

Inspection of Summerswood Primary School

Furzehill Road, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire WD6 2DW

Inspection dates: 30 April and 1 May 2024

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like school and make friends. They have trusted adults who help with learning or with worries. Pupils know they are safe and cared for.

Many pupils are diligent learners. They are proud to get 'superstar' medals and certificates. Pupils enjoy learning different subjects. Extra learning support is provided if needed. However, expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. Pupils across the school are capable of accomplishing more than they currently are. Leaders are aware of this and have started to make necessary improvements to the quality of education.

Lessons are usually calm. Pupils know the school rules. They enjoy playing in the open spaces. Most pupils follow adult instructions. Pupils appreciate that behaviour has started to improve, but there are still instances where a minority of pupils do not follow what is expected of them.

There are different clubs pupils can join like sports, arts and gardening. Older pupils take on 'ambassador' roles. Pupils express their views in the 'school parliament'. Pupils are proud of being a diverse school; however, would like to learn more about others' cultural heritage.

Pupils who attend the specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (specially resourced provision), 'Hive', are well supported and succeed due to the expertise of the staff.

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

Leaders have a good grasp of the improvements needed to drive the school forward. They are taking action to address learning and behaviour. They are working on staff having the required support to improve outcomes for all pupils, as many staff are new to the school. However, this work is still at an early stage.

The school's curriculum is designed to build pupils' knowledge over time in a logical way. Recently, subjects like mathematics and art have been updated to ensure the key knowledge pupils need to know is easily identified. This work has yet to begin in other subjects and in early years. This means currently staff are not clear enough about the depth of knowledge pupils must know. Some teachers need to strengthen their subject knowledge to be able to teach the curriculum expectations consistently well. The work pupils produce is not yet of the high standards intended.

Some leaders have started to use their expertise to train staff on how to improve their teaching. Effective systems are in place to support all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, in lessons, several pupils, including some with SEND, do not have learning activities adapted precisely enough to meet their needs. This restricts pupils' achievement, including in early years. Checks on learning take place. However, these checks are not always

used effectively to accurately overcome barriers to learning. As a result, gaps in pupils' knowledge emerge and are not being filled as swiftly as needed.

Pupils read every day. Pupils visit the school library each week and enjoy having stories read to them. The school has ensured there is a systematic approach to teaching phonics, which starts in Nursery. There is additional support for weaker readers. However, the books provided to pupils to improve reading do not always match the specific gaps in knowledge they have. This means they do not catch up quickly enough.

The learning environment in early years has been recently improved. Children access a range of learning experiences matched to the curriculum areas they are finding out about. However, as with the rest of the school, staff do not routinely extend, check or test children's knowledge when they interact with them.

The school works hard to ensure pupils attend school regularly. If attendance is low, actions are taken to address this. Pupils receive a high level of pastoral support. Despite this, a few pupils struggle to engage in learning. Staff have had some training and advice on dealing with more challenging behaviours but are not yet fully confident in how to do this. Therefore, not all staff manage behaviour in the same way. Leaders have recognised this and have revised the behaviour policy to clarify expectations and support.

Pupils are taught about online safety, healthy lifestyles and relationships and British values. They are aware of different world religions. They have a less secure understanding of what diversity means in modern Britain.

Governors are improving how well they hold leaders to account. The local authority has supported them with this. Governors fulfil their statutory and safeguarding duties. They understand what the school needs to do to improve yet need a clear strategic plan to oversee this. Leaders are mindful of staff well-being and the need to support staff to fulfil their roles in a positive way.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, including in early years, the exact knowledge that pupils need to know, and to what standard, is not laid out precisely enough for teachers to follow. This means that pupils receive work that is not always sufficiently detailed or ambitious. This hinders how much pupils can achieve. Subject leaders need to ensure the most important knowledge is clearly signposted for teachers across all subjects and that all staff understand and follow these high expectations.

Leaders, including governors, need to provide strategic oversight of this.

- There are inconsistencies in how well the curriculum is taught across the school. This results in some pupils not having learning sufficiently tailored to meet their needs, which limits their achievement. Staff need continued subject knowledge and skills training from leaders so that they are confident in delivering and adapting learning activities to ensure all pupils achieve what they are fully capable of.
- Staff do not identify with sufficient precision how to overcome barriers to pupils' learning. This results in some pupils having gaps in knowledge that are not filled quickly enough, including in reading. Teachers need to ensure that pupils swiftly secure missing knowledge and catch up. Staff need to act upon the advice leaders provide to support them in this.
- Some unwelcome behaviours across the school are still not prevented or addressed consistently. This means a significant minority of pupils are disengaging from learning. Staff need to apply the new behaviour policy and recommended strategies consistently so that behaviour incidents continue to reduce and pupils with more challenging behaviours engage with their learning.

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	117182
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10294966
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	374
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	James Conradi and Dean Docherty (Co-Chairs)
Headteacher	Sarah Kneller
Website	www.summerswood.herts.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	7 and 8 December 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school operates its own breakfast and after-school clubs.
- There is a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND on the school site. This provides short-term support for up to six pupils with behavioural and emotional needs from primary schools across the local authority area. Pupils who attend are dual registered at this school.
- The school does not use any alternative education provisions.

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.

- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the leader of the specially resourced provision, subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history, art and physical education. For the deep dives, inspectors spoke with senior leaders and subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils, looked at pupils' workbooks and spoke with teachers and support staff. The lead inspector also heard pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also looked at pupils' work and curriculum documentation across personal, health, social and economic education and religious education.
- The lead inspector met with six governors, including the two co-chairs of the governing body.
- The lead inspector spoke to the school effectiveness partner from the local authority.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's improvement plan. The lead inspector also reviewed minutes of governor meetings.
- 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.
- The inspectors considered the responses gathered through Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, which included 28 free-text comments. An inspector also spoke to parents at the gate. There were 41 responses to the staff survey. Inspectors also spoke to several staff during the inspection, either in groups or individually. No pupils completed the pupil survey. However, inspectors spoke to several pupils from different year groups during the inspection.

Inspection team

Sara Boyce, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alice Early

Ofsted Inspector

Ania Vaughan

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024