

Sidemoor First School and Nursery

Perryfields Road, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B61 8QN

Inspection dates

23–24 May 2017

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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders do not monitor and review the quality of teaching and learning well enough. They do not check the impact of actions taken to improve teaching. Appraisal systems do not hold teachers to account. Consequently, weak teaching persists in the school.
- Teaching does not meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are disadvantaged. As a result, these pupils make inadequate progress across the curriculum.
- Teachers do not support pupils to develop their writing across a range of subjects. Nor do they give pupils enough opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in problem-solving and reasoning activities. This limits pupils' progress.
- Teachers do not insist that pupils produce their best work. They do not help pupils to correct basic misconceptions in grammar, punctuation and spelling. Therefore, pupils continue to repeat their mistakes and some books show pupils making no progress.
- The curriculum is poorly planned and does not develop pupils' skills in a range of subjects.
- Systems for assessing pupils' learning and progress are ineffective. Leaders do not use the information to identify pupils who are falling behind. As a result, not enough is done to help pupils catch up, especially pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged.
- Leaders do not focus their action plans on the right priorities to improve the school. The plans lack precision and clarity. Leaders do not check that actions are leading to improvements.
- Governors do not hold leaders to account. They do not check if the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is being used to improve outcomes for these pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in the early years are taught well and make good progress.
- Pupils are polite and confident. They show respect to adults in school.
- There is a caring ethos across the school which supports pupils' emotional well-being.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe and feel safe in school.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) 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?

- Improve the quality of teaching in key stages 1 and 2 by ensuring that teachers:
 - plan work that meets pupils' needs, especially those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils
 - identify and correct pupils' basic misconceptions in grammar, punctuation and spelling
 - provide pupils with a range of opportunities to practise their writing skills in different subjects
 - plan opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in problem-solving and reasoning
 - develop pupils' use and understanding of subject-specific language and support them to apply their skills across the curriculum
 - insist that all pupils present work to the best of their ability.
- Take urgent action to increase the capacity of leaders and governors to secure improvement by ensuring that:
 - leaders and governors accurately evaluate the school's performance and develop clear actions that focus sharply on the key areas for improvement
 - leaders and governors set out clearly the precise outcomes that are expected as a result of improvement actions taken, and evaluate the impact of these actions
 - governors hold leaders to account for the school's performance, including the use of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - leaders develop and use rigorous systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, identify the weaknesses and then take effective action to address them
 - leaders use the appraisal process to hold teachers to account for the quality of their teaching and its impact on pupils' outcomes
 - assessment systems are fit for purpose and provide accurate information on pupils' progress and attainment
 - pupils' achievement is tracked closely to identify quickly any pupils who are falling behind, especially pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils

- additional funding is used effectively to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - middle leaders receive training and support to effectively monitor, evaluate and review their areas of responsibility
 - the curriculum is planned and taught to enable pupils to develop their subject-specific language and skills across a range of subjects
 - governors and all adults working in the school receive safeguarding training.
- Improve the progress and thereby raise the attainment of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics by:
- monitoring the effectiveness of provision and outcomes for these pupils in class
 - providing training and support to all staff on how to plan to meet the needs of these pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

An external review of governance 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

