

Silver Springs Primary Academy

School Crescent, Stalybridge, Cheshire, SK15 1EA

Inspection dates

27–28 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children get a good start in their educational life because the Early Years Foundation Stage provision is of high quality and helps them make rapid progress in developing their readiness for school.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium, who form a large majority in the school, make good progress in English and mathematics, resulting in achievement that is better than their peers in writing.
- Teaching is consistently good in all year groups. Teachers have high expectations. Activities interest and inspire pupils in a wide range of subjects and they are never bored.
- The safeguarding and provision to ensure the safety of pupils is outstanding. Pupils feel safe because well-written policies are rigorously implemented but do not restrict pupils' learning.
- The school is an important part of the community. It is very well supported by parents, who appreciate the impact it is having on their children's learning and development.
- Leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The governing body is meticulous in monitoring the impact actions have on pupils' learning and is rigorous in holding leaders to account. Leaders are driven by their ambition for continued improvement. Consequently, pupils' achievement is improving rapidly.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A minority of pupils, including some who have special educational needs, do not make enough progress to allow them to reach the highest levels of attainment or to fully close the gaps in achievement.
- Marking, although detailed in all subjects, is not always used consistently to help pupils address errors and improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons including two observed jointly with the Principal.
- Inspectors made short visits to other classes, looked at work on display and listened to pupils reading.
- Inspectors undertook a detailed analysis of pupils' work.
- Discussions were held with members of staff, the pupil leadership team and other pupils, representatives of the governing body and with a representative from the Great Academy Trust, the sponsor of the Academy.
- There was insufficient response to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to allow any analysis, but inspectors took account of the 30 responses to the school's own recent questionnaire and spoke with a group of parents.
- Inspectors considered the 29 responses to a recent staff questionnaire.
- A number of documents were examined including: the school's own information on pupils' progress; planning and monitoring documentation; the school's view of its own performance; records of how funding is used, especially how the money from pupil premium is spent; records relating to behaviour and attendance; and documents relating to safeguarding.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

Inspection team

John Nixon, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

David Woodhouse

Additional Inspector

Gary Kelly

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (the extra government funding for pupils looked after by the local authority, those known to be eligible for free school meals and those whose parents are in the armed services) is more than twice the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above the national average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Pupils are taught in 13 classes, most contain single year groups, with two mixed-age classes in Key Stage 2. The Early Years Foundation Stage is currently in two different buildings, both separated from the main school building.
- The school is preparing for a new build on the current site, starting in June 2014.
- High numbers of pupils join or leave the school mid-year.
- The school is part of a local schools cluster.
- The school is an Academy that is part of the Great Academies Trust and sponsored by a local housing association.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve levels of attainment and further accelerate rates of progress in English and mathematics by:
 - making better use of marking and feedback to improve work
 - ensuring that support for pupils who have special educational needs results in them making the best progress possible
 - increasing the proportion of pupils who make better than the expected levels of progress in English and mathematics
 - further enhancing the work done to improve 'school readiness' for the youngest children to give them the best possible start to their education
 - increasing the amount of learning and teaching that is outstanding.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The vast majority of children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of development well below those which are typical, especially in personal and social skills and those related to communication, language and literacy and mathematical understanding. A small proportion of children enter the school working at the level of development expected for children aged between birth and 11 months. By the end of Early Years Foundation Stage, all groups of children, including those who are most able and those with special educational needs, make good progress, and many make outstanding progress from their very low starting points. Even so, this means children generally enter Key Stage 1 with a level of development below that which is typically expected for their age.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, nearly all pupils make progress that is at least typical of what is expected, with two thirds of them making better than expected progress, especially in reading. Attainment in all subjects in Key Stage 1 is below that seen nationally for all groups of pupils. Typical of the national picture, boys do not perform as well as girls in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The proportion of all groups of pupils meeting the national expectations for the Year 1 screening check in phonics (letters and their sounds) is below the national average, reflecting their very low starting points. However, the standards are improving because of good teaching and targeted support for those pupils who do not reach the expected standard in Year 1.
- By the time most pupils leave Year 6, they are ready for their next phase of education. Overall, attainment in reading, writing and English grammar, punctuation and spelling is in line with that found nationally but below in mathematics, with pupils generally being two terms behind. Some pupils who joined the school shortly before the national tests did not reach expected levels of attainment for their age in all subjects, but they made good progress from when they joined the school. For example, one pupil made more than two full levels of progress over two terms.
- In Key Stage 2, the progress of all pupils, including those who are most able, is generally in line with what is expected over time. Fewer pupils than seen nationally make better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, progress is rapidly accelerating and leading to increasing proportions of pupils, including those who are most able, making better than expected progress in all subjects.
- Pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, generally do as well as other pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 because they make good progress from their starting points. Consequently, the proportion of them attaining the expected levels for their age is in line with that seen nationally in mathematics and above in reading and writing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not make the same progress as their peers. However, strong leadership and increasingly effective support is ensuring they are accelerating their rates of progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good in all year groups. This results in pupils developing good skills, knowledge and understanding across a range of subjects and, therefore, they make good progress.
- Reading, writing and mathematics are taught well, resulting in pupils' accelerating progress to reach and exceed the levels of attainment expected for their age. For example, in one Year 6 lesson, pupils were discussing and explaining correlations between the names chosen by George Orwell for characters in the book *Animal Farm* to their personality traits. One pupil stated that, 'Snowballs are easily broken apart, showing that Snowball was a weaker character.'
- Pupils' written work is consistently of high quality in all subjects. This demonstrates the pride they have in their work and the high expectations of teachers. Work on display, such as the recent work

