

Inspection of South Failsworth Community Primary School

Paddock Lane, Failsworth, Manchester M35 0NY

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 April 2024

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	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish because of the care that they receive from staff at this warm and friendly school. They are celebrated as individuals. Pupils learn about what makes them unique. This makes them feel valued and happy.

The school is ambitious for what pupils can achieve academically and in their wider school life. Many pupils achieve these high standards in most subjects.

Pupils know the school's 'be' rules and they try hard to follow them. They are welcoming and polite towards adults and each other. Pupils work and play cooperatively. Children in the early years follow instructions and listen carefully. They are enthused when sharing their learning experiences with others. Older pupils act as role models through their responsibility as a 'buddy'.

Pupils benefit from the school's exceptional programme for personal development. They enjoy attending the comprehensive range of clubs, activities and trips which staff have thoughtfully designed to enhance their talents and interests. They take part in a programme with a school in a contrasting locality to develop their communication and teamwork skills through a range of activities. Pupils understand the importance of fundamental British values. They demonstrate high levels of respect for, and interest in, those with different backgrounds or beliefs from their own. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

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

The school has designed an aspirational curriculum that helps most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to learn well. From the early years, the school has carefully considered the curriculum content. It has established the order in which pupils will learn new information and when they will learn it.

In the main, staff are knowledgeable about the subjects that they teach. During lessons, teachers use well-established strategies to help pupils revisit previous learning and embed knowledge into their long-term memory. Where pupils have misconceptions, teachers typically spot them quickly and take appropriate actions to address them.

The school usually uses information from checks on learning and achievement to make necessary amendments to curriculum content and delivery. However, in a small number of subjects, the school has not sufficiently developed leadership expertise. As a result, some staff do not have the support that they need to implement the curriculum as effectively as the school intends.

The school places reading at the forefront of the curriculum. Staff have chosen purposeful texts to help foster pupils' love of reading and to give them experience of a range of different cultures and experiences. Pupils throughout the school read

from high-quality texts. These books form the basis of learning in many subjects and help pupils to make links across their learning.

The school's early reading curriculum is well embedded. Staff who deliver the phonics programme are knowledgeable and skilled. In the Nursery Year, children practise learning rhyming patterns and listening to the sounds around them. This prepares them well for learning from the school's phonics programme as soon as they start in the Reception Year. Most pupils become confident, fluent readers by the time that they start in key stage 2.

The school has highly effective systems to identify and support pupils with SEND. Staff are knowledgeable about how to respond to different pupils' needs. They put in place helpful adaptations to assist pupils with their learning.

Pupils behave well. They are compassionate towards each other. Many show maturity in their understanding of other pupils' needs. They are confident and proud of their school.

The school has made deliberate decisions to extend pupils' learning far beyond the academic curriculum. It helps pupils to consider their future aspirations and to aim extremely high. Pupils understand very well what it is to be a positive citizen. They take an active part in supporting their local area through community work, for example litter picking. When visiting the mayor, they experience being councillors. Outdoor learning is a key part of the school's curriculum and provides many opportunities for pupils to develop important life skills such as teamwork and innovation. Older pupils further develop these skills through the opportunity to take part in residential visits.

Staff said that they feel well supported by the school. They appreciate the school prioritising their well-being when it introduces changes.

Governors know the school well. In the main, they understand the school's priorities. However, in a small number of areas, some of the information that they receive goes unchecked. Where this happens, governors do not understand the specific details that will help the school to continue to progress. This means that on occasion, they do not hold the school to account as effectively as they could.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some areas, the information which governors receive lacks clarity. As a result, they do not have sufficient understanding of some of the important details of school priorities and improvement strategies. Consequently, they are not able to

hold leaders to account as effectively as they could. The governing body should ensure that the school provides clear, specific and precise information to enable governors to contribute effectively to school improvement.

- The leadership of a small number of subjects is underdeveloped. This means that on occasion, teachers are not provided with the guidance that they need to deliver the curriculum as effectively as the school intends. The school should ensure that it develops expertise in subject leadership so that teachers are helped to deliver the subject curriculums effectively.

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	105656
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10289892
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	450
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ann Hanaghan
Headteacher	Vicki Foy
Website	www.southfailsworth.oldham.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 September 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.

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 the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, geography, music and science. They met with subject leaders and with teachers. Inspectors visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning.

- The lead inspector observed pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors considered the curriculum in other subjects. They met with leaders, looked at documentation and reviewed pupils' work in these subjects.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the vice-chair of governors. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors met with leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils during meetings, lessons and at lunchtime. They reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- Inspectors looked at a range of policies and documentation relating to pupils' welfare and education. They observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also spoke with some parents during the inspection.
- 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.

Inspection team

Sheena Clark, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Wendy Tracey	Ofsted Inspector
Patrick Rayner	Ofsted Inspector

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