- Leaders do not have an accurate view of the school's performance. Their plans for improvement do not identify the school's key weaknesses, and as a result do not include the correct actions to address them. Intended actions lack clarity and precision. There is no indication of the outcomes leaders expect to see as a result of the actions undertaken. Leaders do not monitor the impact of school improvement actions to see if they are improving the school's performance. Consequently, the school's performance has declined over time.
- Leaders do not monitor the quality of teaching and learning well enough. They conduct learning walks and review pupils' work in books. However, their monitoring does not pick out the key weaknesses in teaching and learning. Leaders do not follow up their monitoring to check if teachers are acting on any feedback they are given and whether teaching and learning are improving. As a result, weak teaching persists across the school.
- Leaders do not use the school's assessment systems to identify pupils who are falling behind in their learning. They recognise that the systems are not fit for purpose. They do not track pupils' progress in sufficient detail. This means that pupils who are making inadequate progress are not spotted quickly enough and they continue to fall behind in their learning. This is especially the case for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils.
- The additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils has not been used effectively. Leaders use some of the funding to support pupils' social and emotional needs. This has a positive impact on their self-esteem. However, leaders do not ensure that the academic needs of these pupils are being met. Over recent years, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils has slowed and their attainment has fallen further behind that of other pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making inadequate progress. Support provided outside the classroom in small group sessions is successful because it is specifically matched to their needs. However, these pupils are unable to apply the skills learned in these sessions in the classroom because teachers do not take account of the particular needs of these pupils in their planning. In many lessons, these pupils are unable to complete their work because it is too hard. Leaders do not check that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are given the right support in the classroom so they continue to fall further behind. The additional funding received to support this group of pupils is not used to good effect.
- Leaders do not use appraisal systems to hold teachers to account for pupils' outcomes. Targets for teachers are not based on accurate assessment information and are too vague. Leaders' expectations of teachers are not high enough. Leaders are not using the appraisal systems as a tool to improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Consequently, teaching is not improving.
- Middle leaders carry out learning walks and review work in pupils' books, but do not give precise and developmental feedback to teachers to address any weaknesses they identify. They do not use assessment information well enough to check that teachers

are planning for the needs of all pupils, especially pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. Furthermore, these leaders do not check that any feedback given has been followed up and used by teachers. As a result, they have had little impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' outcomes.

- The curriculum is poorly planned, very narrow and does not meet pupils' needs. Across key stage 2, all pupils cover much the same work in subjects other than English and mathematics. Subject-specific language and skills are not developed. Some activities are very simple, such as colouring in maps. There are few opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their writing and mathematical skills in these subjects. Therefore almost all pupils are making no progress in these subjects and are not well prepared for the next stage of their education, or for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils lack understanding of other faiths and cultures. This is because they are not taught about them in enough detail. However, teachers do support pupils' social and moral development effectively and teach them about British values. For example, in English lessons Year 4 pupils are developing their own manifesto, the school council is very active and the eco-committee organises events such as litter picking.
- Pupils participate in a range of extra-curricular activities, including sports clubs and drama. Trips and visits widen pupils' learning experiences and pupils say that the trips, 'help them learn things for the future'. Year 4 participate in a residential 'work week'. This supports the development of their independence when away from home.
- The sport premium funding is used effectively. Specialist coaches work with staff to develop their teaching skills. Lunchtime supervisors are trained to help pupils be more active and pupils take part in sports competitions and festivals. Staff have developed clubs that pupils can attend before school to give them an active start to the day. This supports pupils' health and well-being.

Governance of the school

- Governors do not hold leaders to account for the school's performance. The school's self-evaluation is overgenerous and does not identify the key weaknesses. Governors do not check if leaders' actions are improving the school's performance.
- Governors do not have an accurate understanding of current pupils' outcomes. Consequently, they provide little challenge to leaders, especially for the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Some governors are aware of how the additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used. However, their knowledge of this is limited to the use of the funding to support pupils' social and emotional well-being. They do not know what impact the funding is having on improving academic outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Governors do not challenge leaders on the lack of progress of these pupils.
- Governors do not effectively hold the headteacher to account for the school's performance.
- The governor responsible for safeguarding has ensured that policies and procedures are in place to safeguard the welfare of pupils. However, most members of the governing body have not received any updated safeguarding training. Most governors

