

Sandhill Primary Academy

Kilnhurst Road, Rawmarsh, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S62 5LH

Inspection dates

16–17 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Across the school, too many pupils make insufficient progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is too low. There are too many gaps in pupils' knowledge as they move through the school, preventing them from making the progress they should.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are not making the rapid progress they need to in order to catch up with other pupils nationally.
- The quality of teaching over time has been too variable. Some teachers lack the subject knowledge needed to ensure pupils receive appropriate challenge.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are too low. Teachers do not use the information about how well pupils are doing precisely enough to plan learning that helps them to make rapid progress.
- Pupils are given too little guidance on how to improve their work and misunderstandings are not dealt with quickly enough. As a result, pupils, especially the least and most able, do not achieve as well as they should.
- Over time, leaders have not monitored the quality of teaching rigorously or accurately enough. Assessment information has not been used to ensure the rapid progress of all groups of pupils.
- Subject leaders do not do enough to check the quality of teaching and learning and do not effectively support teachers to improve.
- Leaders have created an inviting environment for children in the early years, but some activities provided lack challenge. Hence, children are not making the swift progress needed to develop their basic skills.
- Too many pupils are persistently absent from school, which has a negative impact on their achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- New leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The interim improvement board is experienced and equipped to challenge leaders and steer the school to better performance.
- The work of the learning mentor has been effective in supporting the most vulnerable pupils and families. Leaders are successfully promoting pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding.

Full report

In accordance with sections 44(1) and 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Urgently improve teaching in all key stages so that it is consistently good or better and pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make at least good progress in all subjects by ensuring that:
 - teachers are equipped with strong subject knowledge that will support them in delivering high-quality learning
 - questioning is used well to check on learning so that tasks can be reshaped when pupils have not fully understood the concepts being taught
 - all staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - teacher assessments accurately reflect what pupils can do and influence subsequent planning
 - work set is appropriately challenging for all pupils, but particularly for the most and least able.
- Rapidly raise pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics specifically by making sure that:
 - teachers make sure pupils know how to improve their work and identify basic errors
 - the teaching of phonics improves so that pupils can achieve the standard of which they are capable
 - teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to apply their calculation skills to investigate and solve more complicated problems in mathematics
 - pupils further develop their skills and knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics across a range of different subjects
 - disadvantaged pupils are given more effective support so that they make progress in line with other pupils nationally.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership at all levels by ensuring that:
 - the skills of senior and middle leaders are urgently improved so that they can monitor provision rigorously in their areas of responsibility and secure essential improvements in teaching
 - the learning and progress of all pupils are carefully tracked so that those who are at risk of falling behind are identified quickly and given the help they need to

achieve well.

- Improve the provision and outcomes in the early years for all children, including the most able, by:
 - carrying out accurate assessments which clearly identify what children can do and what the next steps are in their learning
 - ensuring all activities are planned, and appropriate resources provided, with a clear focus on learning
 - providing activities, both indoors and outdoors, for children to fully develop learning and independence in all of the early learning goals.
- Improve the attendance of disadvantaged boys in particular by:
 - working effectively with these pupils and their parents to reduce the rate of persistent absence.

A further external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Over time, leaders have failed to identify the extent of the school's weaknesses. This is because changes to assessment systems have generated unreliable information and insufficient time has been given to understanding the performance of the school. Consequently, leaders have a confused picture about the attainment of pupils and little information about the progress of pupils across the school.
- Leaders have not made the necessary improvements with sufficient urgency. Senior and middle leadership roles are not well developed and consequently it is unclear who has been monitoring the effectiveness of teaching.
- Leadership of teaching has not been effective in securing consistently good teaching over time. Arrangements for managing the performance of teachers have not been effective. This has led to declining outcomes for pupils over the last two years.
- Leaders have revised the curriculum so that pupils have the opportunity to learn across a range of subjects. However, teachers do not develop pupils' basic skills effectively through other subjects because their expectations of what pupils can do have been too low.
- Pupil premium funding has been used successfully to involve disadvantaged pupils, giving them equality of access on residential trips where they have experienced a wide range of challenging outdoor activities and team-building tasks. The impact of this funding on pupils' academic achievement is less clear because little has been done to measure the impact of spending. Disadvantaged pupils achieve less well than others nationally.
- Although the leader for special educational needs is informed about the specific needs of pupils, assessment systems are in development and are not yet fully effective. This has led to delays in the use of up-to-date assessment informing teachers' planning. As a result, teaching is not fine-tuned to ensure pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make accelerated progress. Leaders have not measured the impact of funding for this group of pupils.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. This is done through regular religious education lessons and through visitors to school. Pupils' books show studies of aspects of Islam, Hinduism and Christianity are helping prepare pupils for life in modern Britain successfully.
- The primary school sports funding has been used successfully to raise pupils' participation in sports. For example, a football after-school club is well attended by Year 6 pupils.
- Leaders provided by the Wickersley Partnership Trust, in the form of a new executive headteacher and new associate headteacher, are determined to improve the quality of education for pupils at Sandhill. They have quickly assessed what needs to be done and have accurately identified the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- It is strongly recommended that the school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Governance of the school

