

Southfields Primary School

Address: East Street, Coventry, West Midlands, CV1 5LS

Unique reference number (URN): 131442

Inspection report: 15 September 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Pupils achieve well across the curriculum because they build secure knowledge and skills over time. In early years, every interaction and teaching activity secures pupils' foundational skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils make accelerated progress from their lower starting points. Outcomes at the end of Year 6 are at least in line with national averages or above, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Teachers maximise opportunities for pupils, including for pupils with SEND and those who may have other barriers to learning, to practise and apply subject-specific vocabulary. Any gaps in learning are identified quickly and addressed.

Pupils develop detailed knowledge across a broad range of subjects. Older pupils confidently talk about what they have learned, challenging each other and building on their knowledge. Opportunities to write at length across all subjects embed this. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders create a warm, nurturing environment, which means pupils want to come to school. Leaders communicate high expectations for attendance, working in partnership with parents and carers to support pupils to attend school well. This includes supporting families with advice and guidance from external agencies. Leaders systematically track absences for all pupils. As a result of this diligent and determined work, attendance across the school is consistently above the national average. Persistent absence is consistently below the national average.

Leaders also have high expectations of how all pupils should behave. They have established clear routines around the school's values that help pupils understand their personal responsibility for behaving well. Staff use consistent language and established routines. As a result, the school is calm and purposeful, and pupils can focus fully on their learning. Relationships are positive, and pupils are proud to be role models for others. During lunchtimes and playtimes, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Staff make responsive and reasonable adjustments when applying the behaviour policy, which means that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well. Bullying and unkind behaviour rarely happen. Pupils are confident that staff will support them and deal with any concerns that they have. Suspensions are rare.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have designed an ambitious, well-sequenced curriculum that helps pupils build knowledge and skills securely from the early years to Year 6. They review its impact carefully and refine it in response to evidence about pupils' learning.

Teachers benefit from high-quality professional development and work together to ensure that pupils receive consistently effective teaching. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and explain new learning clearly. They use checks on pupils' understanding effectively to identify misconceptions and adapt teaching when pupils need additional support. Regular opportunities to revisit earlier learning help pupils remember important knowledge over time.

Children develop strong foundations in reading, writing and mathematics from the start. A consistent approach to language development and oracy helps pupils communicate and build on their ideas confidently across the curriculum. Leaders ensure that staff teach the school's phonics programme with consistency and expertise. Staff match books carefully to pupils' reading knowledge and provide timely support for pupils who need to catch up.

The curriculum is fully inclusive. Teachers understand pupils' individual needs and provide support when needed. This enables disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who face other barriers to learning to access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Early years

Strong standard 

The early years provision gives children a highly positive start to their education. Relationships between adults and children are warm and nurturing. A thorough transition programme builds excellent relationships between school and families. Clear routines and expectations allow children to feel safe, settled and ready to learn.

Passionate leaders have established an ambitious, well-sequenced curriculum that is adapted to meet needs. Carefully planned learning opportunities support children to secure foundational skills. Children benefit from a wide range of purposeful, play-based experiences to develop their independence and problem-solving. Pupils who have attended the nursery are confident learners by the time they enter Reception.

Staff interactions provide highly effective support to develop vocabulary and oracy. Phonics is taught systematically, with staff demonstrating secure knowledge of early reading development. Leaders have ensured that staff have appropriate skills and maximise opportunities to model learning with children. Care practices meet the needs of all children.

Children make accelerated progress and are well prepared for Year 1. Staff expertly identify children's starting points and individual needs. They work with other professionals to support children to develop as well as they can. Consequently, children with special educational needs and/or disabilities or other barriers to their learning make strong progress from their starting points.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

The school has a highly inclusive ethos. Leaders support every pupil to flourish and succeed, particularly those who face challenges in their lives. Staff take time to learn about each pupil's background, needs and interests before they start, identifying barriers quickly. This ensures that support is in place from the outset. All pupils make progress from their starting points and develop the skills they need to thrive both in the setting and beyond.

Staff adapt the curriculum thoughtfully so that all pupils can succeed. Sensory circuits, workstations and the use of visuals help pupils access learning successfully. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities participate fully in classroom learning and wider school life. Leaders measure the impact of interventions and support effectively. Staff draw upon specialist advice, including that of the Virtual School, and work closely with families to plan next steps. Highly skilled staff support the most vulnerable pupils well.

Leaders use additional funding effectively, including for pupils who are known or previously known to social care. They consider individual barriers and put the right support in place to help pupils overcome them. Leaders invest heavily in ongoing training. This ensures that the whole team develops strong knowledge of inclusive practice.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard 

All leaders set a purposeful and ambitious direction for the school. They know the community well and use this insight to identify the right priorities for improvement. Their actions are timely, strategic and always focused on securing the best possible outcomes for children. Leaders' deliberate actions improve the experiences of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Regular monitoring and ongoing checks ensure the consistent implementation of these identified actions. Leaders ensure that all staff understand the high expectations that guide the school's work each day.

A robust and carefully planned programme of professional development deepens staff's subject knowledge and sharpens their practice, including those in the early stages of their career. Leaders allocate time thoughtfully so teachers can collaborate, reflect and refine approaches. Staff are consulted regularly through surveys to support leaders in planning appropriate next steps.

Governors share school leaders' ambition to deliver the very best educational experience to the pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. They are knowledgeable and bring a breadth of skills to the role. They use this to ensure that they fulfil their statutory responsibilities. Governors are robust in their challenge and share the school's understanding of the community.