have not read the latest safeguarding guidance and are, therefore, unclear about their safeguarding responsibilities.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe is developed in a variety of ways. Pupils talk confidently about e-safety and how to keep themselves safe online. Staff supervise pupils carefully at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Pupils say there is always someone they can go to if they have a problem.
- All required checks are made on staff and volunteers in school to ensure that they pose no risk to pupils' safety. Safe recruitment policies and procedures are followed. School staff receive training, which is updated regularly. At the time of this inspection, however, the majority of staff employed by the company that owns the school building had not received safeguarding training. Despite this, these staff do understand their responsibility to report any concerns about pupils' safety to the headteacher.
- All required safeguarding policies are in place, including relevant risk assessments for individual pupils and for trips. Confidential records are held securely.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Too often, teachers do not plan work that matches pupils' needs, especially the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. They do not use what they know about what pupils can do already to plan work that develops their learning. Frequently all pupils complete the same activity. This often results in pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils making little or no progress because they do not have the skills and abilities to do the tasks.
- English lessons focus on developing pupils' writing skills, but pupils have little scope to apply these skills in other subjects. Teachers do not correct basic misconceptions in grammar, punctuation and spelling in subjects other than English. Therefore, pupils repeat mistakes and do not practise what they have learned in English lessons in other subjects.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do in subjects other than English and mathematics are particularly low. There is little or no challenge for the most able pupils, and limited support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Work in books is untidy and all groups of pupils, including the most able, make very little progress.
- Teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in problem-solving and reasoning activities. Even when they do so, tasks are not well matched to pupils' needs and are either too hard or too easy. This is especially so for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. Some staff do not use correct mathematical language and this confuses pupils. As a result, pupils do not make the progress they are capable of.

- When teaching assistants work with pupils in small groups outside the classroom, the support they provide is effective. This is because the activities are closely matched to pupils' needs. Staff receive appropriate training on specific learning programmes to ensure that the support is successful. However, in the classrooms the quality of support provided by teaching assistants is variable and does not always help pupils to make progress in their learning.
- Phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) is taught effectively in key stage 1. Teachers model the correct letter sounds and pupils' work shows that pupils apply their phonic knowledge in their written work. The teaching of reading is also effective and enables most groups of pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders place a high focus on supporting pupils' social and emotional needs. The nurture provision is particularly effective at promoting pupils' well-being. Staff manage pupils' feelings and emotions sensitively and relationships between pupils and staff are strong.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a variety of ways. For example, key stage 1 pupils confidently demonstrated how to 'stop, drop and roll' if they were on fire. Pupils talk in detail about how to keep themselves safe online and are clear about e-safety.
- Pupils are very welcoming and chatted happily and confidently with inspectors. They have a good level of self-confidence. Pupils new to the school say that they were made to feel very welcome and made friends quickly.
- Pupils have many chances to show responsibility. The school council actively works with leaders and teachers to share their views on aspects of the school's work such as the curriculum. The eco-committee is also very active and organises events to improve the school environment.
- Pupils say that bullying rarely happens in school. However, they are confident that if they had a problem, a teacher would sort it out quickly. Some pupils were less sure about what cyber bullying is, but know they must talk to an adult if they have any concerns.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Leaders record instances of inappropriate behaviour in detail. However, they do not analyse the information. They do not know if incidents are reducing over time and therefore cannot be sure that their actions to improve behaviour are working.

- Some pupils say that a few pupils play too roughly at playtimes. Pupils have mixed views on behaviour across the school. Some say it has improved and others say there are still times when behaviour is not good.
- Overall, teachers manage behaviour effectively in the classrooms and at break times. However, some pupils rely heavily on reminders from teachers and do not manage their own behaviour well.
- Pupils do not consistently produce work to the best of their ability, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics. They do not always show pride in their work. Work in some books shows a decline in the quality of presentation, especially that of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Pupils who have specific behaviour difficulties are supported well. Leaders identify what support is needed, make sure it is put in place and that behaviour is effectively managed. As a result, exclusions are reducing.
- Leaders do track attendance with care. The deputy headteacher has developed positive relationships with families to encourage better attendance. He has ensured that any pupils who do not attend school regularly are identified and support is put in place to help them improve. For example, pupils are encouraged to attend a range of clubs before school to improve punctuality. Consequently, attendance is beginning to improve, especially for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- At the end of key stage 1 in 2016, the proportions of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading and writing was broadly in line with the national picture, but was below national figures in mathematics. The proportions of pupils achieving a greater depth of learning was above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- However, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected standard in reading and writing and mathematics was well below that of other pupils nationally. The proportions of disadvantaged pupils achieving a greater depth of learning in reading and mathematics was broadly in line with other pupils nationally. No disadvantaged pupils achieved a greater depth of learning in writing.
- The proportions of pupils achieving the required standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 in 2016 was broadly in line with national averages. However, the proportion of Year 2 pupils who achieved the required standard by the end of key stage 1 was below the national average.
- The books of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and of disadvantaged pupils show that the majority are making little or no progress in English, mathematics and topic work. In some cases, they do not have the skills and abilities to take part in the activities set for them in lessons.
- The school's current assessment information shows that disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are not making the progress they should in reading, writing and mathematics. They are making less progress than other pupils and are falling further behind from their starting points.

