School report

Inspection of Roundhill Primary School

Mount Road, Southdown, Bath BA2 1LG

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	**Inadequate**
The quality of education	**Inadequate**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Requires improvement**
Personal development	**Requires improvement**
Leadership and management	**Inadequate**
Early years provision	**Requires improvement**
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a very turbulent time for the school. The school has experienced a period of higher than usual staff turnover alongside several long-term absences, including senior leaders. As a result, the quality of education pupils receive is not well monitored and staff are not held to account consistently.

Pupils do not receive the education they deserve. They are not learning the critical knowledge they need. Consequently, they are not able to remember or build on prior learning in most subjects. Pupils complete activities but do not learn a carefully sequenced curriculum. Too often, there is no link between what pupils learn from one year to the next. This happens from Reception to Year 6. Children in the Nursery have a very strong start. However, this is not built on as they move through the school. Pupils are not prepared adequately for their next steps in education.

Too many pupils do not attend regularly. This means that they are not able to learn well or take part in important school events regularly.

Pupils are polite when walking around the school. They show respect for each other and staff. There is very little bullying, and when it does happen, staff deal with it effectively.

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

In most subjects, the curriculum is not yet designed well enough. Leaders have not identified what pupils need to learn over time. Teachers are unsure of what and how to teach in many subjects. This means that pupils do not develop age-appropriate knowledge and understanding. Most pupils cannot explain their learning, currently or from the past. More recently, the curriculum in mathematics has improved and pupils are learning to calculate and solve problems better than before.

Leaders have not made clear to subject leaders what their areas of responsibility are. Subject leaders do not routinely check what pupils have learned. Therefore, development of the curriculum stalls.

Too few pupils recognise sufficient letters and sounds in Reception and key stage 1. Leaders have tried to match books to the sounds pupils learn. However, in too many cases, the books are not at the correct level. Weaker readers struggle as a result. Pupils' slow progress in reading hampers their writing and spelling. Leaders are aware that the current phonics system is not supporting pupils' development and changes have already been planned to enable implementation in September 2023. Younger pupils enjoy listening to staff read stories aloud. They listen attentively. Older pupils do not receive consistent guidance on what books are suitable for them to read. Their level of reading is not checked systematically. Many older pupils say they do not enjoy reading.

Children in Nursery learn to count and recognise sounds, including some letter sounds. They thrive in their play and activities. Their vocabulary is growing day by day. They learn to speak in sentences, so they are ready to move to Reception. They behave well and show respect to each other, including sharing toys and equipment. Despite this strong early start, children from Reception onwards do not develop as swiftly and securely in their knowledge. This is because of the weakness of the curriculum in the rest of the school.

There is occasional disruption in lessons. This happens when pupils complete activities not matched to their needs, instead of learning concepts that build towards an understanding of a subject in depth.

Leaders who oversee provision for pupils with special educational needs/and or disabilities (SEND) have a secure understanding of the needs of the high volume of pupils with SEND. Staff support pupils with highly complex needs skilfully and with sensitivity. Disadvantaged pupils and other pupils with SEND learn alongside their peers but with too few necessary adaptations. Sometimes, it is because teachers have not received training and, at other times, it is because of the constant changes of staff. Gaps between how well these pupils learn and others widen as a result.

Activities to promote pupils' personal development have not yet returned to the level it was before the COVID-19 pandemic. Pupils' understanding of other cultures and faiths is often superficial. Some older pupils have a clearer grasp of fundamental British values and their importance. Pupils in the school council enjoy fundraising and have had some success in doing so, such as raising funds to buy resources for the play pod. Pupils show respect for each other as they grow older. They understand the importance of consent.

Trustees are aware of the school's emerging weaknesses but steps to identify and address these have taken too long. This has put a strain on leaders and led to an unsettled time. A recent school review has provided accurate findings about leadership and education. The appointment of an interim executive headteacher has made a positive difference already to staff morale. There has not been time yet to make any of the more significant changes needed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated safeguarding leads are vigilant in their duties and protect pupils. They know how to identify and report any concerns about pupils who may be vulnerable. Leaders make sure that external support is provided at the right level to keep pupils safe.

Recruitment checks are thorough.

The school has suitable policies in place to raise awareness among staff, parents and carers about the dangers of online sexual abuse and other related issues.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Trustees understood the level of need in the school, but actions identified were not implemented quickly enough to rapidly improve the school. Trustees must maintain the current level of support so that resources are managed well and leaders are held to account for the quality of education.
- Until recently, leaders have not planned strategically. As a result, evaluation of actions is not frequent or sharp enough. This has had an impact on curriculum design, teaching standards and subject leader training. Leaders must provide a suitable accountability structure so that the current situation of decline is halted quickly.
- Leaders have not put an effective curriculum in place. Pupils are not learning at an age-appropriate standard in too many subjects. Leaders must rectify this situation with urgency, so that pupils receive their curriculum entitlement.
- Staff do not use assessment effectively. They do not know how pupils are progressing through the school curriculum. Therefore, changes needed to ensure that the curriculum plans are supporting the correct sequencing of learning are not made. Assessment processes that are fit for purpose need to be put in place swiftly.
- Too often, teachers' understanding of subject curriculums is weak. Consequently, they fail to build on prior learning and provide subject knowledge with any depth. Subject leaders are not monitoring their subjects, so the weak practice continues. Senior leaders should develop subject leaders' expertise so that they can bring about the significant improvements that are needed.

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	146263
Local authority	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Inspection number	10267803
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	287
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Christopher Nye
Headteacher	Ben Skinner
Website	www.roundhill-pri.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Roundhill Primary School became a member of The Partnership Trust in December 2018. When the predecessor school, Roundhill Primary School, was last inspected, it was graded inadequate.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2022. The interim executive headteacher was appointed in May 2023. She works at the school for three days a week.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His 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.

- 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, geography and history. For the deep dives, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders; visited a sample of lessons in mathematics, reading and history; spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors held meetings with the trust's leadership partner, the chief executive officer, the chair of the governing body and two other governors, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, curriculum leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, staff and pupils.
- An inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- An inspector met with the designated safeguarding leads and examined school records.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments, as well as the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Kathy Maddocks, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Hansen	Ofsted Inspector
Darren Preece	Ofsted Inspector

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