

Inspection of a good school: Southborough Primary School

Southborough Lane, Bromley, Kent BR2 8AA

Inspection dates: 12–13 February 2020

Outcome

Southborough Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are well looked after in this school. Leaders and staff at all levels care about them and want them to achieve their very best. Pupils are eager to come to school every day. Parents and carers appreciate the many learning opportunities that are on offer.

Leaders have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. This is across a wide range of subjects. They ensure that all pupils receive effective support to achieve well. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils love to take part in various activities beyond the classroom. They perform in concerts and music festivals and compete in sports events. Pupils are proud of the vegetables they grow in the school's garden.

Pupils behave well, in and out of lessons. They are polite and well mannered. Adults at the school talk highly of how pupils treat them with kindness and respect all the time. Pupils are considerate and friendly towards each other. They told me that there are very few cases of bullying. If this does happen, adults sort the problem out immediately. Pupils were quick to add that staff support those involved to ensure that it does not happen again.

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

Leaders and staff have reviewed their curriculum and subject planning. In most subjects, learning is logically organised. This allows for pupils to gain significant knowledge over time. This is not yet the case in some subjects.

Leaders are united in their ambition for all pupils to learn how to read. They work with local nurseries and help them to develop children's early reading skills. Leaders build on these skills as soon as children join the school's Reception classes. Staff at all levels are clear about each stage of the school's phonics programme. They make sure that pupils read books which match the sounds they already know. However, pupils do not always get enough opportunities to blend the sounds they know to make words. This can hinder their fluency when reading.

Pupils show a genuine love of reading. They talk about their books with interest and are able to justify their choices of books. Older pupils can use more complex reading skills. For example, they can draw out conclusions based on what they have read so far. They also read with fluency and expression.

Pupils with SEND receive effective support when learning to read. Well-trained staff help these pupils make strong progress in their reading. This high-quality support extends to their other subjects.

The mathematics curriculum is well thought out. Teachers are clear about the end points that pupils should reach. These are ambitious aims, and most pupils reach or exceed these targets. Teachers introduce topics in a logical order. Pupils are secure in applying their knowledge of mathematics in different contexts.

Some subjects within the curriculum are more developed than others. In music for example, it is clear how pupils develop their skills and knowledge over time. By Year 6, pupils are able to compose their own music using a variety of techniques and instruments. Pupils also have the chance to work with professional musicians from the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

In history, pupils remember content in the long term. They are able to describe history topics they have covered before. They show genuine interest in learning about the past. For example, pupils in Year 6 told me in detail about the Stone Age, which they learned about in Year 2. They linked this with their current learning, comparing weapons with those used during the Second World War. Pupils show high levels of engagement in their learning. Disruption to learning is rare.

Leaders give pupils opportunities to develop a deep understanding of the wider world. Leaders support pupils to develop their sense of fairness and justice. Pupils told me that staff teach them how to resolve conflict and prevent harm.

In some subjects, the curriculum is not yet clearly planned and ordered. In computing, for example, it is not clear how pupils gain a breadth of skills and knowledge over time. This is also the case in art, where teaching does not build on what pupils already know and can do. However, leaders have taken steps to train staff and improve subject planning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

This is a place where pupils are nurtured. Staff at all levels work together to ensure that the school is a safe place for all its pupils. Pupils told me they feel safe because they know they have adults who look after them all the time. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe at home, at school and when online.

Staff know the pupils and the community they serve really well. They are quick at

identifying concerns. They seek the support of external agencies promptly when needed. Staff at all levels recognise the importance of nurture for the development of pupils' well-being.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have secured improvements in the teaching of reading across the school since the previous inspection. However, pupils do not always get ample opportunities to blend sounds that they already know. This results in pupils' lack of fluency when reading. Teachers need to ensure that pupils are blending the sounds they have already learned.
- Leaders have reviewed the curriculum extensively. However, in some subjects, such as art and computing, the order in which skills and knowledge are taught is not yet explicitly clear. As a result, teaching does not always build on what pupils already know and can do. This slows down the progress of pupils in those subjects. Leaders need to sequence learning in these subjects to ensure that pupils achieve well.
- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently coherently planned and sequenced in some subjects. However, it is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken to plan next year's curriculum and train staff in how to deliver it that they are in the process of bringing this about.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2016.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	101601
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	10121627
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nick Cooper
Headteacher	Patrick Foley
Website	www.southborough.bromley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 July 2016

Information about this school

- Southborough Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. The school has a higher-than-average proportion of pupils with SEND.
- The proportion of pupils who receive free school meals is higher than the national average.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, curriculum leaders, teachers, pupils, three governors, including the chair of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and a range of support staff.
- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, and history. As part of this focus, I held discussions with curriculum leaders about the design and implementation of the curriculum. Together with leaders, I also visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and held discussions with teachers and pupils.
- In considering the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements, I looked at the single central record. I also looked at records relating to the safeguarding of

children. I considered records on the training staff received relating to safeguarding. I also held discussions with a range of pupils, staff and leaders.

- I also considered opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. I made observations of pupils' behaviour in and out of lessons.
- I considered 82 responses to Parent View, 71 responses to the pupils' survey and 38 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Edison David, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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