

Inspection of Seven Fields Primary School

Leigh Road, Penhill, Swindon, Wiltshire SN2 5DE

Inspection dates: 18–19 May 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

Much has changed for the better at Seven Fields Primary School. Pupils' behaviour has improved, and their attendance has risen notably. Pupils support one another and respond well to staff. They say staff sort out differences and bullying is resolved effectively. Pupils say the headteacher 'holds us all together'. Everyone is rising to leaders' high expectations.

Leaders have firmly established a secure platform on which to build. They have successfully raised expectations and gained the support of staff. Pupils are catching up, particularly in reading and mathematics. They learn freely as lessons are not disrupted. However, leaders are not complacent and know that further curriculum development is the next step towards realising pupils' full potential.

Pupils feel safe and cared for, including in the early years. Pupils know that staff are on hand to offer reassurance and help if they are worried about anything. Sometimes, pupils arrive at school feeling anxious. Staff are attentive and provide a listening ear when needed. This helps pupils ease confidently into the day ahead. Staff support and encourage pupils, including the youngest children, at every turn.

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

Leaders, including those who serve on the governing body, have set about making sure that this is a school that serves its community well. Those responsible have achieved much in a relatively short space of time. Leaders have an unreserved determination to overcome any barriers to success that may stand in pupils' way. All are committed to setting pupils on a path to future accomplishment.

For some time, pupils have not achieved as well as they might. With support from the trust, leaders' work to develop and strengthen the school's curriculum is beginning to take hold. This is markedly evident in English and mathematics where pupils are making up for lost ground. Pupils' reading has improved. Staff's training has led to a high level of consistency in the school's approach, including in the early years. Here, staff know children well and work tirelessly to develop children's language skills. During the teaching of reading, staff pronounce sounds accurately and clearly. They match pupils' reading books closely to the sounds that they are learning in class. Staff use assessment well, moving pupils on when they are ready. As a result, pupils' reading fluency is building.

Leaders accept that they are starting to develop the wider curriculum and are yet to fully realise their goals. Subject leaders are beginning to make a positive difference. Teachers know what they want pupils to learn in every given series of lessons in each subject. However, staff have not yet considered what pupils have previously learned or what they will go on to meet in future years. This is particularly the case in the wider curriculum. In personal, social and health and economic education (PSHE), for example, staff have not considered how work on the dangers of smoking

in Year 5 links to other subjects, such as science. Teachers' use of assessment information, including in the early years, is still developing. In key stages 1 and 2, staff are not certain how pupils' learning is expected to develop over time in different subjects. Consequently, in some subjects, pupils' knowledge is patchy.

The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is improving. The school's special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has received support and is providing useful guidance to staff. Pupils' needs are identified promptly, and then extra help is put in place. Support is most effective in the early years, where staff implement a range of strategies, including those encouraged by external professionals. However, staff are not yet catering well enough for the needs of older pupils with SEND.

Pupils know how to behave well and use 'the magnificent 7' rules as guiding principles. These are understood by all and strongly promote pupils' personal development. Children in the early years, including the very youngest, quickly learn the daily routines. Pupils' behaviour in the classrooms, playgrounds and during transition times is respectful.

In the past, pupils' attendance was concerning. There has been a convincing upward shift and many pupils attend much more regularly. The proportion of pupils with part-time schooling arrangements in place has fallen notably. School leaders work well with a wide range of other professionals to support families and ensure that school is a safe and appealing place to be. They are not afraid to challenge local services when they feel more can be done to support the most vulnerable pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is tenacious in ensuring that staff are well trained. Adults have a thorough understanding of the risks that pupils face, including those that are pertinent to the local area. This is because staff's training is rigorous, of high quality and frequent.

Staff know what to do if they have concerns. Reporting systems are understood, and staff capture suitably detailed records. Additional support, from a range of professionals, is put in place promptly for pupils who need it from time to time.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have revitalised the curriculum, rightly ensuring emphasis on the development of pupils' oracy. Subject leaders are developing their skills well. However, leaders have not yet considered how to build subject plans from one

year to the next. Leaders should make sure that teaching builds on what pupils have learned previously and equips them to tackle what comes next.

- Assessment strategies are used well in the teaching of early reading. In the core subjects, teachers use assessment information to identify when pupils are ready to move on. This is not yet the case in other subjects. Leaders need to develop the school's assessment practices in the wider curriculum to help pupils embed knowledge and develop their understanding.
- Leaders identify pupils with SEND and ensure that plans are in place to support their needs. The school uses external professionals well to extend support to these pupils, including in the early years. However, some teachers need further training to help them plan more effectively for the needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders should continue to provide support for teachers so that the needs of pupils with SEND, particularly in key stages 1 and 2, are catered for well.

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 [here](#).

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	138005
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	10184697
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	336
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kirsten Robinson
Headteacher	Damian Booth
Website	www.sevenfieldsprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	10–11 February 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Seven Fields Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. The school is sponsored by the River Learning Trust (RLT).
- Since the last inspection, there have been some changes to staffing. Several teaching staff have returned from absence. One of the school's deputy headteachers is now the DSL. One teacher is currently absent.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils has increased since the pandemic. Approximately 60% of pupils are disadvantaged, which is well above that seen nationally.
- Swindon Tuition Centre is used for alternative provision.
- The local governing body was established in September 2020. An experienced chair of the governing body was also appointed at this time.
- The early years department consists of one class of children in Reception Year, a nursery class and a pre-school that caters for two-year-olds.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. Inspectors deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, both deputy headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator, some subject leaders and the leader with responsibility for the early years.
- The lead inspector met remotely with three governors, including the chair of the governing body. A face-to-face meeting was held with the director of education of RLT.
- During the inspection, survey responses from 36 members of staff and five parents, including three free-text comments, were considered. Inspectors also spoke with some staff to gather their views.
- Reading, mathematics and science were considered in detail as part of this inspection. Inspectors met with the phonics, reading, mathematics, science, PSHE, physical education and art subject leaders. Inspectors undertook lesson visits to all year groups. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work in a range of subjects and heard pupils in Years 1 to 3 read.
- The school's safeguarding arrangements were reviewed. Inspectors met with the DSL and scrutinised the school's single central record. Inspectors considered how well adults in the school act on emerging concerns about pupils' welfare.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Farr, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kathy Maddocks	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Williams	Her Majesty's Inspector

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