

# Sundorne Infant School

Corndon Crescent, Sundorne Road, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY1 4LE

## Inspection dates

1–2 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is variable across the school.
- The most able pupils are not challenged sufficiently in their learning to reach the standards of which they are capable. Some teachers' expectations are not high enough.
- Progress for all groups of pupils across all year groups in the core subjects is not yet consistently strong.
- The higher standards in writing across the school are not yet being seen in other curriculum subjects.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their spiritual and cultural understanding of the world.
- The newly federated governing body does not yet challenge leaders with rigour. This is because they do not receive sufficient information about improvement priorities and additional funding.
- Individual support plans for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are not yet sharply focused.
- The quality of teaching for pupils who require additional support is variable. Leaders do not monitor the quality of this support well enough.
- The early years foundation stage requires improvement. The indoor environment is less stimulating than the outdoor environment.
- Some staff in the early years foundation stage have not received appropriate training so cannot support children's learning well enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. There is mutual respect and a powerful sense of shared values in the school.
- Pupils are safe and well looked-after at school. They behave well in lessons and around school.
- Leaders and governors are committed to improving the school. They have the skills and capacity to make further improvements.
- The new leadership team has worked at pace to halt the decline in standards seen over the last few years. Outcomes are improving, including those for disadvantaged pupils.
- There are pockets of strong teaching that exist within the school. Writing standards are high.
- The early years outdoor environment enriches children's learning opportunities.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that:
  - work is pitched appropriately and is sufficiently challenging for the more able pupils, enabling them to make accelerated progress
  - the high expectations seen in writing are reflected in other curriculum subjects.
  
- Improve leadership, management and governance by:
  - ensuring that improvement planning targets are specific and measurable and focus on outcomes, enabling governors to monitor progress towards these outcomes more effectively
  - providing governors with accurate information about additional funding so that they can check that its use provides value for money and is targeted to have the most impact
  - monitoring the provision and outcomes for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities more closely to ensure that these pupils are receiving effective support
  - ensuring that the curriculum incorporates all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
  
- Sustain recent improvements to pupils' progress and outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics so that:
  - the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standards and greater depth in their learning continues to rise
  - the difference in progress and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and others nationally continues to diminish.
  
- Take swift action to improve the early years provision so that:
  - the indoor environment for Reception children provides stimulating experiences, allowing children to be more creative and develop their thinking skills
  - staff receive the necessary training so that they can support the children more effectively in their learning
  - parents are more closely involved in initial assessments of their children's skills before the children start school
  - all groups of children make rapid progress from their starting points.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Significant changes have taken place in 2017 at Sundorne Infant School. The school has federated with Harlescott Junior School and there is now a federated governing body, known as the Haughmond Federation. A long period of instability at the school, with a lack of monitoring of pupils' performance, resulted in a declining trend in progress and outcomes for pupils. Federated governors took swift action to address this, through a restructure of the leadership team and appointment of an executive headteacher in January 2017. Leaders took swift action to address the decline in standards and, as a result, outcomes improved in 2017.
- While improvements have been made in early years and key stage 1, rates of progress remain uneven through the school, for all groups. As a result, pupils' outcomes across all subjects are inconsistent and some remain below those found nationally.
- While leaders have a monitoring plan in place, it does not impact sufficiently on improvements to the quality of teaching and learning. Leaders do not monitor the quality of teaching for pupils who receive additional interventions well enough. As a result, the support some pupils receive varies in quality and is not focused well enough on outcomes.
- Leaders do not ensure that individual plans for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities focus sharply enough on addressing pupils' barriers to learning. While leaders engage a range of agencies to help identify the support that pupils need, they do not consolidate this information into a clear plan of action. This means that staff are not able to target their interventions accurately enough.
- Leaders recognise that improvements need to be made to the early years provision, and have taken steps to address these. However, there is inconsistent practice within the early years foundation stage, and the indoor environment for Reception children does not provide rich opportunities for learning. Some members of staff in the early years foundation stage have not received training in this area.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Staff have the opportunity to plan together and incorporate a range of subjects through a cross-curricular theme. Leaders recognise that current curriculum planning does not incorporate all aspects of spiritual and cultural development. A curriculum review is planned for 2018.
- The school provides extra-curricular activities after school, but leaders could not provide information on the range of activities, or how many pupils take part. No after-school activities took place during the inspection.
- Pupils recognise the importance of school values and they told inspectors that they enjoy the values assemblies, where a different value is introduced regularly. Pupils have a strong sense of looking after each other, and this was evident at breaktimes and in discussions. Their knowledge of British values was less secure.
- Leadership capacity has improved this year, and middle leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in their areas of responsibility. The federation has enabled middle leaders to work more closely with colleagues from the junior school, ensuring continuity of approach. They value this, as

