

Southmere Primary School

Ewart Street, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD7 3NR

Inspection dates

29–30 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders have not established clearly defined roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability between the academy trust, the executive headteacher and the senior leaders in school. This means there is not a clearly understood strategic view of the school.
- The relatively new school leadership team are dedicated to improving standards. However, school improvement planning is weak and leaders' monitoring of the impact of actions is not focused enough on the progress pupils are making. As a result, improvements are taking place too slowly.
- The quality of teaching and learning is too variable across the school.
- Attendance is below the national average. Too many pupils are persistently absent or do not arrive at school on time.
- Governors demonstrate a real desire to improve the school, but are unclear about their roles and responsibilities in relation to those of the trust. Therefore they do not always challenge and support leaders appropriately.
- The curriculum does not meet the needs of pupils. Opportunities to develop basic skills, knowledge and understanding in subjects other than English and mathematics are very limited so pupils do not learn as quickly as they could.
- Some actions are being taken to ensure that pupil premium funding is used to raise standards for disadvantaged pupils, but planning and monitoring of the impact of spending are not robust or well enough organised to check that this is fully effective.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' behaviour has improved. Pupils demonstrate kindness, care and respect for others.
- Teaching strategies in phonics and number in the early years and key stage 1 are helping children to improve their basic skills.
- Where teachers' subject knowledge is strong and they have high expectations of pupils then progress is more rapid.
- The head of school has a determination to improve teaching and learning. She is not afraid to make difficult decisions to ensure this happens.
- Children's outcomes in early years are improving due to careful assessment of their starting points and regular checks on their learning.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and governance by:
 - clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of the trust, school leaders and governors so that everyone understands their role and who they are accountable to
 - creating an effective plan to support rapid school improvement that clearly identifies priorities, who will lead and monitor each action, when this will happen, and how progress will be checked
 - carefully and regularly checking the progress pupils are making from their starting points
 - devising a broad and engaging curriculum that will effectively develop pupils' basic skills, knowledge and understanding across a wide range of subjects
 - ensuring middle leaders know precisely what aspects of their subjects need to improve and that they hold teachers to account for the progress their pupils are making
 - ensuring that teachers have the knowledge and skills to teach subjects at greater depth.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils' outcomes improve, by:
 - making sure assessment information is accurate and used carefully to check that each pupil is making at least good progress
 - gaining a good understanding of the expectations of the curriculum, particularly the expectations in English and mathematics at higher levels
 - making sure that pupils apply their improved phonics skills when reading and are helped to deepen their understanding of the books they read
 - ensuring that pupils' reasoning and problem solving in mathematics is developed through the application of taught skills.
- Improve outcomes for children in the early years by:
 - increasing the opportunity and time they have to learn outdoors, particularly for children in Nursery
 - further developing the outdoor areas to promote and encourage children to learn, practise and develop their basic skills throughout the day.
- Work effectively with parents to improve attendance, particularly for the more vulnerable pupils.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the use of pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- All leaders, in the trust and in school, are aware that much needs to be done to improve outcomes for pupils. However, plans for school improvement have not had the desired impact so outcomes for pupils are not improving quickly enough.
- Initially, because the trust recognised the need for rapid improvement, its members provided clear support to the school, putting in place a partner for achievement, an executive headteacher and an experienced governor. However, the support needed to develop the skills and understanding of the school leadership team has diminished over the last year. Leaders have not worked effectively together to develop an in-depth understanding of whether or not pupils and groups of pupils are making progress. As a result, leaders do not target support well enough to those pupils who need it, and the progress pupils make is too slow.
- Leaders have not made sure there is a clear structure and delegation of duties and responsibilities. They have not clearly identified who is accountable for specific areas of improvement and this has hampered progress.
- There are too many different action plans and priorities with no shared understanding or clear direction of what needs doing and when. Uneven delegation of actions has meant there is simply too much for some individuals to do, so improvements are not embedded.
- The management of teachers' performance does not relate closely enough to school improvement priorities. It is only recently that leaders have started to hold teachers to account for the standards their pupils are achieving.
- While leaders have focused on the pupils meeting the standards expected for their age, they have taken too little account of the progress pupils make relative to their starting points. They have not checked if pupils are making enough progress to achieve well.
- The curriculum is weak. Leaders have not made sure that pupils have regular opportunities to learn across a variety of subjects. Leaders have organised specialists to lead an occasional activity, such as a visiting artist, but opportunities to develop a broad understanding across a range of subjects in class are few.
- Where leaders have worked together and identified areas of weakness carefully, they have put effective systems and strategies in place which are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. For example, staff training and a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics is starting to help pupils to read with more fluency.
- Leaders have not defined plans for the spending of pupil premium funding well enough. Similarly, leaders have not evaluated the impact of previous funding for disadvantaged pupils to check that actions are resulting in rapid improvement. For example, they have not considered how well the most able disadvantaged pupils are being supported to reach their potential.
- Leaders have used the additional sports funding to improve achievement for everyone. Pupils now have access to a wider range of clubs and sports activities led by specialists; consequently, more pupils are taking part in after-school clubs. In addition, leaders have successfully used the funding to engage a group of pupils completing an award-driven adventure challenge.

