

Inspection of a good school: Silverdale Primary Academy

Perth Road, St Leonards-on-Sea TN37 7EA

Inspection dates:

10 and 11 October 2023

Outcome

Silverdale Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

The principal of this school is Jonathan Morris. This school is part of University of Brighton Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Dr John Smith, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Professor Christopher Pole.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils develop impeccable manners at Silverdale Primary Academy. Mutual respect and politeness are at the heart of the school's ethos. Staff model respectful and kind interactions. As a result, the school is a happy and positive environment where pupils feel safe.

The school has high aspirations for all pupils. Consequently, pupils work hard to meet these expectations in their learning and behaviour. Pupils relish being challenged in their learning and persevere to overcome any difficulties. They are particularly motivated by the 'ninja code'. Pupils are keen to 'collect' the ninja characters who embody the values the school expects pupils to display. The values include ambition, courage and determination. Pupils aspire to become an 'ultimate ninja,' which means they have demonstrated all the values.

Behaviour in school is positive. Pupils understand that they are expected to be ready, respectful and safe. They are keen to be rewarded for positive behaviour. Pupils trust adults to listen to them if they have a concern and know that staff will help them.

Pupils experience a range of additional activities. This includes many different sports clubs. All pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, benefit from this inspiring offer.

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

The curriculum is well planned and sequenced in almost all subjects. It is ambitious for all pupils, and staff adapt this carefully for disadvantaged pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have precisely identified what they

intend pupils to learn and in what order. For example, in Year 2, pupils learn about continents and oceans, and this is built on in Year 4, when pupils learn about the human and physical processes of coasts. This helps pupils usually to learn well over time. The school provides helpful information to parents and carers about what pupils study in school to support learning at home. Leaders acknowledge that the mathematics curriculum requires further refinement.

Staff have expert subject knowledge. They use this to explain new content clearly. Teachers routinely revisit important concepts, and this helps pupils to build secure learning over time. Pupils are supported to connect new ideas with what they have learned before. Staff make careful checks on pupils' learning. They use information about pupils' understanding to inform future teaching. This helps pupils to remember the most important knowledge and skills. Staff use small-group catch-ups to address gaps in pupils' learning effectively. As a result, pupils who fall behind are supported to keep up. The support for pupils with SEND is highly effective. Staff tailor their teaching and provide bespoke support. Teachers routinely work alongside parents to review the progress that these pupils make. As a result, pupils with SEND are helped to learn the curriculum well.

The teaching of reading is now a strength of the school. Leaders have taken effective action to address historically weaker results. From the start of Reception, staff closely follow the ambitious phonics programme. Struggling readers are supported very effectively. Pupils read books that are tightly matched to the sounds they have learned. This enables them to develop confidence and fluency. Older readers develop a strong love of reading and enjoy visiting the vibrant library. They read a broad range of books, which provides insights into different cultures and time periods.

Pupils enjoy positive attitudes towards learning. As a result, lessons are calm, and this enables pupils to focus. The school has taken effective action to improve many pupils' attendance, but disadvantaged pupils do not attend regularly enough. This means that they are missing important learning and have gaps in their understanding when they return to school.

Personal development is a strength of the school. Leaders strongly focus on supporting pupils who are disadvantaged. This enables these pupils to have good access to opportunities to develop their interests, such as music lessons. Pupils are helped to develop strong leadership skills. This includes older pupils responsibly supporting younger children at lunchtime. The members of the active school council have key roles that contribute to making a positive difference to the school community.

Leaders at all levels are effective. The trust board takes seriously its responsibilities for equalities. It supports the work of the relatively new local governing board. It takes staff workload into account when making key decisions about further work to improve the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Persistent absence for some pupils is too high. This means that some disadvantaged pupils miss out on important learning. Leaders must refine and focus their approaches to working with parents to reduce persistent absence rapidly for disadvantaged pupils.

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 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 good in March 2018.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	141713
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10288048
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	630
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Professor Christopher Pole
CEO of the trust	Dr John Smith
Principal	Jonathan Morris
Website	www.silverdaleprimaryacademy.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	20 and 21 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of University of Brighton Academies Trust.
- The school does not currently use alternative provisions for any pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the principal and other members of the leadership team. The lead inspector also met with a group of trustees, members of the local governing body and the deputy chief executive officer.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, geography and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum,

visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons. They also spoke to pupils in lessons and during play- and lunchtime.
- The inspectors considered a range of documents, including leaders' evaluations of the school, the school improvement plan and minutes of governors' meetings.
- The inspectors gathered evidence to explore the impact of pupils' behaviour, the school's wider curriculum offer and how leaders support staff with their workload.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector spoke to parents and considered their responses to Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector took account of the views of staff through conversations and the responses to the online staff survey.
- Pupils were talked to throughout the inspection to gain their views about the school. The views of pupils were also considered through Ofsted's survey.

Inspection team

Toby Martlew, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Caroline Clarke

Ofsted Inspector

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