well as the additional professional development opportunities they have.

- The very small number of parents who responded to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about the school. Parents to whom inspectors spoke also shared this view, saying that their children were happy and safe at the school, and staff were approachable and supportive. The school's own parental questionnaires support these views.
- The use of pupil premium funding is having some impact on the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. However, there are still inconsistencies in progress and outcomes for this group of pupils. For example, although still below the national average, disadvantaged pupils have caught up with their peers in reading, but this is not the case for writing and mathematics.
- Governors are not yet able to see whether pupil premium spending is being used effectively because they are not provided with information in sufficient detail. Improvement planning is not detailed enough to enable governors to monitor the progress being made in improving pupils' outcomes. As a result, they are not able to challenge leaders with rigour and hold them to account.
- Sport premium funding is used well. Sports coaches work alongside teachers in PE lessons, ensuring that pupils access high-quality physical education. Pupils have now begun competing in sports activities with other schools.

## **Governance of the school**

- The newly federated governing body has re-invigorated the work of the governors following a period of instability in the school. They are committed to improving the school, and have a wide set of skills to be able to provide the right support and challenge.
- The recently introduced link governor role has had a positive impact on the focus of governors' work. School staff were able to attend the training that governors received in relation to this work. This means that staff now have a good understanding of what they can expect from their link governor. This work is in early stages of development and is not yet embedded.
- Governors visit the school regularly so that they can have a better understanding of the school's work.
- Governors are beginning to understand the performance information presented to them. This will enable them to challenge leaders more effectively about progress and outcomes in the future.
- Not all governors have completed their safeguarding training, but this is planned to take place in the near future. They do not yet regularly check that the single central record is compliant.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a clear culture of safeguarding that exists within the school, shared by all staff. Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and any concerns are followed up by leaders in a timely way. The school's new recording system for welfare

and behaviour concerns enables leaders to identify patterns and address concerns swiftly.

- Pupils with medical conditions are supported well in school. Staff receive training from health professionals to administer medication and staff ensure that pupils are able to take part in activities with their peers, regardless of their difficulties.
- Pupils feel safe in school and know who they can talk to if they have any worries. They told inspectors about how it was important to look out for their friends, and help each other.
- The checks leaders carry out when new staff are appointed to the school are thorough. Administrative errors on the single central record were corrected before the end of the inspection.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable across the school. While there is some strong teaching, it is not yet consistently good because expectations of what pupils can achieve are not routinely high enough.
- More-able pupils are not challenged consistently enough in their work. This was seen both in lessons and in pupils' work. Sometimes, pupils are given the same activity, regardless of their ability. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve vary across classes and year groups.
- While standards in writing have improved significantly, these high standards are not evident in other subjects. Pupils have fewer opportunities to write at length in their topic work.
- Expectations in pupils' work in other subjects are not as high as those seen in literacy and mathematics. Pupils of different abilities regularly complete the same activity and this limits their progress. Teaching of other subjects is variable. In some lessons, pupils are engaged in their learning and challenged to do their best. Inspectors saw pupils enthralled in a music activity, creating sounds and practising rhythms using kitchen equipment, inspired by a video clip of performers in the West End. In art lessons, however, pupils did not have the opportunity to use materials creatively or develop their techniques in drawing.
- The quality of teaching in intervention groups is variable. On several occasions, inspectors heard phonics sounds being modelled incorrectly. Leaders recognise that additional training is needed for some staff. Sometimes, pupils in these groups are not moved on quickly enough in their learning.
- On some occasions, spelling and grammar is being modelled incorrectly by staff in pupils' books and on classroom displays.
- Teachers' use of questioning is not consistent. When questioning is used well, pupils are encouraged to think more deeply as teachers probe their understanding further. On other occasions, teachers ask closed questions that do not extend pupils' thinking.

