

# The Reginald Mitchell Primary School

Congleton Road, Butt Lane, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST7 1NA

## Inspection dates

29–30 November 2016

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- This is an improving school. The executive headteacher, federation associate headteacher, associate headteacher and governors have successfully established a culture of high expectations of pupils and staff.
- School leaders across the school, including governors, have secured key improvements in the quality of education provided since the previous inspection.
- Teachers plan and deliver lessons well and make clear to pupils what they are expecting them to learn. They work well with teaching assistants to make sure no pupils are left behind.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. As a result, pupils are polite, well mannered and respectful and standards of behaviour around all areas of school are good.
- Governors know the school well. They offer leaders good levels of support and hold them effectively to account. This has meant that expectations have been raised.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about school and learning and, as a result, they attend well. They enjoy lessons and get on well with one another. Pupils are safe in school.
- While pupils are keen to write and very engaged in the topics they write about, they do not consistently apply their knowledge of grammar.
- The progress of all pupils is good in all year groups. However, the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are not challenged consistently to deepen their learning, especially in reading and writing.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils develop a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding. Curriculum planning captures pupils' enthusiasm and engagement so that they are well prepared for their next stage of education.
- Children in Nursery and Reception have positive attitudes to learning. They achieve well from their starting points.
- A large majority of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive a good level of support and make good progress from their starting points.
- The subject leaders are new to their role and are not yet confident in evaluating the impact of actions and using that evaluation to inform subsequent actions.

## Full report

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

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that subject leaders evaluate the impact of their actions to raise pupils' performance and use that evaluation to inform subsequent actions.
- Accelerate the progress of the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, by ensuring that teachers provide activities that challenge and deepen the learning of this group, especially in reading and writing.
- Improve the quality of pupils' writing by making sure they accurately apply their skills in grammar.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The executive headteacher and her staff have addressed the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection effectively. The school's rigorous monitoring, swift action and structured training for staff result in pupils doing well in the majority of subjects across the school.
- Leaders quickly identify weaknesses in the quality of learning and teaching. Teachers' areas for improvement are addressed through appropriate and effective support. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is effective and pupils do well. Staff who spoke to inspectors said that they really appreciate and value the support and training because it helps them improve. For example, staff said that the training enables them to teach phonics more effectively in key stage 1.
- There is an ambitious culture of wanting the very best for the children. The school constantly focuses on the mission statement of enabling the pupils to 'Work together, learn together, reach for the sky'. As a result, the pupils are enthusiastic about their work, do well and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders make sure that teachers share their high expectations and effective practice. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the previous inspection.
- Subject leaders who are new to their role are supported effectively through a range of specific training and induction. As a result, they are well aware of their roles and responsibilities. However, they are not yet confident in evaluating the impact of their actions to raise pupils' performance.
- Leaders use the pupil premium to make sure that most disadvantaged pupils do well from their starting points. This is especially true for disadvantaged middle and low attainers. Staff provide good support for disadvantaged pupils who are falling behind. Leaders make sure that disadvantaged pupils participate fully in what the school has to offer. However, a minority do not attain the higher standard or greater depth at the end of early years and key stages 1 and 2, particularly in reading and writing.
- The school's curriculum meets the needs of pupils and inspires them. The curriculum provides many opportunities for the pupils to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. The range of subjects and enrichment activities motivates pupils to broaden their experiences and to apply their skills, particularly in writing. Enrichment activities include a host of trips, visits and experiences. For example, pupils learn about different countries, festivals and beliefs during a multi-cultural week. 'Learning at home' supports the curriculum well. For example, pupils research about artefacts at home and then make them to bring to school. Pupils benefit from experiences such as taking part in music concerts and sports competitions. They talk about these experiences with great enthusiasm.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is threaded through the curriculum and underpins the school's values. British values are taught well. Pupils are encouraged to contribute their own ideas. For example, the school council decided on, and led, a

fund-raising project to raise money for Children in Need.

