

Carmountside Primary Academy

Woodhead Road, Abbey Hulton, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST2 8DJ

Inspection dates

18–19 September 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, there has been a decline in pupils' achievements. Many pupils do not reach the standards that they should by the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Some teachers do not plan to meet pupils' learning needs well enough. This means that pupils have gaps in their knowledge and skills. As a result, pupils do not make sufficient progress, particularly in reading and writing, from their starting points. This is especially so for disadvantaged pupils.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is not effective enough, which limits progress for these pupils.
- Teachers do not consistently address basic mistakes in grammar, punctuation and spelling, which leads to pupils repeating mistakes.
- Over the past four years, the proportion of children, including disadvantaged children, leaving the early years with a good level of development has been below the national average. Early years provision does not meet children's needs sufficiently well.
- Leaders do not measure the impact of improvement plans in order to evaluate their effectiveness well enough. Therefore, leaders are unclear about which improvement strategies are most effective.
- Levels of persistent absence are above average. Some pupils miss too much school, which hinders their progress.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. However, pupils' understanding of democracy and different cultures that exist beyond their immediate community is not sufficiently well developed.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils embody the school's core values of 'respect', 'believe' and 'achieve'.
- The headteacher has a vision for the school, which is shared by leaders, staff and pupils.
- Unvalidated assessment data suggests that standards in mathematics at the end of key stage 2 improved significantly in 2018.
- The governing body supports and challenges school leaders effectively. Governors have an informed understanding of the difficulties faced by the school, and they are relentless in their actions to pursue improvements.
- Arrangements to keep all pupils safe are effective. Pupils are well cared for.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve pupils' progress and thereby raise attainment across the school, particularly in reading and writing.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers use assessment information accurately to plan well-structured learning opportunities to support the needs of all groups of pupils
 - teachers address basic mistakes in grammar, punctuation and spelling so that pupils do not repeat them
 - the needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are met effectively through high-quality inclusive teaching and the efficient use of additional adults.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders use assessment and monitoring information accurately to measure the impact of school improvement plans to evaluate their effectiveness
 - leaders use the additional funding received to support disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities more effectively to improve outcomes for these pupils.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - improving levels of attendance further by continuing to work in partnership with parents to overcome any barriers to good attendance
 - continuing to develop pupils' awareness and understanding of democracy and other cultures.
- Improve provision in the early years by:
 - providing more opportunities for children to develop their language skills and understanding of number
 - developing the quality of the indoor and outdoor learning environments.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The headteacher has a vision for the school, which is shared by leaders and staff. This fits with the school's core values of 'respect', 'believe' and 'achieve'.
- While leaders have begun to address weaknesses in the quality of teaching, there is further work to be done to ensure that the overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Leaders recognise that some remaining weak teaching is limiting pupils' progress.
- The leadership of pupils' behaviour is strong. There is a clear rationale for behaviour systems and the school's policy, which staff apply consistently across the school. Leaders record any incidents well and follow up any issues with parents in a manner which is proportionate to the incident.
- Leaders use a range of information to evaluate the school's performance to identify improvements which need to be made. Leaders also seek advice and expertise from external bodies. Leaders use this information to formulate detailed school improvement plans. However, these plans are not focused on the key issues, which means that leaders do not identify the most urgent priorities for improvement well enough. In addition, leaders do not measure the impact of their plans to establish which actions are successfully improving pupils' outcomes.
- Middle leaders, who take responsibility for the leadership of core subjects, are knowledgeable about the school's key priorities. They are enthusiastic about the part that they play in supporting teaching and learning, and they feel well supported by the senior leadership. They are instrumental in organising and delivering training for members of staff and feel that the training has been useful. However, middle leaders are not using assessment information accurately to plan focused improvement strategies which can be measured in terms of their impact on pupils' achievement.
- The leadership of SEN and/or disabilities has ensured that there is a whole-school approach in relation to the identification of pupils who have additional needs, and that there are strong links between school staff and parents. However, the use of additional adults and interventions to help pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are not providing effective support, which limits learning for this group of pupils.
- Leaders identify the barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils. They are aware that a high percentage of these pupils have SEN and/or disabilities. Funding is used predominantly to pay for additional adult support across the school. However, leaders are not evaluating the effectiveness of this support, and it is not specifically targeted at disadvantaged pupils. This does not help these pupils to make strong progress.
- Leaders use the physical education (PE) and sport premium funding in an appropriate manner. The use of sports coaches has increased the confidence and skills of teaching staff. Effective use of the funding enables pupils to engage in a range of sporting activities outside of the normal school day. The school has recently been awarded the 'Gold Active Mark'.
- The curriculum is underpinned by learning challenges and was created in response to changes in the national curriculum. There is clear evidence in pupils' books and around

the school to reflect the broad and balanced nature of subjects being taught. There are increasing opportunities to reinforce English and mathematics skills in other subjects, but this is not consistent across the school. External specialists are used to teach aspects of the PE and music curriculum. The curriculum is enriched through an array of trips which support a range of subject areas. A wide range of well-attended after-school clubs are offered, including basketball, table tennis, cooking and music.

