classes as members of the 'Pupil Parliament', whilst others represent the school as 'Subject Ambassadors'. Pupils have shared many positive ideas that leaders have put into action.

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

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, lead the school very well. They have created a positive team spirit and staff morale is high. Adults go about their work with energy and enthusiasm. Staff have high aspirations for each child. They ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, access a good quality of education. Most parents and carers are very positive about their child's experiences at school.

Leaders ensure pupils study a broad range of subjects and topics. Subject coordinators have thought carefully about the important information they expect pupils to know and remember. In most subjects, this information is very clear. However, in a small number of subjects, the subject specific knowledge that leaders expect pupils to learn is not identified as clearly.

Pupils learn new information in a logical order. Lessons build on the prior knowledge that pupils remember. This helps them to learn well. For example, in design and technology, pupils in Year 2 use a small range of ingredients to prepare simple dishes. Older pupils then build on this knowledge. For instance, they learn how to mix ingredients, including seasoning, when making pizza.

Leaders ensure staff know how to teach the curriculum well. Teachers recap key information to help pupils remember important concepts. Adults make checks on what pupils know in lessons. They address misconceptions and support pupils who need extra help. In some subjects however, leaders' approach to checking how well pupils know and remember key content is not so well established. This makes it harder for leaders to review how well pupils learn in those subjects over time.

The school's approach to teaching phonics is well organised. Pupils, who are in the early stages of learning to read, benefit from daily lessons. These lessons are closely matched to pupils' abilities. In addition, staff promote a love of reading across the school. For instance, they recommend texts and share their favourite stories. The school's work ensures that all pupils become better readers over time.

Children in the early years make the best possible start to their lives at school. Adults take every opportunity to engage and interact with children and they do this highly effectively. They discuss tricky concepts and ask questions that stretch children's thinking and vocabulary. Children are taught how to work independently and in groups. They learn the importance of sticking at tasks and finishing them. Children leave Reception Year full of confidence and self-esteem. The early years provision is exemplary and as such, children are extremely well prepared for learning in Year 1.

Leaders have revised the school's behaviour policy to ensure that pupils' positive behaviour is praised and rewarded. For example, teachers actively look out for pupils doing the right things. They bring attention to these positive behaviours using classroom 'recognition boards'. Pupils understand the school rules and are alert to be 'ready, respectful and safe'. As a result, the school is calm. Nearly all pupils display very positive attitudes to learning and work hard in lessons.

Pupils have many opportunities to learn about other faiths and cultures. They understand the importance of respect and tolerance for others, displaying these values themselves in the way they treat one another. Older pupils speak with maturity about social and environmental matters. They sensibly debate issues in a considered way. Leaders ensure pupils are exceptionally well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders take their safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. They place pupils' well-being at the heart of decision making. Staff understand their roles and are alert to any signs that a pupil may be at risk of potential harm. They know what to do if they are concerned and they take quick action. Leaders work well with families and external agencies to support pupils who need help.

Pupils learn how to protect themselves from harm. For example, many pupils have taken part in workshops that promote water safety. All pupils learn strategies for keeping safe when using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The key information that leaders expect pupils to know and remember is not identified as clearly as it might be in a small number of subjects. This limits pupils' learning in those subjects. Leaders should ensure that the knowledge and skills that pupils are expected to learn is set out clearly in all subjects.
- The school's approach to assessing what pupils know and remember is not yet fully developed in some subjects. This makes it harder for leaders to review the progress that pupils make through all the curriculum. Leaders should improve this to ensure they know how well pupils are progressing in all subjects.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use 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	137292
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10211878
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	586
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gene Willis
Headteacher	Christopher Hansen
Website	www.somersparksschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school opened an additional site at Malvern Vale, on 1 September 2018. There are currently four classes educated at this site – Reception Year to Year 3.
- Breakfast and after-school clubs operate at both school sites.
- The school does not use an 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out inspection activities at the Somers Park and Malvern Vale sites.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and other senior and middle leaders, including subject coordinators.
- The lead inspector also met with executive leaders of the trust, representatives of the trustees and representatives of the delegated governing committee.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and design and technology. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject coordinators, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also visited a sample of lessons.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding arrangements by meeting with the designated safeguarding leader and scrutinising safeguarding records.
- Inspectors considered responses on Ofsted's Parents View including parent free-text responses. Inspectors also took account of responses to the staff and pupil survey.
- Inspectors visited the before-school provision and spoke to pupils who attend.

Inspection team

Jonathan Leonard, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Corinne Biddell	Her Majesty's Inspector
Heather Davies	Ofsted Inspector
Russell Hinton	Ofsted Inspector

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