

Springhill Primary Academy

Mossbank Avenue, Chasetown, Burntwood, Staffordshire WS7 4UN

Inspection dates

4–5 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders are highly aspirational for the future of the school and its pupils. A relentless drive and ambition from the leadership team, governors and the trust have ensured that the school remains on a continuous trajectory of improvement.
- Since her appointment in 2017, the headteacher has wasted no time in addressing the quality of teaching and learning and outcomes for pupils. As a result, both have improved and are now good.
- Leaders have made strategic appointments to continue to drive the school forward. Staff work together well and share good practice. They value the support and professional development they receive from the trust.
- Leaders have planned a curriculum that meets the needs and interests of pupils well. The curriculum is carefully sequenced to build on pupils' previous learning. Subject themes address sensitive and current issues so that pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is strong.
- The quality of teaching and provision in early years is good and as a result, children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Parents appreciate the positive changes and the visible differences that have been made in school.
- Teachers use assessment effectively to plan appropriate work for pupils. They now provide the most able pupils with greater challenge. However, on occasion, pupils require more support to deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Sometimes, in mathematics, pupils are not confident to apply the skills that they already have to harder challenges.
- Most pupils take a pride in their work. However, the quality of handwriting, presentation and spelling is inconsistent, especially in key stage 1.
- Pupils behave well. They are polite and courteous and enjoy their learning. They respond well to adults in school and know that they are well cared for.
- Safeguarding is a strength of the school. A high level of vigilance and strong links with external agencies ensure that pupils and families receive the right support at the right time.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported and as a result make strong progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils by ensuring that:
 - the most able pupils are well supported to secure their understanding so more pupils achieve higher outcomes
 - pupils develop greater fluency in mental calculations so that they use and apply their skills, knowledge and understanding with increased confidence
 - teachers have consistently high expectations for the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation, especially in key stage 1
 - leaders develop and embed the school's approach to improving the quality of pupils' spelling.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Leaders have ensured that a relentless focus on improving teaching and learning has led to improved outcomes for pupils. Leaders have strategically appointed middle leaders and staff who are helping to drive the school forward on a rapid trajectory of improvement.
- Leaders are clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses. They identify specific and appropriate priorities for improvement and take effective action to address them. All leaders' action plans support the overall school improvement plan so that there is a focused and joined-up approach to tackling the school priorities.
- Leaders monitor the effectiveness of their plans and the quality of teaching through regular monitoring and evaluation. They use this information well to make further improvements to teaching and learning. Training and guidance from subject leaders have improved the quality of teaching, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Staff are proud to work at Springhill. There is a cohesive staff team who have a clear shared vision to do the very best for the pupils in the school. Staff very much value the support they receive from senior leaders and the training provided by the multi-academy trust (MAT). They appreciate the opportunities to visit other schools within the trust and share good practice. Staff receive helpful feedback from senior leaders so that they are clear about how to improve their teaching. The programme of professional development is clearly linked to school priorities for improvement.
- Leaders check pupils' progress and attainment carefully so that they can address any gaps in learning promptly, especially for vulnerable groups such as disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.
- The SEND coordinator has clear and robust systems in place for the identification of pupils with SEND. Staff set appropriate targets and ensure that provision meets the needs of pupils. Senior leaders and the trust leader for SEND check the effectiveness and impact of the provision regularly. Consequently, pupils with SEND make strong and sustained progress.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support pupils, both academically and socially. Targeted support has helped disadvantaged pupils to improve their attitudes to learning, attendance, progress and attainment.
- The physical education (PE) and sports premium funding has been spent well. Pupils have benefited from a range of new sports and additional activities at lunchtime, which contribute to keeping them healthy. In addition, sports coaches provide professional development for class teachers to improve the quality of teaching in PE.
- Leaders have planned a carefully thought out curriculum to meet the needs and interests of learners. A series of 'mini-missions', underpinned by a subject focus, engage pupils well. For example, the whole-school mini-mission 'The Greatest Showman' was used to develop skills in writing and grammar and address sensitive issues such as discrimination and difference. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of British values such as democracy and tolerance and learn about other faiths such as Islam and Buddhism. Pupils enjoy the range of extra-curricular activities on offer, such as film club, cricket, dodgeball and drama.

- During the inspection, parents commented positively on the improvements that have been made since the appointment of the headteacher. In particular, parents praised the improvement in progress and attainment, behaviour, the curriculum, the communication with parents and the care and support shown by staff.