- Leaders quickly identify and effectively support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, the needs of these pupils are met and they do well across a range of subjects.
- The sports premium is used effectively to provide more opportunities for the pupils within the school day and after school. Leaders use the premium to provide training for teachers, improve resources and facilitate increased participation in local sports events. There is a much wider take-up in sports than in the past as a result. It is making a significant improvement to the pupils' physical education and sports skills and in their attitudes to the subject.
- The school has a good relationship with the local authority and has benefited from support arranged by the local authority from the federation prior to joining. This arrangement has been particularly useful in helping to improve the quality of teaching, sharpening the accuracy of assessing pupils' learning and coaching leaders to fulfil their role.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors are effective because they are passionate about their role. They are well-informed and organised. They understand their role and have a good grasp of the aspects for which they are responsible such as safeguarding, pupil premium and sports funding. As a result, they make sure these funds are used effectively.
- Governors are linked to subject areas and early years. They play a crucial role in regularly meeting with leaders and visiting classes. The executive headteacher and her staff provide governors with regular reports of assessment information and the outcomes of action taken by leaders to raise standards. Governors challenge and support leaders effectively.
- Governors have a good working knowledge of the life of the school. They know the strength and weaknesses and they have a vision for the future of the school. They have benefited from the support of the federation and are very well equipped to hold leaders to account.
- The governing body takes its responsibility for safeguarding seriously and ensures that pupils are safe.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture and ethos of keeping children safe in school and staff go to great lengths to ensure that pupils are safe. Safeguarding procedures are robust and effective, including the checks made on staff's suitability to work with children. Leaders and governors update policies and procedures regularly to make sure they are in line with the most recent government guidance. Leaders and staff are quick to identify anyone who may be at risk of harm. They tailor support well to meet the needs of pupils. The school works effectively with outside agencies to safeguard pupils. For example, the procedures for dealing with pupils who are missing from school are robust. Staff are well trained in child protection and they know the policies and

procedures well. For example, staff understand how to report concerns. Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of potential risks and dangers through personal, social, health and economic education lessons. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and know how to stay safe. Parents who spoke with inspectors or completed Ofsted's online questionnaire agree that their children are safe in school.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection. This is as a result of targeted and effective training and support for teachers. As a result, much of the teaching is consistently good.
- The majority of teachers use what they know about pupils' knowledge and understanding to set work which meets their learning needs. As a result, the large majority of pupils do well. However, the most able pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to deepen their learning, especially in reading and writing.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge, effective use of resources and imaginative activities capture pupils' interest and motivate them to be successful. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and behave well. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour lead to a calm and purposeful atmosphere where the majority of pupils do well.
- Teachers provide feedback to pupils in line with the school's assessment policy. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that the feedback helps them to improve their work.
- Teaching assistants provide effective and timely support to meet the learning needs of pupils who find work difficult. Teaching assistants deliver a range of intervention programmes that help pupils who have fallen behind catch up with their classmates.
- The teaching of phonics has improved and helps pupils to make swift progress in developing their reading skills. For example, pupils make effective use of their phonics skills to read and spell words. Pupils across the school enjoy reading and they have positive attitudes to reading. Low-attaining and high-attaining pupils read texts accurately for their ability. They can explain the meaning of the text. However, the higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged by the books they are reading to attain the higher standard. Pupils are very proud of the reading resources they have in school, which are clearly motivating them to practise their reading at home and at school.
- A large majority of pupils make good progress in writing. The work in their books and in displays around school reflects pupils' enthusiasm to write. They are very engaged in the topics they write about. However, they do not consistently apply their knowledge of grammar. In addition, teachers do not consistently challenge the most able pupils to attain higher standards in their writing.
- Teachers use a range of strategies and resources to help pupils understand how mathematics 'works'. Pupils are confident to apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding to a range of tasks and problems in mathematics and other subjects. Pupils' calculation skills are assured. As a result, most of the pupils are doing well in mathematics.