- The vast majority of parents are supportive of the school. Parents comment that their children are happy and that positive relationships exist between the staff and their children. One parent commented that the school has helped his daughter to 'come out of her shell'.
- Staff speak positively about the school, and they are proud to work there. They respect the leaders of the school and feel supported. Staff particularly value training opportunities, which they state have enabled them to improve their teaching skills. Support for newly qualified teachers is effective.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective. Governors are clear about their responsibility to keep pupils safe and this is their highest priority. They have clear systems for monitoring safeguarding within school. Governors monitor policy and practice carefully.
- Governors have a clear vision for the school. They are mindful of pupils' starting points and are aware that pupils' outcomes will only improve as a result of a continued focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- Governors are proud of their pupils, and they are pleased that the school sits in the heart of the community.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's current priorities. They provide a good balance of support and challenge to the school leaders. They receive a range of monitoring information from leaders, but the impact of improvement plans is not clear. Governors visit the school on a regular basis. As a result, they are well informed and knowledgeable about the school.
- Governors know how the pupil premium is used but recognise that more needs to be done to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a culture of safeguarding which permeates the school. Staff are aware that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone. Staff undertake regular training in relation to safeguarding and, as a result, they understand fully their roles and responsibilities. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding have undertaken relevant training at an appropriate level to ensure that they fulfil their roles effectively.
- Detailed and accurate records are kept securely in school, and timely action is taken to support vulnerable pupils. The school has clear systems in place if a pupil makes a disclosure or an allegation. Leaders work well with external agencies to provide the

appropriate level of support and intervention required to keep pupils safe.

- Procedures for the recruitment and checking of staff are accurate and updated regularly.
- Pupils report that they feel safe in school and can explain why this is so.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time has not been good enough to ensure that pupils make strong progress and achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- Teachers do not use assessment information well enough to match work to pupils' learning needs. This means that higher-ability pupils are not sufficiently challenged and pupils who require extra support find the work set too difficult. This can also be seen in pupils' work over time. As a result, pupils do not make the progress they should.
- Some teachers use open questions effectively in order to encourage pupils to think, deepen their learning and correct misconceptions. In these instances, pupils become confident learners who are keen to improve their knowledge and skills. They are not afraid to make mistakes. However, this is not consistent across the whole school.
- The majority of teachers model language linked to mathematics and English grammar well. This supports pupils when they are given opportunities to explain their understanding of a concept.
- Leaders recognise that the teaching of reading is the main school priority. They have recently organised training using a programme to support the teaching of phonics. However, the impact of this training is yet to be seen.
- In English books, a range of interesting activities are covered. However, basic errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar are not routinely picked up by teachers, so pupils repeat the same errors. This prevents pupils from making strong progress in writing.
- In mathematics books, a range of mathematical concepts are taught across the year. There is growing evidence that pupils can recall basic numeracy facts and work out how to solve problems. However, teachers do not consistently match work to pupils' skills and abilities, which hinders progress.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are regularly withdrawn from the classroom to be taught in small groups. In these instances, the needs of these pupils are not always met effectively and their progress is limited.
- Pupils talk enthusiastically about how their teachers make lessons enjoyable. Where teachers plan relevant and interesting work, pupils are keen to do their best and strong progress is evident. Pupils listen well and have a positive attitude to learning. However, this is not consistent across the school.
- Homework is set regularly to reinforce learning. Pupils talk positively about their homework, particularly the creative tasks, which they enjoy.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are positive and happy at school. They embody the school's core values of 'respect', 'believe' and 'achieve'. Pupils are proud to attend Carmountside Primary Academy, and they feel valued and nurtured by school staff.
- Pupils feel safe, and they attribute this to the caring nature of the staff. In the words of one pupil, 'Our teachers are nice and they look after us.' Pupils have positive relationships with staff, which are underpinned by mutual respect.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of how to stay safe online. They speak confidently about this.
- Pupils make a significant contribution to the local community. They enjoy visiting the elderly people's home, the local church and delivering harvest baskets to members of the local community.
- Pupils have a developing understanding of British values. However, their knowledge of democracy is more limited.
- Pupils can talk about the difference between right and wrong, and they understand the consequences of their actions. They enjoy working together as a team, and they respect the views of others. However, pupils' understanding of the different cultures and customs that exist beyond their immediate community is less well developed.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. This is because leaders have not been successful in reducing overall and persistent absence. Leaders are doing everything they can to try to improve attendance. They systematically use strategies such as first-day calling, home visits, breakfast club, incentives and attendance meetings to follow up absence and improve attendance. However, the unauthorised and extended leave of pupils continues to prevent attendance rates from rising further.
- In the main, pupils' attitudes to learning are positive, and they enjoy coming to school. During the inspection, pupils were keen to talk to the inspectors at every opportunity about their experiences at school. However, some pupils become disengaged when teaching does not challenge them or meet their needs.
- Pupils are positive, and they respond well to praise. They are polite and welcoming to all visitors. They are well mannered and always happy to help other pupils and adults around the school.
- The vast majority of pupils know how to conduct themselves. They are calm and walk sensibly around the school. Most pupils cooperate well with each other during lessons and at breaktimes. Pupils respond promptly to adult instructions.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of the different types of bullying. They say that

