

Inspection of a good school: Summercroft Primary School

Plaw Hatch Close, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 5BJ

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 December 2022

Outcome

Summercroft Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Summercroft Primary are curious and enthusiastic learners. They benefit from a rich curriculum that extends their interests and deepens their understanding of a broad range of subjects. Pupils develop detailed subject knowledge. This builds their confidence and enables them to make connections in their learning. Pupils enjoy sharing their ideas. Older pupils are happy to challenge each other's thinking and make sure that all relevant points are considered. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils respond positively to staff's high expectations of their learning and their behaviour. Children in the early years quickly learn the routines that help them to feel confident in school. Pupils listen carefully to adults and to each other. There is a culture of mutual respect. Pupils are resilient to setbacks and learn from their own and others' mistakes. Pupils are safe and feel safe in school. They are confident that adults listen to their concerns. Pupils say that adults act quickly to help them resolve any worries pupils may have. Bullying is rare. If it happens, it is dealt with quickly.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive. They appreciate the school's nurturing ethos, which values each child as an individual.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum across the full range of subjects from the early years to Year 6. Leaders have carefully considered the important knowledge that pupils should gain in each subject. Teachers plan lessons that build on what pupils have learned before. Staff's explanations are clear because they are confident in their subject knowledge. In lessons adults routinely check pupils' understanding. They ensure that pupils are secure in their knowledge before moving on to new learning.

Leaders work closely with pupils, families and staff to ensure that the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are accurately identified at an early

stage. Lessons are suitably adapted to enable pupils with SEND to access the full curriculum and make good progress from their starting points.

Leaders prioritise reading. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the books they read and the books that are read to them. Leaders have recently introduced a new programme to teach phonics and early reading. This programme is building on the effective practice that was already in place. Staff in the early years and key stage 1 have received training to teach the programme well. This has resulted in a more consistent approach. Younger pupils secure their phonics knowledge through daily practice. They read books that are closely matched to the sounds they know. They confidently apply their knowledge to decode texts and develop reading fluency. Staff check pupils' phonics knowledge systematically. This helps staff to identify pupils who need extra practice to keep up with the programme.

A small number of pupils in key stage 2 are not secure in their phonics knowledge. The reading support that these pupils receive is not focused well enough on identifying and addressing specific gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge. These pupils are not developing their confidence and fluency in reading as quickly as they should.

The curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities support pupils' wider development well. Pupils regularly take part in music, drama and sport. Visits and visitors are planned to complement pupils' learning. Pupils are knowledgeable about different cultures, traditions and beliefs. Pupils are respectful of each other and value each other's differences.

Governors visit the school regularly and routinely gather the views of pupils, parents and staff to check that leaders' work is having a positive impact on pupils' learning and development. Staff receive regular training and feel well supported by leaders to carry out their roles. Leaders are considerate of staff workload and well-being. Staff share leaders' vision for the school. Governors and leaders recognise there is work to do to ensure that the information that is published on the school's website is up to date and reflects current policy and practice.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that the safeguarding of pupils and all other members of the school community is at the forefront of everybody's mind. Regular training and communications ensure that staff are confident in identifying when a pupil may be at risk of harm. Leaders have established efficient systems for recording and reporting safeguarding concerns. These systems are used effectively by staff. Leaders act promptly and work well with other agencies to ensure that vulnerable families can access the support they need.

Pupils in all year groups learn to keep themselves and others safe, including when they are using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils who are not confident readers are given additional help with their reading in school. For pupils in key stage 2, this support does not address the gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge precisely enough. This limits these pupils' ability to decode texts accurately and fluently. Leaders should ensure that support for pupils who are at the early stages of reading in key stage 2 enables them to secure and apply their phonics knowledge so that they quickly become confident and fluent readers.
- Leaders have not ensured that the information published on the school's website is up to date. This means that parents do not always have access to the information they need in relation to the curriculum and current school policies. Leaders should review the information that is published online so that parents can be well-informed about all aspects of the school's work.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2016.

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](#)' 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.

School details

Unique reference number	137351
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10206466
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	443
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Michael Kirby
Headteacher	Stephen Jess
Website	www.summercroft.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 November 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Summercroft Primary School is part of a single-academy trust. The trust consists of five members. There is a local governing body, which is accountable to the trust. The chair of governors and vice-chair of governors were appointed to their roles in September 2022.
- The headteacher was appointed in February 2021, having been acting headteacher from September 2020. The deputy headteacher was appointed in April 2021, having been acting deputy headteacher from September 2020.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The school runs a Nursery for children from three years.
- There is a breakfast and after-school club, which is run on the school site. This club operates under a separate registration.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- A monitoring visit took place in November 2020. This was part of Ofsted's work to understand how England's education system was managing the return to full-time education for pupils, following an extended break in formal schooling due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was not a graded inspection.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher. The inspector met with the Hertfordshire Improvement Partner (HIP). The inspector met with the chair of governors, the vice-chair of governors and eight members of the governing body.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) to discuss the arrangements in place to identify, assess and meet the needs of pupils with SEND.
- The inspector held a meeting with the assistant headteacher to discuss the curriculum for the early years foundation stage.
- The inspector held meetings with the designated leader for safeguarding and the school business manager to discuss the arrangements in place to safeguard pupils and staff. The inspector scrutinised records of safeguarding concerns and how these are followed up. The inspector reviewed records of staff training and scrutinised the single central record of pre-employment checks.
- The inspector reviewed the information published on the school's website, including information about the curriculum and school policies.
- The inspector considered the 183 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View, and 124 free-text comments. The inspector considered the 268 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and the 35 responses to the staff survey. The inspector also spoke with staff and with pupils to gather their views of the school.

Inspection team

Katherine Douglas, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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