done regarding the writing of David Walliams, highlights the school's priority to develop reading and how it can be used to stimulate learning. Pupils read widely and often, and this is having a direct impact on the progress pupils make in all subjects.

- Some pupils, particularly some boys, are reluctant readers at home. However, teachers effectively address this by ensuring that pupils are given regular opportunities to read in school on a variety of topics, regularly making use of trained community volunteers. These include well-respected male role models, such as a local senior fire officer.
- Lessons start promptly. Teachers use assessment effectively to move learning on. For instance, during the inspection, a teacher in a Key Stage 2 class used the assessment of how much pupils understood about partitioning numbers and the grid method of multiplication to set work in a subsequent lesson that was hard enough to stretch the most able and also ensured support for the least able, so that all pupils grasped the concept and moved their learning forward.
- Questioning is used well in most lessons to challenge pupils to explain their reasons for answers. However, not all teaching assistants are adept at using questioning. Where this occurs, this slows the pace of learning for pupils with special educational needs.
- Teachers consistently mark work frequently and accurately in all subjects. Their feedback to pupils is nearly always high quality and they often give details of how to improve. Pupils are not always given opportunities to use this advice or apply this advice to make the best progress.
- Teachers work well together and see themselves as a team. This means that expertise and innovation are shared. This is resulting in continued improvements in the quality of teaching in all year groups.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Policies are well written and recognise cultural threats to children. All staff apply procedures rigorously. This results in a safe and secure environment which supports good attitudes to learning and behaviour. Teachers are well trained in child protection and take their roles seriously. Consequently, pupils say they feel safe and trust teachers and other adults to help them if they have a problem.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe because of regular and effective teaching in lessons and at other times, such as in 'Mrs Mason's Assemblies', which are shared with parents via the school's website.
- Nearly all children behave well in lessons because of the high expectations placed upon them by teachers and other adults. No disruptions to learning were seen during the inspection. However, some children, including some who are most able, do not concentrate well enough on learning to make the best progress, but teachers are vigilant and take effective action to counter this.
- Pupils' behaviour around school is good. They are polite and show consideration and respect for each other and adults. They take responsibility for the continued harmony in school. For example, older pupils help the young children in their canteen and manage the door to and from the playground at breaks and lunch times.
- Bullying is rare and is dealt with effectively through a system of restorative justice that involves parents. This results in little repetition of incidents.
- Pupils say they like coming to school because of the range of activities available to them and because the school helps them to learn. There is good attendance at after-school clubs such as 'Active Thursday', a night of activities run in partnership with other agencies, such as the local community policing team. It is attended by over 150 pupils, reducing the incidents of anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhood and further developing pupils' love of learning.
- Pupils' attendance is in line with that seen nationally and is continuing to improve. Persistent absence over the last year was higher than that found nationally and attributable to a small number of families. However, the actions taken by school leaders, including the employment of a designated worker to engage with these families and others, are rapidly improving attendance.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The Principal demonstrates an uncompromising drive for improvement that is shared by other leaders, governors and staff at all levels. This is clearly communicated in the school development plan and rigorous self-evaluation. The Principal is well supported by senior leaders who use their delegated authority to drive forward improvements in their specific area of responsibility.
- Rigorous analysis of assessment information ensures leaders accurately target the performance of individuals, groups and cohorts. The support for pupils, including those with special educational needs, is helping to boost their progress and attainment. It is especially evident in the progress made by those pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium. Most recent data indicate that these pupils are now doing better than their peers because leaders are checking closely to identify precisely what is stopping pupils from making faster progress and then taking appropriate actions.
