

Inspection of a good school: Southam Primary School

St James Road, Southam, Warwickshire CV47 0QB

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 July 2022

Outcome

Southam Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy learning in this happy and welcoming school. They say that they feel safe. Vigilant staff care for pupils well.

Pupils thrive on the experiences that staff offer. Pupils enjoy visits to theatres and taking part in a range of clubs. They look forward to attending more activities as the school gets back to its pre-pandemic richness.

Staff expect pupils to behave well around school, and pupils step up to this expectation. They look out for each other. In lessons, pupils show that they want to learn. They listen carefully to staff. They are quick to get on with their learning. Staff support pupils who need extra help to manage their behaviour well.

Lunchtimes and breaktimes are well organised. Pupils play with a range of equipment and resources. They play well together. Pupils make sure that they include their classmates in their activities. Pupils say that bullying is very rare. If it does occur, staff take it very seriously and deal with the incident effectively.

Pupils learn well through a wide range of subjects. The curriculum is well planned. Leaders know that refinement in some topics will help pupils retain more knowledge.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about the curriculum, and it is ambitious. Pupils in younger age groups cover challenging themes. For example, pupils in key stage 1 learn about feudalism. Teachers deliver the curriculum well. Leaders, who have a secure knowledge of the subjects they lead, support teachers well.

Teachers plan well. This helps them to focus on teaching specific knowledge and skills. They use an agreed method to help assess pupils' progress in each subject. In some topics though, pupils find it difficult to recall specific pieces of knowledge. Leaders

recognise that some tweaks are needed to the way in which the curriculum is planned and delivered.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn about what it means to live in a diverse community and world. Pupils study diversity through a range of subjects, including history, art and music. They study characters who represent different genders, faiths, cultures and ethnicities. Pupils talk knowledgeably about cultural diversity.

Curriculum leaders know how the early years foundation stage helps pupils to get ready for their learning in Year 1. In history, for example, pupils see helpful words on display in the Reception classroom. Starting in the early years, pupils develop subject-specific skills as they move through the school, including in mathematics. Pupils develop a secure understanding of numbers. They use this knowledge when learning about more complex mathematics in later years.

Leaders prioritise reading. Teachers carefully choose books which interest pupils and read these in classrooms. Staff know that pupils need to read fluently. Well-trained staff ensure that pupils learn phonics as soon as they arrive in Reception. Pupils learn to segment words in lessons. They become fluent readers by practising decoding in books that match the sounds they know. Staff check each pupil's progress frequently. This means that staff identify and quickly provide extra support for any pupils who need it. Confident readers enjoy using their secure reading skills to learn about new things. Pupils certainly enjoy reading.

During the pandemic, leaders ensured that pupils continued to learn in all subjects. Leaders were determined to support each pupil during lockdown periods. Parents recognise leaders' commitment. All pupils accessed learning, either in school or at home.

Leaders and staff expect pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to achieve well. The leader for the provision of this group of pupils is highly knowledgeable. She uses this knowledge to help teachers plan the best ways to support each pupil in their learning. Teachers know what to do to support each pupil. Some pupils, for example, are given more time to think than their classmates. Others are taught specific skills before they go into their lessons. This means that pupils with SEND join in lessons and learn well.

Staff feel supported. They say that leaders take the time to consider their workload. A number of changes in recent years mean that staff have a reduced workload. These changes include staff only attending meetings if they need to.

The trust supports the local governing board well. The trust facilitates training for governors. Governors know what to look for to check that leaders continue to improve provision. Governors link with different aspects of work at the school, including SEND and the curriculum. They work with staff in order to gain a better knowledge of the work at Southam.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know what vigilant safeguarding looks like. Senior leaders quickly identify the risks around any pupils who come to their attention. Leaders have good links with a range of external services. They use these to ensure that pupils are kept safe.

A watchful culture is evident. Staff check that all pupils, and particularly those who might be more vulnerable, feel safe during the day. Staff know what to do should they become concerned. They value the training and support provided by school and trust leaders. School and trust leaders follow a robust staff recruitment process for any appointment.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some topics, leaders have not made clear what specific knowledge must be taught and what all pupils need to learn. This means that in some lessons, pupils, particularly those who struggle to retain information, are not securing the most important knowledge in their long-term memory. Subject leaders need to ensure that teachers know exactly what knowledge to teach and when.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Southam Primary School, to be good in May 2014.

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	143906
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10227734
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	368
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Nicola Lester
Headteacher	Emma Longworth
Website	www.southamprimary.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Southam Primary School converted to become an academy school in May 2014. When its predecessor school, Southam Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and senior leaders. The inspector met with two members of the local governing body, including the interim chair.
- The inspector met with the chair of the trust.
- The inspector met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. Pupils were observed reading to members of staff.

- The inspector checked the arrangements for keeping pupils safe. He reviewed a range of documents and spoke with leaders, staff and pupils about the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school. He spoke with pupils about their experiences in school, including how safe they feel.
- The inspector spoke to staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspector considered the views of parents through Ofsted Parent View, an online survey.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents shared by school leaders, including external reviews and minutes of meetings of the local governing body.
- The inspector focused on reading, mathematics and history as part of this inspection. Other subjects were considered as part of the inspection.

Inspection team

Jeremy Bird, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022