

Inspection of Saffron Green Primary School

Nicoll Way, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire WD6 2PP

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 February 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Most parents and carers and pupils would recommend the school and recognise that improvements have been made by school leaders. Families are becoming more involved with the life of the school community.

Children in early years make a good start. Most older pupils achieve well, but too many cannot read well enough. Some pupils do not enjoy reading. They have fallen behind as a result. The knowledge pupils develop is improving, but more support is needed to ensure that pupils' experiences are of a better quality. Behaviour in some lessons does not match leaders' expectations. Teachers do not always address this. Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This means they cannot make the progress they need to.

Most pupils are respectful of differences between people in the community. Pupils are kind, happy and caring. Pupils are polite to visitors and staff. The number of reports of bullying is low. A small number of pupils use unkind language. Pupils are confident to speak with a trusted adult if they are worried. They feel safe.

Generally, pupils at Saffron Green can take part in a wide range of activities outside the school day. They enjoy these opportunities. Pupils are experiencing an increasing range of educational visits that support their learning and development.

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

While the approach to the early reading curriculum is consistent, it does not enable pupils to read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to access the curriculum. Too many pupils in key stage 1 do not read well enough. Some pupils do not read at home often enough to have an impact on their progress.

The curriculum is very new in some areas. Most pupils are able to learn and remember information well. Some pupils do not achieve as well as they should in all subjects they study. The time between topics can sometimes mean that pupils forget what they have learned. In subjects such as mathematics, leaders ensure that staff are well trained, and pupils learn effectively. Most pupils can easily recall number facts. This allows pupils to move on successfully. However, in some subjects, pupils do not enjoy the curriculum content as they do not experience success in the subject.

The curriculum in early years is effective because children are benefiting from the new curriculum plans, which staff enact skilfully. This provides a strong start for children.

Leaders prioritise the early identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers support pupils with SEND to access the full curriculum. Pupils appreciate this and can describe the support they receive in detail.

The needs of pupils with SEND are met through effective coordination with external specialists, so that pupils get the right help.

Generally, pupils behave well. However, in some lessons, low-level disruption affects learning. Levels of suspension are high among vulnerable pupils. A minority of pupils use homophobic language because they do not understand the impact and meaning of their words. Older pupils are not benefiting sufficiently from the revised personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum because it is too new, and they have not learned the previous content. Parents have not been consulted on the relationships and sex education curriculum.

In the context of COVID-19, persistent absence is too high and is not falling. A quarter of pupils have missed more than 10% of school time this year. The school has appropriate systems in place to monitor attendance, but these have not reduced overall absence.

Leaders and governors are working to raise the profile of the school with parents and the local community. They understand that the school needs to improve and have plans to address the most important weaknesses. Parents would recommend the school to others. They can see the improvements that the new leadership team is making. They speak very positively about the school. One parent commented, 'Saffron Green has recently changed dramatically into a beautiful community-centred school.'

Staff are positive about working in the school. Staff say that workload is not a concern and they appreciate the useful and varied training they receive.

Governors provide challenge and support to school leaders. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses. They check regularly on the effectiveness of leaders' actions to improve the school. Governors hold school leaders to account through regular school visits and meetings.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff and governors have been well trained to carry out their safeguarding duties. Staff understand the importance of keeping children safe. Staff can identify the signs of potential harm and act to help when concerns arise. Effective systems are in place for reporting concerns. Leaders keep accurate safeguarding records and work well with external agencies. Governors provide strategic challenge and practical support to leaders.

The safeguarding governor regularly checks that systems are working effectively and that pupils are safe. Leaders ensure that background checks are undertaken to determine whether staff are suitable to work with children. There is a culture of safeguarding.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Too many pupils in key stage 1 do not learn to read fluently. This means that they struggle to access the curriculum and develop a love of books and literature. Leaders should ensure that there is an appropriately planned curriculum. Pupils should receive the support and practice to catch up and keep up with their peers.
- In some curriculum subjects, content is not introduced in a logical manner. Sometimes, too long is left between topics, meaning that pupils forget their learning. Leaders should review the curriculum to ensure that pupils are taught the knowledge in a logical order and at intervals that allow them to recall, and build on, existing knowledge.
- A minority of pupils use prejudicial language. They have not been taught effectively about the impact of this language. This mainly affects older pupils who have not received a strong curriculum in PSHE. Leaders must ensure that all pupils have a clear understanding of, and respect for, those with protected characteristics and the value of a diverse society.
- Persistent pupil absence is too high. This means that they cannot benefit from the planned improvements to the curriculum. Leaders must ensure that the systems for supporting and challenging pupils to attend school are robust and effective, so that they attend school more often.

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	117195
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10255107
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Pam Aristokle
Headteacher	Amy Salisbury
Website	www.saffrongreen.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 December 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up her post in May 2022.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 met with the headteacher and other staff. There was a telephone meeting with the local authority representative. Inspectors also met with four members of the governing body, including the chair of governors and a staff governor.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, French and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors spoke with staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to review their knowledge, records and actions. The inspectors also looked at safeguarding records and actions and reviewed information about the safer recruitment of staff.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils to talk about their learning and their experience of the school.
- The inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school improvement plan, curriculum documentation and school policies.
- There were 36 responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and 27 free-text comments from parents. Inspectors also took account of 23 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Jonathan Rockey, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Dan Lambert

His Majesty's 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 2023