

Inspection of Little Sutton C of E Primary School

Berwick Road, Little Sutton, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire CH66 4PP

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Good

The executive principal of this school is Zoe Carciero. This school is part of The Samara Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), George Bulman, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Graeme White. The executive principal is responsible for this school and one other within the trust.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very proud of their school. They happily come into school each morning. Pupils feel well cared for and they enjoy playing with their friends. They said that their school welcomes everyone.

Pupils listen carefully to their teachers. They are curious to learn new knowledge and they enjoy talking about what they have found out in class. Pupils work collaboratively. They are confident to share their ideas and they take on board the views of others.

The school has high expectations of pupils' achievement. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), enjoy academic success. They leave Year 6 ready for the next stage in their education.

Pupils benefit from a range of extra-curricular opportunities. This includes clubs such as ceramics, running and choir. Pupils are inspired by visits that enhance their learning. For example, pupils returned to school enthused from meeting an author at the local library. Older pupils value the opportunity to hold positions of responsibility. They are proud to make a difference to their school. For instance, the facilities team help to keep the school tidy and play leaders help to organise the games that are played during breaktimes.

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

The school provides an ambitious curriculum. Typically, pupils progress through the curriculum well. However, this is not reflected in the 2023 published data. This is due, in part, to weaknesses in the previous curriculum. Pupils in the 2023 Year 6 cohort had too many gaps in their learning to succeed in the national end of key stage two tests and assessments.

The subject curriculums identify the small steps of learning that pupils need to gain. Teachers know the order in which concepts should be taught. Staff receive regular training which enables them to deliver the curriculums with expertise. Teachers regularly check what pupils have learned. This helps teachers to identify and address any gaps in pupils' learning. In most subjects, pupils, including those with SEND, learn well. However, in a small number of subjects, some pupils do not retain new knowledge. This is because the activities that teachers select do not enable pupils to remember their learning.

The early years curriculum is exceptionally well-crafted. The strong expertise of staff aids the design of meaningful learning opportunities that allow children to learn all that they should across all areas of learning. Children's language and vocabulary is extended very well. They take great delight in their learning. Children relish challenges. They show determination and resilience when faced with activities that are tricky at first. They enter Year 1 very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

The teaching of reading has a high priority. Trained staff deliver the school's phonics programme well across early years and key stage 1. The books that pupils read are carefully matched to the sounds that they know. Parents and carers are well supported so that they can help their children practise reading at home. Pupils love to read and they can talk about books with confidence. Pupils become fluent and accurate readers who can access the full curriculum successfully.

The school identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND accurately. Staff are well-trained and are able to adapt their delivery of the curriculum so that pupils with SEND learn alongside their peers. Pupils with complex needs are given the individual help that they need to learn all that they should.

The way in which the school promotes pupils' personal development has been carefully considered. It has a well-designed curriculum for relationships, sex and health education. Pupils are especially proud of their fundraising efforts. For example, they raised money for a children's charity by running a collective marathon. They have also considered environmental issues. This led to pupils influencing local builders to plant trees to replace those lost during construction.

Pupils play happily together in the playground. They are sensible as they move around school. Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful. The small number of pupils who need help to manage their behaviour receive kindly support. This means that these pupils are able to quickly refocus on their learning. As a result, the school is calm yet industrious.

The school considers the impact that decisions about school improvement may have on staff's workload and well-being. As a result, staff feel valued. They are proud to be part of the community.

Members of the local academy committee are committed to the school. They want the best for pupils. However, their work to identify the school's strengths and weaknesses is not as effective as it should be. This limits their ability to offer sufficient challenge to aid the school's continued improvement. In turn, this also hampers the trust's insight into what is working well at the school and what needs to improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, some pupils do not remember the new knowledge that they learn. This is because teachers sometimes do not use the most effective strategies to help pupils to commit their learning to their long-term memory. The

school should ensure that staff receive the training that they need to help them to choose strategies that enable pupils to retain their learning over time.

- Members of the local academy committee do not have a sufficient insight into the school's strengths and areas for development. As a result, they do not offer enough challenge to contribute to the school's ongoing improvement. This also hampers the trust from gaining an accurate insight into the school's work. The trust should ensure that all of those responsible for governance gain a sharper overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

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	145075
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10255944
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	150
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
CEO of the trust	George Bulman
Chair of trust	Graeme White
Executive Principal	Zoe Carciero
Website	www.littlesuttonceprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 March 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Chester. Its last section 48 inspection, for schools of religious character, took place in October 2016. The next inspection is scheduled to take place in 2024/25 academic year.
- The school offers a breakfast club and after-school provision each day.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, including early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, looked at a sample of pupils' work, spoke with teachers and talked with pupils about their learning.
- The lead inspector observed pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other areas. This included talking with pupils and scrutinising curriculum documentation.
- Inspectors met with the executive principal, the deputy headteacher and other leaders. An inspector also met with members of the trust and the local academy committee, including the chairs of each group. An inspector also met with the CEO of the trust.
- An inspector spoke to the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour as they arrived at school and during lessons and breaktimes. They also spoke with pupils about their views of school life.
- Inspectors considered views of parents. They looked at the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also spoke to a number of parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils and staff who responded to Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Frith Murphy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Keith Pullen

Ofsted Inspector

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