Governance of the school

- The trust and the local governing body (LGB) have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and priorities and are ambitious for the future of the school. A shared vision ensures that there is a collective approach in building on the considerable improvements already made. Strong structures ensure that the MAT has an effective oversight of the school, holding the LGB and the headteacher to account. The LGB are proactive in helping to drive school improvement. They are well-informed, hold leaders to account and provide effective support and challenge to the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have established robust policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe. Safeguarding is a high priority and consequently staff are vigilant. Thorough checks are made on all staff and visitors. Staff are well trained and knowledgeable in all aspects of safeguarding, such as the 'Prevent' duty and female genital mutilation. Well-organised training records ensure that staff are trained promptly on induction and are kept up to date regularly. Thorough and detailed risk assessments are completed and shared with staff so that pupils are kept as safe as possible at all times.
- Staff use their skills and expertise to good effect. Leaders access the right support at the right time and are proactive and determined in ensuring that the needs of families and their children are catered for. A shared understanding, strong communication, joined-up thinking and a holistic approach ensure that everyone takes responsibility for the welfare of children.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching is now good. Teachers have high expectations and routines are well established so that pupils know what is expected of them. Relationships are strong and most pupils respond well to the tasks that are set for them. Pupils try hard, concentrate and persevere with their work.
- Teachers and support staff check pupils' understanding regularly and intervene appropriately when pupils need extra help. Teachers generally address misconceptions well through providing helpful examples and additional resources so that pupils make good progress.
- Pupils respond well to the helpful feedback that teachers give them. Teachers deploy effective strategies, in line with the school's assessment policy, so that feedback is incisive, purposeful and useful for pupils.
- Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and mostly plan work that is appropriate for pupils because they use assessment information well. In mathematics,

teachers assess pupils' understanding regularly to identify and address gaps in learning. Teachers plan more challenging work for the most able pupils. However, sometimes, this is too hard because pupils have not consolidated previous learning sufficiently or are unable to apply their knowledge and understanding with confidence.

- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding in different contexts and in 'mini-missions', which engage them well. For example, when learning about direction and turns, pupils in Year 2 worked on a 'secret mission' to move their soldiers around a map. Teachers make good use of mathematical language and key vocabulary. On occasion, in mathematics, pupils do not routinely use and apply the mathematical knowledge and skills they already have. Some pupils are not sufficiently confident in their mental calculations and this slows learning.
- Effective support for lower-ability pupils and pupils with SEND enables them to discuss and engage in their learning. Pupils enjoy their learning. They cooperate with each other and learn well together.
- The teaching of reading is a high priority in the school, including the teaching of phonics. Pupils develop decoding skills effectively from an early age.
- Leaders have introduced a new approach to guided reading so that pupils study extracts of text and whole-class novels. Teachers select books carefully to develop pupils' vocabulary and widen their knowledge and understanding. For example, pupils in Year 5 read about the life of a refugee and learned about the location and context of the story.
- Pupils develop reading comprehension skills well such as summarising text, making inferences and explaining the meanings of words. Pupils are encouraged to think deeply and find evidence from the text to support their answers to questions. Pupils enjoy reading and read regularly. 'Reading bingo' encourages pupils to read a range of texts and genres and win book prizes.
- In writing, pupils build on their prior learning and apply grammatical features well. Pupils' reading supports them in their writing. For example, pupils in Year 5 studied a powerful poem by a refugee. Pupils wrote a diary entry based on the poem using emotive language and grammatical features such as ellipses and short sentences for effect.
- Pupils' work is generally well presented, especially in key stage 2. On occasion, there is some inconsistency in the quality of handwriting in pupils' books. However, in key stage 1 the quality of handwriting and presentation is too variable. Pupils do not consistently form letters accurately.
- Teachers usually address common spelling mistakes in pupils' work. Older pupils identify misspellings for themselves. Sometimes, however, teachers do not insist that pupils copy words accurately, especially in key stage 1. Leaders have recently introduced a new approach to improving the quality of pupils' spelling, which is not yet fully embedded or demonstrating an impact.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.

- Pupils are exceptionally well cared for and are at the heart of all that the school does. The school's 'REACH HIGH' values underpin the ethos of the school. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning and are proud of their achievements. For example, during the inspection, pupils in key stage 2 celebrated achieving distinctions in their recent national music exams.
- Pupils are proud to take on roles and responsibilities such as being a member of the school parliament, being a playleader or a librarian. The school parliament teaches pupils about democracy and encourages pupil voice. Through this opportunity, pupils have recently contributed to improvements in the school library.
- Pupils are happy. They say they feel safe and are cared for well. They say it is OK to be different to others as 'everyone is different, everyone is unique'. Pupils know what to do if they are worried. Pupils have a strong knowledge and understanding of bullying and cyber bullying and know how to act if it happens.
- Leaders address sensitive issues with pupils. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 learn about hate crime and the differences between banter and bullying. Pupils receive assemblies and workshops to develop their confidence to speak out. Leaders pay attention to mental health issues affecting pupils and staff receive appropriate training to support them.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite, friendly and welcoming. They move calmly around school. Pupils work and play together well. At lunchtime pupils are well-engaged with toys and games such as tennis, football, badminton, hula hoops and skipping. Pupils wait patiently for their turn to take part. At the end of break and lunchtimes pupils line up sensibly.
- An effective behaviour policy is used consistently across the school and by all staff. Behaviour records show that the number of recorded behaviour incidents has fallen each term this year. Pupils' and parents' views of behaviour are mostly positive. Some pupils who find their behaviour difficult to manage are well supported by staff.
- In 2018, pupils' absence was slightly above the national average. Leaders' actions to improve attendance are robust and comprehensive. Although, attendance has improved for some pupils, other pupils have joined the school with weaker attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- As a result of improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, attainment has risen at the end of key stage 2 to above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment at the higher standard remains below the national average but is a focus for school improvement. Progress at the end of key stage 2 is in line with the national average.
- Disadvantaged pupils made average progress in reading and mathematics but below-average progress in writing. The attainment of disadvantaged pupils was broadly in line with other pupils nationally at both the expected and higher standard. Leaders

