

Inspection of Southmere Primary Academy

Ewart Street, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD7 3NR

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
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 at Southmere Primary Academy greet visitors with warmth and kindness. One pupil commented, 'You have to treat visitors to school like a guest that is coming to your house.' Leaders have created an environment that is vibrant and engaging. The school is a place that pupils enjoy coming to and where they feel safe.

Leaders have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve. Their high ambitions for the pupils are at the heart of all their plans and decisions. They know the pupils extremely well.

Pupils behave well around school, at lunchtimes and at playtimes. The behaviour policy is applied consistently by all staff. Pupils understand the consequences of poor behaviour. They also enjoy 'buying' rewards from the school swap shop when they behave consistently well. Pupils insist that bullying is rare and they know that they could rely on trusted adults to help them should any bullying take place.

Leaders have a strong commitment to developing pupils into successful and confident citizens. They plan for pupils to have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These activities are free to attend and are widely accessed by pupils. Pupils are proud to represent their school in a variety of local sporting competitions.

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

Leaders have planned an ambitious curriculum. In all subjects, they have identified the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn. There is a clear sequence of learning that pupils follow from Year 1 to Year 6. In mathematics, pupils regularly practise basic skills, such as times tables. They often revisit and revise important knowledge. This helps pupils to deepen their understanding. In early years, the curriculum is less well developed. Leaders have not identified as clearly the knowledge and skills that they want the children to learn across their time in Nursery and Reception.

Leaders have introduced a consistent structure to how lessons are taught. This structure is designed to ensure that learning is regularly revisited so that pupils' knowledge deepens and grows over time. In geography, pupils learn to use globes, atlases and maps in ever more detail as they progress through the school. On some occasions, teachers do not plan activities that are closely matched to the needs of the pupils. When this happens, pupils become less engaged.

Leaders are determined that every pupil will do well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders believe that nothing is more important than pupils learning to read. Teachers are well trained and have expertise in the teaching of reading. They teach pupils to read well. The school's chosen phonics scheme is taught consistently well by teachers who are experts in the teaching of reading. Teachers regularly check that pupils are keeping up with their

reading and provide focused support for those who struggle or slip behind. These strengths in reading are not reflected in the outcomes achieved by Year 6 pupils in national assessments in 2022. These pupils were adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The early years environment is rich in language and vocabulary. There is a strong focus on communication and language. Children are supported well by adults to settle in and make friends. Leaders have devised a strong curriculum for children in the early years. Because of this, children are provided with engaging opportunities to learn that ensure they make good progress in all areas of learning. Children behave well and respond to high expectations and clear routines. Children in early years have many opportunities to develop their mathematical skills. They have story books that promote measuring and counting. However, it is not clear how what children learn in the early years links to their learning in foundation subjects in the next stage of their education.

There is a strong commitment to meeting the specific needs of every individual pupil. Staff know all the pupils very well. Pupils with SEND receive high-quality support. They are well supported by adults, and they have the curriculum adapted to meet their needs.

Leaders know how important it is to provide pupils with a range of stimulating experiences to build their interests and their self-esteem. Pupils access a wide variety of extra-curricular clubs. Staff encourage high levels of involvement from pupils. Leaders check attendance and ensure that the most vulnerable pupils access these clubs. This broadens horizons for all pupils. Pupils, such as those in the girls' football team, are proud to represent their school in a range of sporting contexts. All pupils learn a number of musical instruments over their time at the school. This develops their performance skills and their self-confidence.

Through the curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE), pupils learn to lead healthy lives. They learn about the differences between people. They are tolerant and inclusive. They are very well prepared for their next stages. Pupils have high aspirations. One pupil captured the views of many in saying, 'You can be anything you want to be when you grow up, but you will be a good person.'

Members of the Academy Advisory Board (AAB) and trustees share leaders' unequivocal commitment to a community that faces many challenges. AAB members know the school well and work with leaders to ensure pupils are receiving a good education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding. They ensure that staff receive regular training. All staff know the signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. When they have concerns about pupils, they report these concerns to leaders.

Records of safeguarding concerns demonstrate leaders' commitment to ensuring that pupils are kept safe.

Pupils learn about risks and how to keep themselves safe, including when using technology.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On some occasions, teachers do not provide activities that are sharply focused on the knowledge that they want pupils to learn. When this happens, some pupils become disengaged and do not learn as well as they could. Teachers need to ensure that the activities that they set pupils help them to consistently learn the knowledge in the planned curriculum.
- The precise knowledge children must know and remember is not yet fully identified in the early years curriculum. Children are not as well prepared for the next stage in their education as they might be. Leaders should continue to refine the early years curriculum so that it builds sequentially and all children are even better prepared for key stage 1.

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	146798
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10267777
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy special sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	389
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Steven Hodsman
Head of academy	Rachael Binns
Website	www.smpa.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school has a nursery for four-year-olds.
- The current head of academy took up post in September 2019.
- The school is a larger-than-average primary school.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.

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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and design, and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with curriculum leaders, spoke to pupils and teachers, visited lessons and looked at their work. The inspectors heard pupils read.

- Inspectors met with the head of academy, assistant principals, subject leaders and other members of staff. They also met with representatives from the trust and those responsible for governance.
- The inspectors talked to staff about their role in keeping pupils safe. They also talked to staff about workload, and about the amount and quality of training and support they receive from leaders.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes. The inspectors gathered pupils' views from both formal and informal discussions.

Inspection team

Dughall McCormick, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Helen Hussey	Ofsted Inspector
Tracy Turner	Ofsted Inspector

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