

Inspection of Sea Mills Primary School

Riverleaze, Sea Mills, Bristol BS9 2HL

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils from a range of different backgrounds are proud to belong to this inclusive community. They say, 'Everyone is different but all are welcome.' Diversity is celebrated and leaders are committed to meeting the needs of all pupils.

Parents recognise the school as a place where their children are 'safe, happy and make progress'. Relationships between all members of the community are warm and supportive. Pupils and parents benefit from the school's strong pastoral care.

Clubs, such as 'Taskmaster', develop creativity and prepare pupils for later life. For example, one explained that it helped them to 'learn to multitask and think of unique ideas'.

Pupils focus well on their learning and keep trying when faced with challenge. They develop the confidence to engage in debate and ask questions of adults to extend their knowledge. Pupils are supportive of each other. At playtimes, they play together well. Pupils have a strong understanding of what bullying is. On the rare occasions that bullying occurs, pupils are confident that adults deal with it well.

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

Leaders have developed a broad curriculum that reflects the context of the school. It meets the needs of all learners well. Leaders have designed learning so pupils work towards ambitious end points. In most subjects, learning builds on what pupils already know. Leaders review and monitor the provision. They use this information to improve the quality of education. However, evaluations of the impact of their work can be too broad and the next steps for improvement can lack incisiveness.

Leaders provide training for staff to improve their subject knowledge. The focus on pupils' vocabulary has a strong impact on their language development. Teachers give clear explanations of new subject-specific vocabulary. They provide opportunities for pupils to articulate what they know. This deepens their learning. For example, in Year 6 geography, pupils explain that deforestation causes an increase in carbon dioxide. They further applied this knowledge to global warming and how this will cause sea levels to rise in the Bristol Channel. However, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high. In written work, pupils do not always apply their knowledge with such depth. They lack care in the presentation of their work and make mistakes. Teachers do not reinforce their expectations or address errors in a timely way. As a result, pupils' learning does not improve as much as it could.

Reading is a strength of the school. Learning is well sequenced to develop pupils' phonic and comprehension knowledge. Gaps in pupils' learning are quickly addressed. Parents are well supported to ensure that they can help their children to read at home. As such, pupils become strong readers over time. They enjoy reading books that reinforce their learning across the curriculum.

Children in the Nursery get off to a good start. They learn to take risks and develop their physicality. Adults help them to manage their feelings and follow routines. They provide life experiences to develop children's understanding of the world. This gives them tangible things to talk about in future learning. The teaching of early mathematics develops children's knowledge of number well. They build on this as they move through key stages 1 and 2 to become fluent mathematicians. However, pupils do not develop their problem-solving and reasoning, because teachers do not ensure they complete this aspect of the curriculum as well as they can.

Leaders are relentless in ensuring that the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are met. They ensure teachers adapt the curriculum well to meet these pupils' needs. Leaders secure support from external agencies at the earliest stage. Parents and pupils contribute to pupils' plans. As a result, they are clear and effective.

Personal development sits at the heart of the school's work. Leaders provide experiences for pupils that prepare them well for future success. These impact positively on pupils, who contribute to the wider society. For example, the school received a 'Community Climate Champions' award for working with a local climate action group. The curriculum and visitors to the school help pupils to know how to keep healthy. Relationships and sex education are taught sensitively so pupils develop a secure understanding of relationships. They know that these should always be in the context of love and happiness.

Governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and priorities. They support and challenge leaders to ensure that pupils achieve and learn well.

Staff are confident that leaders look after them and take account of their workload and other pressures.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is the school's priority. Staff identify and report any concerns about pupils' safety and well-being straightaway. They are knowledgeable about risks and work with community partners to make sure that pupils are well supported in the local area.

Pupils are confident that the adults in the school listen to them and take their concerns seriously. The curriculum systematically develops their knowledge of how to keep themselves safe.

Leaders and governors ensure that they follow robust processes for the recruitment of staff. They complete checks on all adults who visit the school to ensure they are safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high across all areas. As a result, pupils do not always achieve their very best. Leaders need to ensure that teachers raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve so that pupils achieve the highest possible outcomes.
- Leaders' evaluation of the impact of their work is too broad. Therefore, improvement planning and curriculum development can lack incisiveness. Leaders need to ensure they evaluate the impact of their work with more precision, focusing on pupil outcomes.

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	135779
Local authority	Bristol City of
Inspection number	10227991
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	257
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jenny Winfield
Headteacher	Sian Randall
Website	www.seamills.bristol.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a high proportion of disadvantaged pupils. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also above average.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.
- Leaders use one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, groups of staff, parents, groups of pupils, a representative from the local authority and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum

with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also reviewed samples of work in other subjects and spoke to pupils about their learning.

- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. They also checked bullying records, behaviour logs and attendance information.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their personal development.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff to see how leaders support their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted online survey, Ofsted Parent View, responses to the staff survey and responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

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