- The governance of the school was dissolved when funding for the academy was withdrawn by the education funding agency.
- The newly formed interim improvement board was appointed to begin on 1 November 2016. Members of the board are experienced and well-equipped to offer challenge and support to school leaders.
- Members have begun their work with urgency, making contact with parents and undertaking research prior to setting out a plan of action.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff have received appropriate training in safeguarding and designated safeguarding staff are trained to a higher level. All staff are trained effectively to recognise the signs of radicalisation of pupils.
- All safeguarding policies meet the statutory requirements and robust procedures ensure pupils are safe. Risk assessments for all aspects of the school's work are on display throughout the building. The management of risk is particularly thorough for residential visits.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Some teachers do not demonstrate well-developed subject knowledge leading to weak teaching over time. This has prevented pupils from making enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics across the school.
- The teaching of phonics has not been effective enough. Not enough has been expected of children in Reception, leaving the most able pupils unable to make rapid progress in phonics later in school.
- Teachers are not ensuring the least able pupils are equipped with the skills they need to read some of the books they are given. Consequently, they are not reading fluently and with confidence in either key stages 1 or 2. Most-able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are making better progress in reading.
- Pupils at every key stage are not writing as well as they should because not enough emphasis has been given to developing basic skills. In addition, expectations of what pupils should learn have not been clear. For example, expectations of pupils' handwriting and presentation are higher in lower key stage 2 than upper key stage 2.
- Recent improvements in the teaching of mathematics are supporting pupils in lower key stage 2 to make better progress in developing reasoning and problem-solving skills. However, this approach has been confined to only two year groups, leaving pupils in key stage 1 and upper key stage 2 lagging behind in developing confidence and mastery in mathematics.
- Feedback to pupils has not had the impact it should in helping pupils to improve their work. In key stage 2, pupils, particularly boys, are less careful about completing their work to the best of their ability.

- Teachers are not consistently developing and deepening pupils' understanding through precise questioning and pupils' misconceptions are largely not identified or corrected. Work in pupils' books shows the most able pupils are not making enough progress and the least able are struggling to keep up.
- Assessment systems are still in development and are not helping teachers to accurately identify what pupils know and can do. Teachers' planning for learning across the curriculum has not secured sufficient opportunities for pupils to practise basic skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Teaching successfully ignites pupils' interest in a range of subjects. Pupils particularly enjoy art and physical education. Evidence can be seen in the good quality of pupils' art on display around the school. In a physical education lesson observed, pupils were keen and excited to work with their teams to string movements and balances together; much fun was had and pupils succeeded as a result.
- The teaching of music is a strength. Pupils take part in whole-class brass and recorder lessons where they learn about the dynamics of music, pitch and notation through playing an instrument in an ensemble.
- Pupils enjoy good relationships with their teachers. They say their teachers are kind.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils talked about the opportunities they have been given to learn about keeping safe, including dealing with bullying online. As a consequence of the school's work in this area, pupils say they feel safe in school.
- Pupils learn how to keep safe and to make healthy life choices through an effective and comprehensive personal, social, health and citizenship programme. In addition, they learn about the dangers of drugs, fire, roads and strangers through participation in the 'Crucial Crew' programme. Key stage 2 pupils have a well-developed understanding of how to keep themselves safe from harm.
- The learning mentor has been instrumental in supporting pupils and their families to remove barriers to learning. She provides a breakfast club twice a week which has helped to reduce pupil absence and improve punctuality. Her work to support vulnerable pupils, including those who are at risk from harm, has been very effective.
- Pupils' understanding of what it means to live in modern Britain is well developed through participation in assemblies and lessons designed to deepen their understanding. The school council, elected by their peers in class, works with staff members to improve aspects of school life. Pupils have improved the use of playground equipment, for example.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. While the majority of pupils have positive attitudes to learning, some show less commitment when the pace of learning

slows; they lose concentration and drift off task.

