

Inspection of an outstanding school: Sutton Primary Academy

Bayley Way, Sutton St Nicholas, Hereford, Herefordshire HR1 3SZ

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 April 2023

Outcome

Sutton Primary Academy continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Sutton Primary Academy is a very special place that pupils thoroughly enjoy attending.

There is lots on offer and all pupils are fully immersed in everything that the school does. Leaders and staff have high expectations for all, and pupils relish living up to these.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Older pupils look out for younger pupils on the playground and play leaders ensure that there is always plenty for everyone to do. Pupils know that if they have a worry they can put it in the 'worry monster' and a member of staff will help them. Pupils feel safe and well cared for in school.

Pupils value the visits and clubs that leaders arrange for them. From drama to sketchbook club, football to choir, all pupils have the chance to develop their talents and discover new interests. Pupils also enjoy taking on responsibilities in school, such as being eco warriors or members of the school council.

It is clear that this is a school where caring and understanding are at the heart of everything. Pupils recognise this. They learn how to be independent, take risks, and show respect.

Staff, pupils and parents speak very highly of the school. They are right to do so.

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

Leaders continue to build on the school's considerable strengths. All staff share leaders' ambitious vision for every pupil. To this end, there is an unremitting determination to remove barriers, include every pupil and fully prepare them for their next stages of education and beyond. Every decision is sharply focused on what is best for the pupils.

Leaders ensure that all pupils receive the very best education they can. Teachers, well supported by leaders and the training they receive, skilfully adapt the curriculum to meet

the needs of all pupils. They spark a passion for learning. This begins in the early years, where children get off to a strong start.

Across the curriculum, leaders have ensured that they have identified precisely what they want pupils to learn. This is skilfully organised in a way to help pupils build on their knowledge and skills over time. Teachers carefully check what pupils know and use this knowledge to shape subsequent learning. They only move on to new concepts when they are sure that pupils securely understand the previous learning.

Where pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), these are swiftly and accurately identified. Leaders and staff take advice from specialist services. They also use their own significant skills and knowledge of pupils and their families to ensure that all pupils, no matter how significant their need, can access the same learning as their classmates. Leaders are passionate to ensure that nobody is left behind.

Pupils love learning to read. Staff are well trained to deliver the phonics programme. This starts in Nursery, where children enjoy learning about the sounds that letters make. They are incredibly proud to show how they are beginning to form these letters and are keen for visitors to join in. These strong foundations are built on as children move into Reception and beyond. As a result, pupils quickly become fluent readers. If any pupils need extra support, staff quickly put this in place to help them catch up. 'Reading buddies', where older pupils read regularly with younger pupils, provide an extra chance to practise reading and develop a love of books and stories.

Pupils' extremely positive attitudes to education and school mean that all time in lessons can be spent on learning. Behaviour in lessons and around school is exceptional. Pupils enjoy having fun together, but they also show deep respect for rules. For example, they enjoy chatting over lunch, as well as the five minutes of quiet eating time every day. Pupils understand that this is for their benefit. In lessons, while there is always a buzz of activity and excitement, there is a sharp focus on learning. Leaders have taken deliberate decisions to further develop pupils' attitudes to learning. For example, pupils in Year 5 have been focusing on teamwork, resilience and developing confidence through choreographing their own dance, which they performed for the public at a local theatre. Year 4 pupils are also currently working with the local theatre company on a mental health project, culminating in a public performance at the theatre.

The school's work to promote and develop pupils' broader development is exemplary. There is a rich range of extra-curricular activities, and leaders ensure that all pupils can become involved. Where pupils show particular talents, opportunities in school have enabled them to take these further. Roles such as house captains, play leaders and school councillors give pupils an opportunity to take the lead and develop important skills. As a result of all that the school has on offer, pupils show empathy, understanding, resilience and spirit.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders in school and at trust level prioritise safeguarding. Staff receive regular training and robust systems are in place to ensure that all concerns are recorded. Leaders are swift to follow up any concerns. They engage with external support and are diligent in working to achieve the best possible outcomes for pupils.

Pupils know that adults in school keep them safe. Through the curriculum, they are taught how to keep themselves safe and healthy.

Leaders have ensured that all the relevant checks are carried out on adults who work in school. Records of these checks are securely and accurately kept.

Background

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

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in January 2017.

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	136765
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10240596
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	193
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Chris Hayes
Headteacher	Elizabeth Orton
Website	www.sutton.hmfa.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 and 25 January 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provider.
- Before- and after-school care is provided by the multi academy trust on the school site.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine 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.
- During the inspection, the inspector carried out deep dives into these subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans where they were available, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, curriculum leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The inspector held meetings with the chair and one other representative of the local advisory board and spoke to a representative from the multi academy trust.

- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, around the school and at lunchtime. The inspector spoke to pupils about pupils' behaviour.
- To evaluate safeguarding, the inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and the trust director of safeguarding, looked at the single central record of recruitment checks, looked at safeguarding records and talked to pupils and staff.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text responses. The inspector also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspector talked to parents and families at the school gate.

Inspection team

Rachel Henrick, lead inspector

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