

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Southwold Primary School

Holm Way, Bicester, Oxfordshire OX26 3UU

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Inspection dates:

25 and 26 March 2025

## Outcome

Southwold Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Luke Graham. This school is part of The White Horse Federation, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Dr Dan Nicholls, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ninna Gibson. The headteacher is responsible for this school and one other.

## What is it like to attend this school?

This is a vibrant, inclusive and welcoming school. Relationships are nurturing and pupils are happy here. The school's 'ACHIEVE' values underpin everything the school does.

The school has high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils achieve well across the subjects they study. The curriculum is broad and offers a stimulating range of subjects. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive effective support when they need it. Those pupils supported through the school's specialist resource provision, 'The Willows', follow a curriculum that is well suited to their needs.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Children in the early years settle quickly into routines and cooperate well together. Older pupils make a tangible contribution to the life of the school, acting as role models for their younger peers.

Pupils are keen to participate in the wide range of clubs and activities that the school offers, including coding, football, science and music. They benefit from meaningful trips and visits. These enrich their learning, for example visits to the headquarters of an international car racing company, as part of their learning about engineering design.

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

The school has recently introduced a new and ambitious curriculum across subjects. With support from the trust, the school has identified the knowledge it wants pupils to learn. This has been designed carefully to prepare pupils well for the next steps in their education. The curriculum has been sequenced so that it builds on secure foundations established in the early years. Children in the early years are supported effectively to develop their communication and language. They benefit from the opportunities they are given to use and understand numbers. This prepares them well for learning in Year 1.

The school has ensured that reading is a priority. Staff benefit from effective training and deliver the school's reading programme well. In Nursery, staff use stories and songs to help children start to understand the sounds that letters make. In their Reception year, children learn to read using the well-delivered phonics programme. The school identifies any pupils who fall behind and intervene swiftly. Staff work closely with external experts to ensure that pupils with SEND are given the support they need to read with increasing independence. The school promotes reading throughout pupils' time at the school, so that all pupils develop an appreciation of a range of high-quality, diverse texts.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. In most subjects they explain ideas and concepts clearly. They check pupils' understanding carefully and address any misconceptions that arise. They ensure that activities are purposeful and designed to deepen pupils' understanding. Staff check that pupils with SEND can access the curriculum, with appropriate adaptations made when they are needed. Occasionally, teachers' explanations are less clear, or their checks on learning less effective. This is because there is not a consistent level of staff knowledge in how to deliver the curriculum in some subjects. The school and trust are providing high-quality training to address this.

The school ensures that there is early accurate identification of pupils with SEND. They communicate this information helpfully to teachers. Pupils in 'The Willows' receive effective support from skilful staff. The school benefits from working with the trust and external specialists to ensure that that pupils with SEND achieve well.

The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils are respectful and committed to their learning. Staff ensure that there is effective support in place for those who struggle to manage their emotions and behaviour. The school has taken a range of actions to raise attendance and reduce absence. These are making a difference. Pupils attend well. Staff are swift in identifying any patterns of concern. They work closely with other agencies to ensure that pupils' welfare is supported.

There is a rich programme of personal development at the school. Pupils keenly engage in discussion and debate. They are curious and show resilience in the face of difficulty. They have a good understanding of how to look after their physical and mental health. Pupils celebrate diversity and difference. They readily take up roles to develop their leadership skills, such as head pupils, house captains and eco warriors.

The school is highly reflective about its performance and takes effective action to drive improvement. Leaders, governors and staff set high expectations of both pupils and each other. They ensure that there is a sustained commitment to working in the best interests of all pupils at the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In a few subjects, recent changes to the curriculum are not delivered consistently. Where this is the case, some pupils do not build and secure their knowledge and understanding as fully as they should. The school should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to deliver the curriculum in each subject effectively and confidently.

## Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in January 2019.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142728
<b>Local authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10341799
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	318
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Ninna Gibson
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Dr Dan Nicholls
<b>Headteacher</b>	Luke Graham
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.southwoldschool.org">www.southwoldschool.org</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	23 and 24 January 2019

## Information about this school

- There is nursery provision for children aged two, three and four years old. Provision for two-year-olds has opened since the last inspection.
- The school has a specialist resource provision for up to 12 pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties. There are eight pupils currently attending the provision.
- The school does not use any alternative provision currently.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the headteacher, other senior leaders and members of the trust education team. The inspector met with trustees, governors, the CEO and representatives from the local authority.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector gathered the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions and responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Russell Bennett, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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