Staff consistently report that leaders listen to them and take meaningful steps to manage workload and promote wellbeing. They benefit from an open culture, where their views are welcomed and considered. There is a real sense of community and togetherness. Parents and carers speak positively about the school. They appreciate the inclusive culture and support provided.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Leaders have carefully considered the context of the community and created a rich, inclusive programme of personal development. Thoughtful planning and targeted action ensure all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who face other difficulties, benefit fully. Leaders rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of this, adapting provision where necessary.

The curriculum for personal, social and health education enables pupils to know the characteristics that define healthy relationships and lifestyles. Pupils can apply this to real life, for example, physical and emotional changes during puberty. Pupils understand how to keep themselves and others safe, including online safety and water safety.

The youngest pupils are supported to manage their emotions and think about how their actions make others feel. Pupils understand what is right and wrong, value differences and respect opinions. British values are demonstrated through the tolerant, respectful way pupils interact, effectively communicate and demonstrate empathy.

Pupils take part in a rich variety of activities that broaden their understanding of the world around them and develop life skills, for example, a visit to a Jewish Temple, overnight stays in school and residential. Pupils can experience a rich variety of clubs, such as language and culture club, skateboarding, and mini chef club. Pupils have a strong understanding of different faiths and cultures. Families are welcomed to join events that celebrate the diversity of the school community.

Leadership opportunities develop pupils' understanding of how they can impact positively on those around them. Bilingual pupils acting as Language Ambassadors and Safeguarding Champions support other pupils in school, making them feel safe, secure and heard. Sports Leaders support younger pupils at sports competitions and community events.

Visitors talk to pupils about their role in the community. Such activities help pupils to develop their interests and curiosity. Pupils have high aspirations of the type of citizen they want to be.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils are at the heart of everything the school does and they thrive. Positive relationships ensure pupils and families feel listened to and supported. Pupils fully understand the values of the school and demonstrate these in the kindness and respect seen throughout the school. Pupils behave very well, enjoy learning, and contribute to the calm, happy atmosphere. They say that bullying is rare. Pupils know there is always a trusted adult to turn to if they need help.

Children in the early years settle quickly and follow routines in a highly supportive setting. Learning is engaging and purposeful. They make excellent progress. Pupils across the school enjoy reading, write with increasing accuracy and are developing the knowledge and skills they need for the next stage of their education. They speak confidently, sharing and building on their ideas.

Staff have a deep understanding of the barriers to learning and wellbeing their pupils face. These barriers are quickly addressed when pupils start school. This means they receive the right support at the right time. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those who face challenges in their lives are fully included and achieve well from their starting points.

Pupils' experiences widen because of the broad range of activities provided to them beyond the classroom. They value the skills that they develop on residential, where they learn to work as a team, be independent and stay safe. Pupils speak with pride about the additional responsibilities they have in school, including Languages Ambassadors and Safeguarding Champions. Older pupils act as positive role models for younger children.

Pupils' enjoyment of school is demonstrated in the consistently above average national attendance figures. They embrace new opportunities enthusiastically and experience a true sense of belonging.

Next steps

- Leaders should further strengthen teaching across all subjects and phases through refining adaptations and adjustments so that they are effective and highly responsive.
 - Leaders should ensure exceptionally high standards are achieved in handwriting with practice that is targeted, precise and impactful.
 - Leaders should refine assessment systems to secure pupil knowledge further and ensure high achievement for all.
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About this inspection

The chair of the local board of governors in this school is Kirsty Woollaston.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with school leaders, including the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, the early years lead and other school leaders. They also spoke with representatives of the local governing committee, including the chair of governors, and the local authority. Inspectors reviewed documentation about the school, as well as plans for improvement.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school runs a nursery provision.

There is a school-led SEND Unit for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Head teacher: James Gale

Lead inspector:

Karen Hambleton, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Jax Nicholls, Ofsted Inspector

Heather Simpson, Ofsted Inspector

Andrea Hales, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from [different sources](#). More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

 The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 15 September 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

450

Well above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 268

School capacity

420

Above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

35.75%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.5%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

1.78%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

7.11%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English indices of deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	70%	61%	Above
2024/25 (final)	71%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	72%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	68%	60%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	79%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	75%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	87%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	75%	73%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	74%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	71%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	78%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	71%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	78%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	80%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	80%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	75%	73%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	61%	46%	Above
2024/25 (final)	62%	47%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	63%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	57%	44%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	73%	62%	Above
2024/25 (final)	66%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	84%	62%	Above
2022/23 (final)	65%	60%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	65%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	62%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	75%	58%	Above
2022/23 (final)	57%	58%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	68%	60%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	69%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	72%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	61%	59%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	61%	68%	-7 pp
2024/25 (final)	62%	69%	-7 pp
2023/24 (final)	63%	67%	-5 pp
2022/23 (final)	57%	66%	-10 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	73%	80%	-7 pp
2024/25 (final)	66%	81%	-15 pp
2023/24 (final)	84%	80%	5 pp
2022/23 (final)	65%	78%	-13 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	65%	78%	-12 pp
2024/25 (final)	62%	78%	-16 pp
2023/24 (final)	75%	78%	-3 pp
2022/23 (final)	57%	77%	-21 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	68%	80%	-12 pp
2024/25 (final)	69%	81%	-12 pp
2023/24 (final)	72%	79%	-8 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	61%	79%	-18 pp

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	3.7%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.2%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.6%	5.9%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	7.2%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	7.5%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	11.2%	16.2%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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