continue to focus on the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils so that they achieve outcomes in line with other pupils nationally.

- Although attainment in reading and mathematics at key stage 1 declined in 2018, it remains in line with the national average. Writing improved to above the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving a greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics declined to below the national average.
- Over time, the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening check has been consistently above the national average at both the end of Year 1 and the end of Year 2.
- The school's own assessment information and pupils' books show an improving trend in outcomes for all groups of pupils at both key stage 1 and key stage 2. Disadvantaged pupils make progress close to that of other pupils in the school. Pupils with SEND make strong and sustained progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' books show good progress over time and appropriate challenge for the most able pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding further. Work in pupils' books show strong progress in developing independent writing skills across different subjects and styles. Subject skills in subjects such as history and science have improved over the year.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years leader knows individual children well and plans a curriculum to meet their needs effectively. Leaders now use a range of assessment tools to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Leaders have developed appropriate action plans and have targeted funding for disadvantaged pupils to meet their needs.
- Leaders have provided a rich and well-resourced learning environment which ensures that children are engaged well, motivated and keen to learn. Children access a breadth of activities to develop their learning in all areas, including early reading, writing and mathematics. However, on occasion, the high number of activities can sometimes mean that learning becomes less focused.
- Children join the Nursery with knowledge, skills and understanding which are below those typical for their age and some are well below. However, they catch up quickly. Children make strong progress so that by the end of Reception, most children achieve a good level of development in line with the national average. Children with SEND are well supported. Consequently, most children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Children's behaviour is good because there are clear routines that children respond well to. Strong, caring relationships between staff and children enable children to grow in confidence and independence. In Nursery, children play and cooperate well together, such as when they are making 'vegetable soup'. In Reception, children complete jigsaw puzzles together and make rafts from Lego. They take turns and help each other.
- In phonics, children are well supported to make good progress. Teaching is precise and accurate and moves children on effectively. Children build on their previous learning and teachers intervene appropriately so that learning is secure. Children enjoy their learning and are keen to do well. In Reception, children use and apply their phonics knowledge to write phonetically plausible sentences. For example, when writing a story

about Peter Pan, children attempted to write 'Captain Hook' using the 'oo' sound that they had learned at the start of the day. Books show that children make good progress over time.

- Children develop a love of stories. In Nursery, in the 'castle' role play area, children played the part of Rapunzel and explained, 'She is a princess, she lives in a castle and she lets her hair down!' Children enjoy listening to traditional tales such as 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff' and join in with the story. In Reception, children acted out the story of 'Peter Pan' before writing about him.
- Leaders build positive relationships with parents prior to children starting Nursery to gather information about children's interests and needs. Parents are invited to contribute to their child's learning through a web-based assessment programme and to attend phonics workshops. Currently, there is little uptake but as there is a small number of children, staff interact daily with parents at the end of the school day.
- Children are safe and well looked after. Staff are experienced and well trained and all statutory requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	140402
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10058488

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	174
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Jeremy Bennett Biddle King
Headteacher	Diane Raftery
Telephone number	01543 225620
Website	www.springhillacademyreach2.co.uk
Email address	office@springhillacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	16–17 November 2016

Information about this school

- The school is sponsored by the REAch2 Multi-Academy Trust. It became an academy in January 2014.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2017.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium grant is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is just below the national average. The proportion of pupils with an education health care plan is just above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than usual is higher than the national average.

- The level of deprivation is in highest 40% nationally.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes and looked at pupils' work. Senior leaders joined inspectors for some observations and a work scrutiny.
- Inspectors observed pupils on the playground and in the dining room, talked to pupils formally and informally and listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, the family support officer and designated safeguarding lead, and the school business manager.
- The lead inspector met with a member of the local governing body and the regional and deputy directors of the MAT.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day and considered 12 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including eight written comments. Eighteen responses to the staff questionnaire and 35 responses to the pupil questionnaire were also considered as well as the school's own pupil survey.
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised including: the school's own self-evaluation; the school's improvement plan; information on pupils' progress and attainment; records of behaviour and attendance; monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, including records of continuing professional development; minutes of governing body meetings, the single central record of staff recruitment and safeguarding information.

Inspection team

Sue Cameron, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Appleby	Ofsted Inspector

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