- Because the school's assessment systems are underdeveloped, leaders do not have clear and detailed information about the progress of the most able pupils. Work in the most able pupils' books shows that they are making sufficient progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. However, there is little evidence of the most able pupils making strong progress in these subjects.
- Because of the poorly planned curriculum and teachers' low expectations, pupils make poor progress across the curriculum. Books demonstrate that all groups of pupils are making inadequate progress in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics. The school's assessment systems do not track progress and attainment in subjects other than reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- Where teaching is stronger, pupils make better progress in reading, writing and mathematics, especially those who are working at the expected standard for their age and the most able. However, even where teaching is stronger, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities still do not make enough progress to enable them to achieve as well as they should in reading, writing and mathematics because the work is not matched to their needs.

Early years provision

Good

- Teaching in the early years is good. Staff know the children's needs in detail and plan engaging learning activities to meet them. All staff contribute to children's learning records. The well-thought-out learning environment provides a range of opportunities for children to learn across all areas of the early years curriculum. The outdoor learning environment is used effectively to further promote children's learning. As a result, children in the early years make good progress and are well prepared for key stage 1.
- The additional funding to support disadvantaged children is used well. Children receive support that is specifically targeted to their needs. Leaders and staff review the impact of this support carefully. All children have 'smarty pants' targets that focus on key learning needs. Children confidently talk about the support they receive and can say how it has helped them. Consequently, disadvantaged children make similar progress to their peers from their different starting points. Published assessment information at the end of 2016 shows the proportion of disadvantaged children achieving a good level of development was below the national average. However, the school's assessment information shows that these children made good progress from their individual starting points. This good progress remains the case for current children.
- Effective support is provided to children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Individual support plans clearly identify children's needs and staff ensure that the provision is carefully matched to those needs. Staff work with additional agencies, such as speech and language therapists, to further develop children's learning. As a result, children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities settle well and make good progress.
- Children enter the early years with skills and abilities below those typically expected for their age. The proportion achieving a good level of development has been broadly in line with the national average, which represents good progress. In 2016, outcomes dropped to slightly below the national average. However, the school's assessment

information shows that children made good progress from their starting points. Currently, children are making good progress across the early years.

- Staff communicate effectively with parents. Parents are encouraged to share any concerns and staff are readily available at the beginning and end of the day to speak to them. Weekly information sessions are held for parents and additional information is provided through events such as phonic workshops.
- Staff have effective systems to ensure that children make a positive start to school life. They meet with parents, visit different nursery settings and hold 'play and stay' sessions to help children's smooth transition to school. This support enables children to settle quickly. Children develop into confident and happy learners.
- Safeguarding is effective. Appropriate supervision is in place at all times and all early years welfare requirements are met.
- The early years leader has a detailed understanding of the strengths of the provision, but also where it needs to develop further. The leader accurately identifies the next steps to further improve outcomes for children in the early years action plans. The early years leader recognises that the next step is to undertake an even more detailed analysis of the assessment information of different groups of children. The leader has developed a strong and cohesive team within the early years, where everyone works and plans together effectively.

School details

Unique reference number	116664
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10032621

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	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	339
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Chris Platt
Headteacher	Mrs Mari Jones
Telephone number	01527 872 271
Website	www.sidemoorfirst.co.uk
Email address	head@sidemoor.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 May 2010

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Sidemoor First School and Nursery is slightly larger than average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average.
- The school has a nursery class.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan, is below the national average.
- There are two classes for each year group from Reception to Year 4.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups. Some of the observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors met with pupils, heard pupils read and observed pupils at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other staff with leadership roles. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and spoke to a local authority representative.
- Work in pupils' books from all year groups and a range of subjects was looked at.
- A number of documents were considered including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. Inspectors also considered information about pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safety.
- Inspectors took account of 61 responses on Parent View. Inspectors spoke to a number of parents before school.

Inspection team

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