incidents of bullying or derogatory language are rare but, when they occur, staff deal with them in a timely manner. This view is also held by the majority of parents, who feel that staff deal with issues promptly.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2016 and 2017, pupils in key stages 1 and 2 made weak progress in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, attainment in these curriculum areas has been below what is expected for pupils nationally. In 2017, the school was ranked in the bottom 20% of all schools nationally for progress in reading, writing and mathematics across key stage 2.
- Progress of current pupils in reading and writing is improving but remains below the national average. As a result, many pupils do not achieve the standards of which they are capable. However, school assessment information and evidence in pupils' books indicate that progress is improving in mathematics. The unvalidated assessment information for 2018 suggests that progress and attainment in mathematics, by the end of key stage 2, are broadly in line with the national average.
- School achievement information and work in books indicate that the progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below that of other pupils nationally with similar starting points, particularly in reading and writing.
- Since 2016, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been below average.
- In 2017, disadvantaged pupils were ranked in the bottom 20% of all schools nationally for progress in reading, writing and mathematics across key stage 2. Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school do not perform as well their peers in the majority of year groups and subjects. Leaders do not target support for this group of pupils effectively.
- There is evidence in books that pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are being reinforced in other areas of the curriculum, such as in science and history. However, this is not consistent across year groups. This reflects the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children enter early years with skills and abilities which are well below those typical for their age. Over time, the progress that they have made has not been good enough to prepare them fully for the demands of Year 1.
- Over the last four years, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has been below the national average. It is a similar pattern for pupils for whom the school receives additional funding.
- Children are calm, happy and settled in the early years. Positive relationships between children and staff are evident, and there is a strong sense of nurture and pastoral care. Children are confident to share their ideas with school staff and visitors because they feel sure that their ideas are valued.
- Leaders are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. Leaders and staff are beginning to use

assessment information more effectively to plan and inform teaching opportunities to improve children's outcomes.

- Children engage in a wide range of purposeful activities. Where staff use questioning effectively, children are encouraged to talk about their ideas. This supports the development of key skills and embeds positive learning behaviours. However, staff do not consistently develop children's language and understanding of number well enough. As a result, children's progress in this area is hindered.
- The learning environment is welcoming and colourful. It is rich in displays, but resources to support independent learning are not routinely available, or appropriately placed. The outdoor area is not well maintained and opportunities to utilise this area are therefore reduced.
- Links with parents are strong and parents value this immensely. Transition to prepare children for early years begins prior to their start date, and it is well structured and highly effective. This helps children to settle quickly.
- Safeguarding arrangements in the early years are effective. Staff follow safeguarding procedures with the same rigour as in the rest of the school. Children feel safe and secure. Relevant staff hold paediatric first-aid certificates. Welfare requirements in the early years are met.

School details

Unique reference number	139846
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10042912

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	250
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Ray Palin
Headteacher	Lisa Challinor
Telephone number	01782 234 676
Website	www.carmountsideprimary.org.uk
Email address	lchallinor@carmountside.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 January 2015

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are predominantly from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is significantly above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is significantly above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is average.
- The school has a breakfast club and an after-school club. This provision is managed by the governing body.
- Pre-school provision is available.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other key leaders. The lead inspector spoke with two members of the governing body, including the chair. The lead inspector discussed the school with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors made visits to classrooms on both days of the inspection. Some of these visits were with the headteacher and other senior leaders.
- The inspectors scrutinised a wide selection of pupils' books from different subjects. This was carried out during visits to classrooms and in a formal scrutiny of pupils' work books.
- The inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally. Two separate groups of pupils each met with an inspector to discuss a range of issues. Another group of pupils accompanied an inspector on a walk around the school. A number of pupils read to an inspector. The inspectors observed behaviour in classrooms, in corridors, in the hall at lunchtime and outside on the playground.
- Two inspectors talked to parents before school. The lead inspector also considered the 10 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- The lead inspector considered the 20 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Various school documents were scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, records of monitoring, the local authority review and governing body minutes of meetings. Information about pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance, and safety was also analysed and discussed with a number of leaders.
- Documents relating to safeguarding were checked and the lead inspector looked at published information on the school website.

Inspection team

Wayne Simner, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Louise Blackburn	Ofsted Inspector
Justine Lomas	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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