- The quality of homework is good and builds effectively on what pupils do in lessons. In addition, research and more creative homework help pupils develop a wider range of skills and knowledge.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school has established a strong positive ethos that pupils are proud of and that is reflected in their attitudes in school. Pupils are very aware of how to be a successful learner and they regularly share their effective learning strategies with other pupils. Pupils work well together to support each other.
- Pupils are gaining in confidence to talk about their learning. For example, pupils were keen to share their learning about World War 2 poetry and how it made them feel. Pupils' physical and emotional well-being is at the heart of the school's work and leaders are rigorous in organising support to address pupils' needs. Leaders and staff are committed to ensuring that the pupils are safe in a range of situations that they encounter in everyday life or may encounter when they grow up.
- Pupils readily take on responsibilities such as being a playground buddy or a member of the school council. They are elected to the school council through a democratic process and their views are canvassed as part of the school's review process. Pupils can point to changes they have made and events they have organised, such as fund-raising and the introduction of a school swap shop as part of the reward system. This helps their understanding of aspects of British values.
- Pupils have a strong sense of awareness of how to keep safe in a range of situations, both at school and in their daily life outside school. They are well aware of the potential dangers they are exposed to, both online or on social media. The police, for example, have recently been working with Year 6 pupils as cadets. These pupils now have a more secure knowledge of crime prevention.
- Pupils share ideas about bullying and recognise the different forms it can take. They feel the school manages incidents and concerns about bullying effectively.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Staff set high standards for behaviour which the pupils respond to very well. Pupils are polite, respectful and kind towards each other and adults. They are very well mannered and love to help out. They are very keen to talk to visitors and share their work. The school is a happy, welcoming and orderly environment. From an early age, children are taught well how to consider the feelings of others and the consequences of their actions.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in lessons. They are engaged and enthusiastic in their learning tasks. Pupils are happy at school. In class, they listen carefully and cooperate

well with each other. Pupils know the rules and usually stick to them. They respond positively to rewards such as the school swap shop.

- Pupils' conduct at breaktimes and lunchtimes is good. They play well together in the playground and look after each other. They have a range of equipment to play with and they look after this well.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Staff record attendance accurately and follow up pupils' absence effectively. As a result, attendance is in line with the national average and absence levels have reduced. The school works well with outside agencies to address any underlying barriers to attendance.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Good

- The large majority of pupils do well in reading, writing, mathematics and other subjects across the school. This results in pupils meeting age-related expectations. However, a minority of the most able pupils and most-able disadvantaged pupils do not make the progress expected of them in reading and writing. As a result, this group of pupils do not reach the higher standards. Information provided by the school shows that most of the low attaining pupils are supported well in order to meet age related expectations.
- Achievement across many subjects of the curriculum is good. The quality of pupils' writing in other subjects is typically of the same standard as in their English lessons.
- Leaders successfully identify less able groups and individuals and provide appropriate support. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do well in a range of subjects as a result of well-targeted teaching, support and intervention. Staff quickly identify and support pupils who are falling behind their classmates. As a result, this group of pupils are doing well.
- The school is proactive in its support for disadvantaged pupils and carefully identifies any potential barriers to learning. The work in pupils' books and the school's assessment information show that disadvantaged pupils make typically similar rates of progress to other pupils nationally. Additional support is helping most of the disadvantaged pupils catch up with their learning. However, expectations are not high enough for some of the most able disadvantaged pupils, especially in reading and writing, so they do not do as well as they should.
- The school has successfully addressed the recommendation from the previous inspection to improve pupils' knowledge and skills in calculation. Pupils can now skilfully explain how they have carried out their calculations and how they apply them to solve problems in mathematics. The work in pupils' books also shows this.
- The number of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was below national average in 2015/16. However, because the school has focused on improving the teaching of phonics, pupils' knowledge of the sounds that letters represent is improving and helping them to enjoy reading from an early age. Pupils read fluently across the school. They talk knowledgeably about characters in books and what the books are about.
- Pupils are well prepared for their next stages in education.