- Pupils are supported well in their reading in school and have the opportunity to read regularly. They use their phonics skills to decode words. Some pupils were able to talk about how they were helped with their reading at home. Leaders told inspectors that they would like to engage parents more in reading activities in the home.
- Teaching assistants give effective extra support to pupils in lessons if they are falling behind or need help.
- Teachers value the training they have received in writing and mathematics, and they have used this knowledge to plan activities that engage pupils in their learning and help them make progress. Pupils benefit from a range of practical resources in mathematics to support them in their learning and are developing skills in problem solving and reasoning.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' abilities are now more secure, and staff have opportunities to check each other's judgements of pupils' work. Leaders are now using additional information from standardised tests to make sure that assessment information is accurate. Teachers' use of assessment information is limited when planning lessons as pupils are often completing the same work.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pastoral support for pupils is strong and pupils told inspectors that they were looked after well and kept safe. As well as knowing who to talk to if they have a problem, older pupils know that they can try to help each other. They recognise that different pupils might have different needs, but said that 'it's ok to be different'.
- The school has recently appointed a family support worker who will be a regular point of contact between home and school.
- There is clear mutual respect between pupils and staff. Staff appreciate the code of conduct, which reminds them about their own behaviour towards pupils – smile, be kind.
- Pupils are confident to work independently in lessons. They enjoy being given extra responsibilities in the classroom and around school.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare at school, but if it happens, they know that they can talk to a member of staff and they will deal with the problem. Even though bullying is rare, leaders regularly promote anti-bullying activities to ensure that pupils know what to do if they are being bullied. Parents expressed no concerns about bullying.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in and around school and on the internet. They know that visitors who are wearing school badges are 'allowed to be in school'. Pupils talked confidently about how they are kept safe on the internet and know that if they see something on screen that they shouldn't, they can click on 'Hector the Protector' and tell a teacher.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Staff and parents agree that this is the case. Parents recognise that staff deal with issues in a sensitive way.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the school's behaviour policy. They know that they will 'move down the rocket' if they don't behave well.
- The school records and monitors incidents of inappropriate behaviour and records show that these are few.
- Pupils play together well at breaktimes and lunchtime. The large play area which is adjacent to the local secondary school is not currently fenced off, but, in the interim, there are high numbers of vigilant staff on duty to manage the risk. Plans are in place to install fencing very soon.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and show an interest in their learning. They move around the school sensibly and wear their uniform with pride. Pupils listen to each other, and to the teachers. They show respect for others. However, when teachers do not plan effectively or they have low expectations, pupils can lose interest in their learning and become distracted and start to distract others.
- Leaders have worked hard to improve attendance in the school. The level of absence has reduced and attendance is now nearly in line with the national average. There has been a significant drop in the rate of persistent absence this year.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- At the end of key stage 1, outcomes have improved but are not consistent across all subjects. In writing, outcomes are now above the national average, but are below for reading and mathematics.
- More pupils achieved greater depth in their learning this year; the proportion of most-able pupils achieving greater depth in mathematics is now in line with the national average and is higher in writing. Fewer pupils achieve greater depth in reading than those nationally.
- Leaders have taken effective action to address the poor outcomes seen in 2016 for disadvantaged pupils. 2017 has seen significant improvements for this group of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics, but their achievements are still below those seen nationally.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has risen in 2017, halting the decline seen in the previous year. It is now just below the national average. In 2017, the proportion of disadvantaged children who achieved a good level of development was higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who met the standard required in the Year 1 phonics screening check has risen year on year and is now just above the national average. Phonics outcomes for boys are now above the national average. However, phonics outcomes for disadvantaged pupils remain below the national average.