Governance of the school

- Governance of the school has been in transition, with many recent changes in membership. The trust has recently, for example, appointed a new, experienced chair. Some of the changes, along with governors' uncertainty about their delegated role, have meant that the challenge and support given to the leadership team has not been rigorous enough.
- Governors have questioned leaders in meetings, but have not challenged them for further information or followed up concerns they have raised. For example, governors discussed attendance, but the focus was on families asking for leave of absence and did not include challenging school leaders about the effectiveness of their work to reduce persistent absenteeism.
- Governors value the monitoring and data reports they receive from the trust. They rely on these to inform them about how well the school is doing and which actions need to be taken next. However, they are unclear about which areas they should be addressing and which are the trust's responsibility so necessary actions not being taken. For example, while governors have an awareness of the pupil premium funding, they have not checked how successfully it is supporting disadvantaged pupils to make better progress.
- Governors do not receive sufficiently detailed information about the progress pupils and groups of pupils are making to be able to challenge leaders well enough.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff have a good understanding of what to do if they believe that a child may be at risk of harm. Training is regular for all staff. Record-keeping and contact with other agencies is robust, ensuring that pupils' needs are quickly addressed.
- Pupils have regular teaching and assemblies on how to keep safe, including road safety and internet safety lessons.
- There are clear systems and checks in place if pupils do not turn up at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching and learning require improvement because there is too much variability in teachers' subject knowledge, their explanation of tasks, and their expectations of the quality of work produced by pupils.
- Assessment is not accurate enough to ensure teachers know what their pupils need to do next to improve. In daily lessons, some adults are using new systems effectively to check on pupils' work and move them on. However, teachers do not check regularly enough against starting points to ensure that pupils are making at least good progress over time.
- Not all teachers fully understand the national expectations in English and mathematics, or how to challenge pupils to reach a greater depth in their learning. Over time, this means that pupils do not make the rapid progress needed from their often low starting points, to reach the standard expected for their age. It also means the most able pupils are not challenged to reach higher standards.
- The way teachers help pupils to understand new learning varies widely. In examples where this is done well, pupils quickly get to grips with new knowledge, understanding

and skills. For example, one child, when asked what helped him most to learn, said: 'Our teacher shows us how to do it on the board and then tells us what she expects from us. She shows us how to make our work even better.' When teachers do not demonstrate new concepts well, misconceptions arise and learning halts.

- Teachers' and teaching assistants' use of questioning to challenge and deepen pupils' understanding is inconsistent. This is a barrier to the most able pupils reaching greater depth in their learning.
- The teaching of reading does not focus enough on developing pupils' understanding of the books they read; therefore some pupils find it hard to talk about the story and why certain characters act as they do.
- Where teachers use new systems effectively to regularly check pupils' work, pupils have a much clearer understanding of what they can do well and how to improve. In the best examples, teachers accurately identify when pupils are ready for more challenge, helping them to make more rapid gains in their learning. Teachers encourage pupils to do homework to practise and check their learning. Pupils speak with animation about some of the incentives on offer for completing homework, including raffle tickets ('the more homework you do, the more tickets you get and the more chance you have to win a prize!') and 'Spellopoly', where learning is tested out as pupils move around a board, collecting pretend money and prizes. Homework contributes less effectively to pupils' learning in reading.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Some children take pride in their work, but this is not consistent across the school. Where teachers' expectations for the quality and presentation is high and planned, learning is well matched to pupils' needs.
- Some of the teaching to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is helping pupils learn to be good citizens. For example, pupils were able to talk about why it is important to show respect to everyone. Older pupils are also developing an understanding about what it means to live in modern Britain. For example, they discussed their learning about Martin Luther King and apartheid and equal rights with confidence. However, the quality of the teaching in this area of the curriculum, particularly in religious education, is not consistently strong.
- Pupils are happy, confident and feel safe. They say there is very little bullying and that where it does happen, adults step in to make sure it stops.
- Pupils spoke warmly about their confidence in the care, support and guidance offered to them by the head of school. They felt she 'will always help us sort out a problem'.
- Adults create an attractive and safe environment for pupils to learn in.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Despite the school's effort to improve the attendance of the most vulnerable pupils, attendance overall is in the bottom 10% of schools nationally. The rate of persistent absence is high and in the top 10% of schools nationally. Overall, this picture is not

improving, except for a minority of disadvantaged pupils.