## Early years provision

Good

- The provision is led and managed well by the early years leader, who has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development. Planned actions are carefully monitored to have the desired impact on achievement. The early years leader monitors the teaching and continuously provides training and support to improve practice. For example, the children were not making strong enough progress in their phonics and writing skills so staff training was organised and more regular assessments undertaken. This has meant that it is much easier to identify specific children's needs and to provide further support.
- The children enter early years with skills lower than those typical for their age, particularly in speaking and listening. However, they make good progress towards catching up with the skills and abilities that are typical. By the time they leave Reception class, the proportion of children who attain a good level of development is above national averages. This enables them to be ready to start Year 1.
- Children settle quickly and engage positively in tasks. They talk confidently about what they are doing. For example, during this inspection, children were busy outdoors building a den using recyclable materials and at the same time developing problem-solving, creativity and language skills.
- There is a happy atmosphere in lessons and children's behaviour is positive. Staff have high expectations of manners and courtesy which they model for the children and, as a result, children learn and play together well.
- The children are encouraged to be independent and to do things for themselves. They get the resources out and put them away themselves and they use their 'talking pegs' to access activities independently.
- The children's reading and writing skills develop well through a language and literacy rich learning environment. For example, during this inspection, children were enjoying writing a letter to Santa about what they would like for Christmas.
- Safeguarding is effective in the early years and there are no breaches of welfare requirements. Staff are well trained and understand how to keep children safe. Children show they feel safe through their attitudes and behaviour and are confident enough to speak to visitors.
- Parents have regular information about their child's progress. They are becoming even more involved in their child's learning and the early years leader has rightly identified that this is an area to improve further. Parents are now inputting information into the e-journals and staff share next steps online with parents.



## School details

Unique reference number	124090
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10020023

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	223
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Blood
Executive Headteacher	Abigail Rourke
Telephone number	01782296778
Website	<a href="http://www.reginaldmitchell.staffs.sch.uk">www.reginaldmitchell.staffs.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:headteacher@reginaldmitchell.staffs.sch.uk">headteacher@reginaldmitchell.staffs.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	14–15 October 2014

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Reginald Mitchell became part of the Learning First Federation in April 2016, joining two existing local schools. This was after a period of intensive support.
- The Learning First Federation is led by an executive headteacher, a federation associate headteacher and the school's associate headteacher who drive school improvement. Senior leaders work closely together to strengthen and develop leadership capacity.
- Reginald Mitchell is slightly smaller than the average-sized school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average.
- Early years is made up of a morning and afternoon Nursery class and a full-time Reception class.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is

below the national average.

- The school meets the government's floor standards. These are the minimum standards and rate of progress expected in reading, writing and mathematics of pupils in key stage 2.
- The school operates a breakfast club and after school club, which are managed by the governing body.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes and observed learning in 17 lessons. Two lessons were conducted jointly, involving the headteacher and the federation associate headteacher.
- Discussions took place with: the executive headteacher, the federation associate headteacher, senior and middle leaders, four members of the governing body, a group of teachers and teaching assistants and the county commissioner for school quality assurance and intervention.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents. These included: the school's self-evaluation summary; action plans for school improvement; records of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning; performance management documents; minutes of the meetings of the governing body; the school's own assessment information; and records relating to behaviour, attendance and the safeguarding of children.
- Pupils' work was reviewed during lessons and a more detailed scrutiny was made of pupils' books with the associate headteacher and subject leader for English. Pupils read to inspectors and inspectors spoke with pupils throughout the inspection in order to gain their views.
- The behaviour of pupils was observed in lessons, in assembly, at breaktimes and at lunchtime, as well as when moving around the building.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents through the online survey and spoke to parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also took account of the staff survey and pupil survey.

## Inspection team

Lynda Townsend, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Johanne Clifton

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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