

Inspection of Sandhills Community Primary School

Terrett Avenue, Sandhills, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX3 8FN

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 November 2022

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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy being part of this welcoming community. They feel happy and safe in this nurturing school. Pupils adore their teachers and trust that staff will look after them. Staff and pupils get on really well and treat each other with courtesy and kindness. Respectful behaviour is modelled by staff every moment of the day. Additionally, pupils show the same respect to visitors.

Teachers help pupils to understand how they are expected to behave and manage their feelings. This supports pupils to behave well, look after each other and make the right choices. Bullying does not happen very often, and it is not something pupils worry about. If it does happen, staff work effectively with pupils and parents to resolve issues.

There are a wide range of opportunities to foster and stretch pupils' talents and interests. Clubs such as choir, craft activities, sports clubs and music opportunities are appreciated by pupils. These, in addition to art and diversity projects, also support their cultural and social development well. Leaders plan to further increase the range of enrichment opportunities and their uptake. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of this inclusive and improving school.

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

Leaders act decisively and with integrity. They have designed an ambitious and broad curriculum to enable pupils to build their knowledge and skills over time. Leaders have sensibly sought advice from within and beyond the trust to assure themselves of the quality of their improvement work.

The provision in Reception class is particularly well designed. This helps children get off to the strong start they need. Curriculum planning across the school clearly sets out what leaders have identified as the most important knowledge pupils need to learn and the precise order to learn it. This is helping children to achieve well. However, teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils fully understand this key knowledge, so it can be used easily and independently, before moving learning on. Also, teaching is not always effective in helping pupils remember what they have been taught. Leaders are aware of this and have plans to address it.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The newly appointed special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has ensured a sharper focus on identifying and meeting the needs of new and existing pupils. Leaders have strengthened how they involve parents and are beginning to help teachers adapt their teaching further to enable pupils with SEND to succeed alongside their peers.

Leaders believe that being a good reader allows pupils to access the whole curriculum. They quickly identify pupils who need some extra, targeted help with learning phonics. This also helps them develop the confidence and fluency they

need. Staff teach phonics confidently and effectively because they receive good quality training and ongoing support. Pupils are encouraged to practise reading every day. Teachers ensure that beginner readers read books matched to the sounds they are learning. This helps pupils to learn quickly and securely. Pupils are beginning to develop a love of reading through exploring more challenging texts as well as those that reflect the diversity within the school. Pupils enjoy choosing books from the well-stocked library that capture their interests and enable them to develop their vocabulary.

Overall, pupils behave well. They understand and follow well-established routines. Staff are quick to re-engage anyone who is less focused. In the early years, the calm and caring environment ensures children settle quickly. Children learn how to cooperate, develop their curiosity and learn alongside their friends.

Leaders' work to promote pupils' personal development is a growing strength. Pupils relish opportunities to make a positive difference. For instance, pupils value responsible roles such as eco-warriors. They appreciate the chance to contribute to the school's embedded environmental sustainability strategy. Leaders are determined to broaden pupils' experiences and personal skills, especially after the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Already, the wider work on resilience, independence and confidence can be seen starting from the early years onwards.

Leadership in this school is highly strategic. The trust board and governors have accurate views of the school's strengths and priorities. They also guard against complacency and duplication. Both groups work effectively together to challenge and offer well-informed support to the school. They work well alongside determined leaders to develop clear strategic plans and check that these are working as intended. Staff value and appreciate leaders' care for their well-being. They also know that leaders carefully consider their workload and do not add to it unnecessarily.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding. Regular training ensures that all staff know what they need to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Any worries are reported promptly. Leaders are tenacious in their work and follow up on any concerns swiftly. They work closely with relevant external agencies to ensure that pupils get the right support. All necessary recruitment checks are carried out diligently. Records are meticulously maintained and monitored well by governors. Pupils are taught to make good choices, how to alert staff to worries and how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, teachers do not assess pupils accurately enough and move them on to the next steps in their learning before they are ready. This means that pupils miss planned opportunities to use and embed their learning securely. Teachers should check that the most important knowledge has been understood by pupils before teaching new content.
- Although the most important knowledge and skills pupils need are set out in curriculum planning, teachers' expertise is too variable in delivering it effectively. For example, pupils' misconceptions are not consistently identified so that direct feedback can be given quickly. Pupils do not develop their knowledge, skills and abilities so they can apply what they know and can do with increasing fluency and independence. Leaders should improve the effectiveness of training and support for teachers to ensure that pupils know and remember more across the school's curriculum.

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.

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	146270
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10241587
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	253
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kirsten Robinson
Headteacher	Emma Coleman
Website	www.sandhills.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Sandhills Community Primary School joined River Learning Trust in September 2018 as a sponsor-led academy. When its predecessor school, Sandhills Community Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted in January 2018, it was judged to be inadequate.
- The school provides and manages a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The SENCo began working in this role in September 2022. Previously, the school had been without a substantive SENCo for a significant period of the last academic year due to absence.

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 held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and SENCo.
- The lead inspector met with six governors, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also met with the chair of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, English, music and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed curriculum planning with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils and looked at their work. The lead inspector also heard pupils read to a known adult.
- Inspectors checked a wide range of safeguarding documentation and school policies, including the single central record. They also reviewed the school's records regarding child protection and the welfare of pupils.
- The lead inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, school improvement plan and relevant school policies.
- Inspectors took account of parents' responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, along with their written comments. An inspector also talked with parents on the morning of the first day of inspection.
- Inspectors gathered pupils' views about their learning, what behaviour is like at the school and whether they felt safe. Inspectors also talked to pupils about their views on personal development and the wider school curriculum.
- Inspectors met with a range of staff to gather their views on how leaders support them and took account of their responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Gareth Flemington, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Julie Hiddleston	Ofsted Inspector
Debra Mansfield	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