- Leaders' efforts to improve attendance are having a positive impact so that attendance overall is broadly in line with national averages. However, the persistent absence of a small, but significant, number of pupils, particularly disadvantaged boys, is adversely affecting their achievement in school.
- For the most part, school is a calm and orderly place where pupils show respect for others and for adults. Pupils say that although bullying happens, it is effectively dealt with by adults. Some racist incidents have occurred and these have been appropriately recorded and resolved by the learning mentor.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Despite entering Year 1 at broadly average levels, pupils have not made appropriate progress in phonics and results have been below those seen nationally for the last three years. Girls and boys do less well than their equivalent groups nationally.
- Pupils are underachieving considerably in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they reach the end of key stage 1. The progress of girls in reading in particular does not compare well with girls nationally. Disadvantaged pupils overall did not attain well, although the most able disadvantaged exceeded expectations in reading and writing.
- Overall, key stage 2 pupils made expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, progress for different groups of pupils and in different subjects is too variable. Low prior attaining pupils made good progress in reading. The progress of the most able, including the most able disadvantaged, was below what might be expected in reading and writing in particular.
- Despite some improvements in their social and emotional skills, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have not made the appropriate academic progress over time.
- In 2016, at the end of key stage 2, pupils' attainment was slightly above national averages in reading, in line in writing and below national figures in mathematics. The proportion of pupils who attained expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics combined was below that seen nationally, suggesting not all pupils are well equipped with the skills needed for high school.
- Work in books and school assessment information show large variations in the progress made by different groups. The school's own information shows there are considerable differences between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and others and these differences are largest in reading and writing. The least able pupils are struggling to make appropriate progress in writing and mathematics. Most-able pupils are not demonstrating their understanding well enough to reach the high standards of which they are capable.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Many children enter Nursery with skills and abilities broadly in line with those typical for their age. Around one third of children enter with skills below those typically seen.

Children are, on the whole, clearly spoken and articulate. They use full sentences. Children maintain concentration and are able to stay at a task for extended periods of time.

- Children enter the Reception class with levels of development broadly typical for their age. They enter Year 1 with levels of development close to, or just above, that seen nationally. This indicates only steady progress in Reception.
- Leaders are providing a lively setting with much to do both inside and outdoors. However, staff are not always clear about the learning intention behind each activity and are missing opportunities to fully develop children's knowledge and skills. This is particularly the case in providing activities with a focus on improving children's understanding in reading, writing and numbers. Information about the progress of children is regularly recorded but not used to plan future activities. Consequently, individual activities are not fine-tuned to the precise needs of different ability groups.
- Children in Reception are taught to read using a range of books. The choice of books available is hindering children's ability to make rapid progress in early reading because some of these books are too difficult.
- Funding to support disadvantaged children is effectively used to deploy the learning mentor. As a result of early interventions, disadvantaged children achieve as well as other children in the setting.
- Children are effectively helped to manage their behaviour and, as a result, speak kindly to one another and respond well to adults. Thus, children are demonstrating they feel happy and safe in the setting.
- Risk assessments are in place and safeguarding policy and procedures, including for intimate care, are followed by all staff.
- Parents express satisfaction with the education provided in early years and say they are consulted about their child's development prior to starting at the setting. Parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning via weekly communication in home-school learning logs.

School details

Unique reference number	140446
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10019275

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	249
Appropriate authority	The academy trust
Chair	Philip Marshall
Headteacher	Nicola Ainsworth
Telephone number	01709 710875
Website	www.sandhillacademy.org.uk
Email address	Sandhillacademy@rotherham.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 March 2013

Information about this school

- Sandhill Primary Academy is smaller than an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is slightly above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- In 2015, the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children in the Reception class attend full time. Nursery children attend part time.
- The school is part of the Wickersley Partnership Trust.

- The headteacher has been in post since November 2016.
- The trust associate chief executive officer and executive headteacher began supporting Sandhill at the start of October 2016, at the request of the regional schools commissioner.
- The governance of the school was dissolved when funding for the academy was withdrawn from the education funding agency. The interim improvement board is very newly formed.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about pupil premium on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Together with the headteacher, executive headteacher and trust associate chief executive officer, inspectors looked at pupil progress data, information about the performance of teachers, documents relating to behaviour and safety and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 18 part lessons, some alongside the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to Year 2 and Year 6 pupils read, and observed pupils' learning in small groups. They spoke with pupils in lessons, in a meeting, at lunchtime and at playtimes.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, trust associate chief executive officer and members of the interim improvement board.
- The inspector could not consider the opinion of parents through Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents) because not enough parents registered their views.
- The inspectors took account of six online responses returned by members of staff and 24 responses from pupils.

Inspection team

Lesley Butcher, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Julia Wright

Ofsted Inspector

Susan Twaits

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

Parent View

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

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 www.gov.uk/ofsted.

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 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2016