

Inspection of Sandiway Primary School

Weaverham Road, Sandiway, Northwich, Cheshire CW8 2ND

Inspection dates:	28 and 29 January 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Deborah Bertram. This school is part of Create Learning 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), Susan Walters, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mark Butcher.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love attending this warm, welcoming school. They arrive happily every day, excited and curious about their learning. Pupils appreciate how staff help and guide them. There is always someone happy to be a friend.

Pupils welcome the school's high ambitions. They are animated and articulate learners. Pupils enjoy their lessons and do their best. From when they start in Reception, children take great pride in their work and achieve well.

Pupils uphold the school's approach to managing behaviour through the 'ROCK' principles of respect, ownership, care and kindness. They demonstrate high levels of self-control and take responsibility for their own behaviour. This means that most pupils do the right thing, even when no one is looking. Pupils, from the youngest to the oldest, show exemplary levels of independence around school.

Pupils develop into responsible, active citizens in a variety of ways. They readily assume positions of responsibility which have a real impact in school, for example overseeing the new salad bar at lunchtime. Pupils also enjoy opportunities to engage with the wider community. For example, they visit the local nursing home as part of an intergenerational project. Pupils benefit from a wide range of clubs which cater to every interest, from sports and musical activities to debating and 'leafy legends'.

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

The school has considerably improved the design of the curriculum so that it is exciting and ambitious. It has carefully considered the important knowledge that pupils should learn, and the order in which they should learn it. Teachers are well equipped to impart new knowledge clearly. Pupils remember this knowledge well. However, in a small number of subjects, pupils have gaps in key prior knowledge and vocabulary. This is due to weaknesses in the design and delivery of the previous curriculum. In these subjects, some pupils do not have a firm foundation on which to build new learning.

The school has the same high ambitions for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It identifies the needs of pupils with SEND at the earliest opportunity. These pupils benefit from the right support to enable them to access learning alongside their peers. This means that pupils with SEND make strong progress through the curriculum.

The school uses effective assessment strategies to check current learning and identify pupils' misconceptions in lessons. These misconceptions are either addressed in the moment or pupils may receive extra support, for example through carefully designed interventions.

The school ensures that staff are well trained to deliver the phonics scheme skilfully. Most pupils demonstrate secure understanding of the sounds they are learning. They read appropriately matched texts with increasing fluency and expression. Staff identify when

pupils need extra help and provide effective support immediately. As a result, pupils become confident and successful readers.

Pupils engage extremely well in their lessons. They listen carefully and think hard. In line with the school's ROCK principles, they take ownership of their learning. Pupils show high levels of respect for each other. They listen to each other carefully and enjoy exchanging different viewpoints.

Attendance is high. Pupils understand the importance of being in school on time every day. The school has worked successfully to reduce previous levels of persistent absence.

The school teaches pupils about different religions. Pupils extend their understanding and empathy through comparing different faiths and world views. Pupils learn about other cultures through the curriculum. They also have links with a twin school in Kenya. Pupils learn about different types of relationships and families. They have a very secure understanding of fundamental British values and can talk about how these are relevant in the school and wider community. Pupils also understand that people can be different in many ways. They believe strongly that everyone deserves to be treated equally and accepted for who they are.

Leaders have taken staff on a significant journey since the last inspection. There have been remarkable improvements to the quality of education that pupils receive, staff training and pupils' personal development. At times, this has resulted in an increased workload, but staff appreciate how well this has been managed by the school. Staff value the training and support that they have been given to put changes in place.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the work of the school. Leaders have built high levels of trust through open communication with pupils and their families.

Governance is strong. The trust has provided robust and effective support to guide the school through a period of intense change. The local academy board knows the school extremely well. It has supported and challenged the school on its successful journey towards reaching a shared vision to give children the very best start in life.

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, pupils have gaps in their learning because of weaknesses in the previous curriculum. In these subjects, some pupils do not have a firm foundation on which to build new learning. The school should ensure that these gaps in learning are identified and addressed so that pupils can build new learning securely over time in these subjects.

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	146131
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10378024
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	201
Appropriate authority	The Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Butcher
CEO of the trust	Susan Walters
Headteacher	Deborah Bertram
Website	www.sandiway.cheshire.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	25 and 26 January 2023, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Create Learning Trust.
- The school provides before- and after-school care.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- During this inspection, the inspectors met with the headteacher and a wide range of other staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the local academy board.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO and other members of the academy trust, including the chair of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour around the school and while in lessons.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents submitted through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- Inspectors also spoke to subject leaders and pupils and viewed examples of pupils' work in a range of other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed key documents, including the school's self-evaluation, school action plans and monitoring records.

Inspection team

Liz Davidson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Juliet Francis

Ofsted Inspector

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