- Although improving, pupils' progress remains variable across all years and groups. Progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is weak in the early years provision, but is better in key stage 1. Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics for the last two years has been stronger for pupils in Year 2 than in Year 1.
- There are effective transition arrangements for pupils who are moving to the junior school. The new federation has enabled staff to work more closely together, sharing information about pupils' achievements and social and emotional needs so that pupils are ready for the next stage of their education.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- While more children are now achieving a good level of development in the early years, outcomes for different groups, and those in literacy and mathematics are not yet consistently strong.
- The proportion of children who have made expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics is below that seen nationally. Reading outcomes are now lower than they were in 2016.
- Boys' outcomes have improved from those seen in 2016 and are now broadly in line with outcomes seen nationally. The proportion of boys who achieved a good level of development is above national figures. However, outcomes for girls have seen a decline since 2016 and they are now below those seen nationally.
- Disadvantaged pupils' outcomes have improved significantly in 2017; their performance is now broadly in line with their non-disadvantaged peers nationally.
- The progress of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is weak in the early years. Leaders recognise this and are now ensuring that interventions are more focused in meeting the needs of this group of children. However, it is too early to see the impact of these actions.
- Leaders recognise that their assessment systems in the early years have not been robust enough. They have taken steps to address this, and the recently introduced system for measuring children's progress is more robust. However, this system is at an early stage and is not yet embedded.
- Leaders do not ensure that baseline information about children joining the school is accurate enough. Staff do not have the opportunity to visit children in the home and see what they can do. As a result, some baseline information is incomplete. Leaders are now taking steps to address this.
- Teaching in the early years is variable. This is because some staff have not been trained in working in the early years. Where strong practice exists, this is reflected in the way staff ask questions and model learning. Story-telling activities engage the children and help them to develop their thinking skills. Questions such as, 'What would you do if you were the little princess?' brought about responses such as, 'I'd find some other friends', or 'I'd tell the teacher', showing children's understanding of the text and their deeper thinking skills.

- The outdoor environment in the early years provides rich and stimulating experiences for children to engage in creative and exploratory play, providing the opportunity to develop their thinking skills. The indoor environment is less effective; activities are not as exciting and children are limited in the choices they can make.
- Children are safe in the early years provision and all welfare requirements are met.
- Children's learning journeys are well documented, and judgements about children's achievements are well evidenced. However, learning journeys do not yet include all the information necessary to enable all staff to work as effectively as they can with the children.

## School details

Unique reference number	123395
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10037871

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	352
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Jones
Executive Headteacher	Stephanie Peters
Telephone number	01743 362519
Website	<a href="http://www.sundorne-inf.shropshire.sch.uk">www.sundorne-inf.shropshire.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@sundorne-inf.shropshire.sch.uk">head@sundorne-inf.shropshire.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	2 May 2013

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Sundorne Infant School federated with Harlescott Junior School in January 2017. The federated governing body is called the Haughmond Federation.
- An executive headteacher was appointed to work across both schools in January 2017.
- The number of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The majority of pupils are White British.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups. They were accompanied by senior leaders for some of these observations.
- Inspectors met with pupils, talked to pupils about their learning and listened to a group of pupils read. Inspectors considered the very small number of completed pupil questionnaires. Inspectors and senior leaders carried out a joint scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents at the beginning of the school day, considered the very small number of responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire and looked at responses to the school's own parent surveys.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher and other senior and middle leaders. Inspectors spoke to a group of staff and took into account 40 responses to the Ofsted online staff questionnaire.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector met with the school's improvement adviser.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of school documents, including the self-evaluation and development plans, progress and outcomes information, school policies and minutes of the governing body. Information about behaviour, safeguarding and attendance was also seen. Child protection files and files for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities were seen.

## Inspection team

Deb Jenkins, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Allyson Taylor	Ofsted Inspector
Tracy Stone	Ofsted Inspector

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