- Middle leaders understand their roles and responsibilities and are held strongly to account by senior leaders and governors. They are effective in instigating and leading developments that help pupils to achieve, such as the development of step-by-step mathematics challenges resulting in pupils having good mental calculation skills.
- Leaders have ensured the primary school sport funding has a positive impact on participation and well-being both in and out of school through the employment of specialist staff to run sports lessons such as 'Dance with Jane' and the provision of out-of-school coaching sessions, including holiday clubs.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils share in interesting assemblies which are often attended by parents. They take responsibility for the leadership of many aspects of school.
- Senior leaders work well with external partners such as the local housing association and health authority to improve pupils' lives and break down barriers to learning. For instance, the school purchases spectacles for individual pupils to use so that they access learning more effectively and have commissioned the work of two speech therapists to tackle children's communication issues in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The school's curriculum is broad and gives many opportunities for pupils of all abilities to develop a range of skills and ensures they are well prepared for their next stages in learning. Cultural events such as links with the Halle Orchestra and visits to theatre performances expand their knowledge and experience of the arts, while residential visits to adventure centres develop their interpersonal and physical skills.
- Performance management is used robustly to hold all teachers, including those who are newly qualified, to account for the achievement of pupils. Targets are clear and rooted in teachers' national standards. They demonstrate high expectations of staff to ensure pupils make good progress. These targets are reviewed regularly and outcomes used to inform the academy pay awards and professional development. Consequently, teaching is consistently good and improving.
- The school engages well with parents. Regular newsletters and events ensure parents are fully informed about the work of the school. Written reports specifically aimed at giving information about pupils' progress and next steps for development, termly 'Parent Partnership Weeks' and other regular contacts with parents provide parents with clear and up-to-date information about how well their child is doing and gives teachers and leaders an opportunity to listen and respond to any concerns. Parents recognise the improvements made to teaching and learning since April 2012. They expressed unreserved support for the school and would recommend it to other parents.
- Leaders in the school play an active part in developing effective educational provision in the wider community. The Principal advises other schools on the effective implementation of pupil premium support, while other staff members support the moderation of levels of attainment in other subjects.
- The school's sponsor is highly effective in holding leaders to account and providing additional expertise to drive improvement. The trust's human resources department has helped to design and implement performance-management policies that have ensured rapid and sustained

improvements in the quality of teaching, while their health and safety team both challenge and support site management through regular audits and training. Executive leaders of the trust demonstrate high levels of commitment to the school and actively enhance pupils' learning through links with local businesses, orchestras and theatres.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance of the school is outstanding. The governing body is made up of community representatives, including parents, who have professional expertise. Governors take a 'hands on' approach in leading important developments, such as the project management of the construction of the new school building, while also rigorously holding the school's leaders to account for pupils' achievement. They have a strong understanding of the school's performance due to their regular visits, which include learning walks to classrooms, and their challenging investigations into pupil and staff performance. They have a clear understanding how the pupil premium and sports funding secure improvements and evaluate the impact of this spending at regular intervals. Governors are well prepared for their roles due to their professional expertise and their own rigorous self-evaluation and commitment to training. Governors ensure that statutory requirements for the safeguarding of pupils are met.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	137591
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	399905

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy special sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	340
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Powell
Headteacher	Deborah Mason
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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