- The proportion of pupils who are late is too high. This lateness occurs regularly, resulting in pupils missing the first part of lessons and impacting on their understanding and learning.
- The drive to improve pupils' behaviour and their attitude to learning over the past year has been effective. Attitudes to learning in class are generally good. Where teaching is not as successful in promoting learning, low-level disruption can sometimes occur.
- Pupils are polite and show consistent helpfulness and respect to others. One child said: 'We are school buddies. We help to take care of each other, little ones and older ones. Everyone.'
- Adults support pupils in demonstrating good behaviour in the times that are not as structured. They constantly model and remind pupils how to walk calmly and use good manners, for example during transition between lessons, going out to play and at lunchtime.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because the progress pupils make is inconsistent over their time in school.
- Actions taken by leaders and teachers to improve teaching and learning have not had enough impact on improving progress for all pupils.
- Assessments on entry to school have been unreliable in the past, so it is difficult to establish pupils' individual starting points. Pupils' work shows that they make at least steady progress through key stage 1. Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress through key stage 1, but their attainment is still below that of other pupils nationally, particularly in reading.
- The pace of improvement in progress in key stage 2 has not been rapid enough. While pupils currently in Year 6 and Year 3 are working at similar levels to pupils nationally, in other years a large proportion of pupils are working below national expectations.
- Where leaders take focused, well-planned actions to improve teaching and learning, outcomes are improving. For example, in phonics, pupils' rate of progress has increased, particularly for the disadvantaged pupils, due to high-quality training for all staff. The large difference between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally is diminishing.
- In the past, leaders and teachers have not tracked well enough the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The progress these pupils have made in reading is not strong enough during their time in school. They make better progress in mathematics.
- The progress of different groups of pupils in key stage 2 is uneven. The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, do not make as much progress as most-able pupils nationally in reading and mathematics.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The new leader for the early years has quickly identified strengths and areas needing rapid improvement.
- Historically, attainment and progress of children in the early years has been very weak. In the past there have been inaccuracies in assessment. There is now a shared view of children's attainment and a better understanding of the progress they are making.
- The targets for this year are challenging and children are demonstrating strong progress towards reaching them.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have received training and are working well as a team to develop children's speech and language skills and their use of phonics. They are using effective questioning to support children in becoming enquiring, independent learners.
- Adults in both the Nursery and the Reception classes have created a welcoming, safe and nurturing environment where expectations of good behaviour are high. Personal development and the care children receive are good.
- Adults have made the Nursery environment inviting and it is well organised. There are plentiful opportunities for children to develop skills in a range of indoor activities in areas of learning which are engaging. However, outdoor provision is extremely limited. Children only have access to the outdoor area for half an hour a day. The provision is not planned to promote effective learning across the foundation stage areas of learning.
- Partnerships with parents are highly valued. An early years teacher leads a 'stay and play' session each week to encourage parents, carers and young children to become part of school life.

School details

Unique reference number	141189
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10020713

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	404
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	David Brown
Head of school	Delyth Roberts
Telephone number	01274 575 178
Website	www.southmereacademy.org
Email address	delyth.roberts@southmereacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about pupil premium funding, sports funding and governance on its website.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about pupil premium, sport premium and governance.
- Southmere Primary School is larger than the average primary school.
- The school became an academy in September 2014 and is part of the Northern Education Trust.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as a second language is well above average.
- There is provision for children in the early years in a Nursery and two Reception classes. Children in the Nursery attend part time, in either the morning or the afternoon.

- The school meets the current floor standards. These are the minimum expectations of pupils' achievement in English and mathematics set by the government.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in a range of lessons or parts of lessons.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in a range of subjects. For English and mathematics this review took place alongside middle leaders.
- Together with senior leaders, inspectors looked at school improvement planning, pupils' assessment data, information about the performance of teachers, documents relating to behaviour and safety and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Meetings took place with the head of school, the director of primary academies from the trust, the executive headteacher, the academy achievement partner, senior leaders, a representative from the governing body and groups of pupils.
- Inspectors heard pupils read.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day. They considered the five responses on Parent View.

Inspection team

Kate Rowley, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Tim Scargill

Ofsted Inspector

Chris Cook

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

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 www.gov.uk/ofsted.

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 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017