

Inspection of Silkstone Primary School

High Street, Silkstone, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S75 4LR

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 December 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Silkstone Primary School is a school full of respect and acceptance. Everyone enacts the school mantra of 'A school with a soul'. This means that staff and pupils feel valued and cared for. Pupils trust adults to help them with any issues or worries they may have. Pupils are kind to each other, tolerant and accepting. Pupils are confident and articulate. The school has high expectations that pupils will behave well and they do across all parts of the school day. Pupils learn carefully developed routines, so that they can work together in a collaborative way.

Leaders are ambitious for all children to excel academically and to develop the skills and attributes that they need to thrive in the world. Pupils achieve well. The four school golden rules also inspire pupils to 'be their best self.' Therefore, pupils are motivated to work and to be resilient.

Pupils develop a secure understanding of how to be physically and mentally healthy. All pupils can discuss the importance of this. Pupils also know how to stay safe online. Pupils have many opportunities to take on a range of responsibilities. For instance, there are: members of school council, eco-warriors, outdoor assistants and well-being warriors. The school council has an impact in their local community by fundraising for charities and organising music events for senior citizens.

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

Following the previous inspection in 2020, the school has improved the quality of education provided. It has effectively reconsidered areas of the curriculum. The school has now clearly defined what they want pupils to know and in what order. Pupils achieve well, overall. Pupils are able to remember what they have learned. For example, they start lessons with an entry task. Pupils talk about what they have learned in previous sessions. This helps them to remember and learn new knowledge. Some areas of the curriculum are still more developed than others. For example, in science, pupils are able to think like scientists. They use skills of prediction, analysis and evaluation to reach their own conclusions. The school also considers ways for pupils to learn outside of the classroom. In geography, pupils complete fieldwork in the local area and learn to use maps and atlases. They also develop this learning during trips, such as to the Peak District.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are very well supported. They access an ambitious curriculum that enables them to learn successfully alongside their peers. Plans to support these pupils contain clear targets that are well known and understood. This provides staff with the information they need to provide precise and effective support.

While most pupils achieve well, sometimes, a few pupils find their work too hard, or too easy. The resources that will most effectively help or challenge pupils are sometimes not given enough consideration. For those few pupils that struggle with their learning, for example, occasionally, there is an over-reliance on support from

additional adults to help them to complete their work. This hampers pupils' ability to apply what they know with fluency, confidence and independence.

The majority of pupils learn to read fluently and with accuracy. Pupils read books that are matched closely to their phonics knowledge. Reading areas across school are purposeful and inviting. The school provides creative incentives to encourage pupils to read. Pupils enjoy reading. However, approaches to teaching phonics are sometimes inconsistent. For a small number of pupils, learning is not well matched to pupils' next steps in learning. Pupils who have fallen behind are not always given the time they need to practise the sounds they learn. This delays their ability to catch up.

Pupils have high attendance. The school analyses attendance and looks for trends. They ensure that good attendance is prioritised across the school community. Where there are instances of low attendance, the school can show swift improvement from the support given to families.

The school puts great emphasis on pupils' personal development. There is a well-developed curriculum for personal, social and health education. The school's curriculum includes information pupils need to know to stay safe in their community. Pupils have a good understanding of equality and diversity. They can discuss issues related to racism with maturity and can apply their knowledge of historical figures, such as Rosa Parks. Pupils have a secure understanding of fundamental British values. They can give examples of how this is enacted in the school, such as through voting within school council.

Children in the early years are happy and feel safe. Staff and children share positive relationships. Children respond well to routines and settle quickly. However, the quality of education in early years is not consistently good. The curriculum does not clearly identify how children will build their knowledge in all areas of learning. The school has not fully identified the most important knowledge that it wants children to learn. This hampers the ability of staff to effectively check children's progress and identify and plan for their next steps in learning. This means that learning is not always well matched to children's varying needs. Therefore, some children do not fully make the progress of which they are capable.

In some areas, the early years learning environment is not planned with sufficient purpose. For example, children are not always provided with the resources they need to be creative in their play and to self-initiate learning. Opportunities to encourage children to count, to recognise numbers or write letters while playing in their post office are not fully utilised.

Staff are incredibly positive about the support they receive from leaders. Governors are aware of their statutory responsibilities. They use their skill and experience to provide appropriate challenge and support. They are often in school and spend time learning about the curriculum from subject leaders. This helps them to effectively hold the school to account.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In early years, the school has not fully identified the important knowledge that it wants children to learn in all areas of learning. This means that children are not always able to build effectively on what they already know. The school must set out clearly the important knowledge that children need to learn in all areas of learning. It needs to ensure that staff use the checks they make on children's learning and progress effectively to identify and adapt learning to reflect children's varying needs.
- The early years learning environment does not always support children to effectively develop their knowledge and skills across all areas of learning. Children have limited opportunities to consolidate their learning, develop their independence or practise new vocabulary. The school needs to ensure the environment is planned purposefully and that the resources selected meet children's needs.
- For a few pupils, work is sometimes not well matched to their needs. In particular, pupils who struggle with aspects of their learning, do not always have their needs met. This means that they cannot apply what they know and can do with increasing fluency and independence. The school needs to ensure the curriculum is consistently well adapted to meet these pupils' needs and that adults that provide additional support are always deployed effectively.
- Pupils who have fallen behind in phonics do not have enough opportunities to practise their phonics knowledge. The school needs to ensure that any gaps in pupils' phonic knowledge are identified and used effectively to support pupils who need help to catch up.

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	106602
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10289912
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	184
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sophy Smith
Headteacher	Sally Adams
Website	silkstoneprimary.com
Dates of previous inspection	29 and 30 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative providers of education.
- The proportion of pupils that are eligible for a free school meal is below average.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since 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.
- Inspectors held meetings with school leaders and members of the local governing body about their evaluation of the school and any improvement planning.

- To evaluate the quality of education, inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and geography. For each deep dive, 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.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils in groups and individually about their experiences of school.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons at different times of the day and at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors evaluated all the responses to Ofsted's staff, pupil and parental surveys. An inspector also spoke to some parents at collection and drop off.
- Alongside the school's special educational needs coordinator, inspectors visited pupils with SEND in lessons and checked how their individual plans are used by teachers.

Inspection team

Becky Austwick, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Gill Holland

Ofsted Inspector

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