

# Silver Springs Primary Academy

School Crescent, Stalybridge, Cheshire SK15 1EA

## 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	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- After several years of low attainment, standards improved in 2017 and 2018, particularly at the end of key stage 2. However, leaders and governors have not ensured that pupils across the school make good progress. This includes disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils.
- Leaders have been unable to secure consistently good teaching and learning across classes and subjects. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. This is preventing pupils from catching up in their learning and making the best possible progress.
- Governors have not challenged leaders effectively about pupils' achievement in different year groups.
- Pupils' progress in writing is uneven throughout the school. The teaching of writing skills is not consistent across year groups.
- In mathematics, too few pupils develop reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- The proportion of pupils that reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been below the national average for the last three years. Leaders have not implemented an effective approach to teaching phonics.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 1 has remained below average over time. Teaching has not effectively supported pupils to gain the skills and knowledge they need.
- Pupils' progress varies across curriculum subjects. Teaching is not consistently successful in developing pupils' subject knowledge and skills. Leadership of some curriculum subjects is at the early stages of development.

### The school has the following strengths

- The principal knows the school well. Despite significant challenges with staffing, she has ensured that Silver Springs Primary Academy remains a highly inclusive, safe and nurturing school.
- Behaviour in the school is good. Pupils show high levels of respect and care towards others.
- Pupils value the learning experiences provided by the school. The broad curriculum is enhanced by a good range of after-school clubs.
- The quality of teaching across the early years is good. Good-quality provision supports children to make strong progress in their learning.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in writing and mathematics, so that pupils, including those in key stage 1, the most able and disadvantaged pupils, make consistently good progress by:
  - ensuring that teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - ensuring that writing skills, such as punctuation and handwriting, are taught consistently and systematically from year to year so that pupils develop fluency in their writing
  - enabling pupils to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics
  - ensuring that the teaching of phonics leads to swift and sustained improvements in pupils' reading and writing skills.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - governors challenge leaders about the progress and attainment of pupils in all year groups throughout the school
  - the role of subject leaders is developed so that these leaders have a greater influence on the curriculum in order to develop pupils' subject-specific skills and knowledge.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- School leaders have been successful in improving outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 2. As a result, attainment in Year 6 improved in 2017 and 2018. However, leaders have been unable to eradicate inconsistencies in the effectiveness of teaching and learning across subjects and classes. As a result, pupils' progress in different classes and subjects is uneven.
- Staff absence and difficulties in recruiting staff have disrupted the teaching for pupils. Leaders have provided support for new teachers. However, this has not led to pupils making consistently good progress. This is particularly the case in writing and mathematics.
- The principal has an accurate view of the challenges that the school faces. The school community holds the principal in high regard. They recognise that her passion and drive for improvement place pupils at the heart of the school's work. She has secured the commitment of others to ensure that Silver Springs Primary Academy is a welcoming, safe and happy school.
- Staff morale is high. Leaders and teachers share their expertise with staff at Silver Springs and across the Great Academies Trust. This sharing of good practice is helping leaders to tackle weaker teaching. Staff value the support of their colleagues and the opportunities to learn from each other's practice.
- The curriculum is broad and planned to provide opportunities that pupils might otherwise not experience. The curriculum covers a variety of different subjects and topics and places a strong emphasis on reading. However, subject leaders are at the early stages of checking how well curriculum provision is enabling pupils to gain subject-specific skills and knowledge. This is because the role of some subject leaders is underdeveloped.
- Leaders have made improvements to the provision for disadvantaged pupils and these changes are beginning to have a positive impact. However, improved attainment and progress for this group of pupils are not consistently good across different year groups.
- Leaders are careful in using additional funding to support pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Leaders ensure that pupils have the additional support that they need to overcome barriers to learning and to meet their personal and emotional needs. Additional teaching has improved progress for this group, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Leaders ensure that good use is made of the additional funding for physical education (PE) and sport. Specialist PE teaching increases pupils' participation in sport, including in competitive events. Pupils value opportunities across the PE curriculum and after-school clubs, such as dance and cheerleading, football and cycling.
- Parents and carers are positive about the school and would recommend it to others.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively. Pupils show care and consideration for others. The respect that they show towards others is an example of their good awareness of British values.

## Governance of the school

- Governors show a clear commitment to the school, its pupils and their families.
- Governors successfully hold leaders to account for outcomes at the end of key stage 2. However, they do not challenge leaders in enough depth about pupils' attainment and progress in some other year groups across the school.
- Governors have not questioned rigorously all aspects of school performance. They know the strengths and areas for improvement but not in enough depth.
- Governors receive regular training to make sure that they have a good understanding of good practice in safeguarding.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders work effectively with external professionals to support vulnerable pupils and their families. Improved systems to record concerns and incidents support timely actions. The family worker plays an important role in following up referrals. The school is effective in ensuring that early help is provided.
- Staff are appropriately trained and are familiar with the government's latest guidance on keeping children safe in education. Staff know what to do if they are worried about a child's welfare. Notices around the school indicate who the nominated safeguarding leads are and information given to visitors clearly explains safeguarding procedures.
- Thorough checks are made on staff, governors and regular visitors to the school. This ensures their suitability to work with children.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement because pupils' progress in writing and mathematics is not consistently good.
- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what their pupils can achieve. Where teachers' expectations are too low, pupils are prevented from catching up with their learning. It also means that some of the most able pupils are not challenged to make the best possible progress.
- There is some strong practice in the teaching of mathematics in some year groups. However, the development of pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills is not consistent across the school.
- Leaders have successfully prioritised actions to improve the teaching of reading. They have provided teachers with support to teach reading more effectively. Pupils read more widely, and additional teaching is proving effective in improving pupils' progress.
- Weaknesses in the teaching of phonics have made it difficult for pupils to gain a sufficiently strong knowledge of the sounds that letters make. This, in turn, has impeded the progress of some pupils in their reading and writing skills. While teachers regularly assess pupils' progress in phonics, there has been insufficient urgency to

ensure that a greater proportion reach the expected standard in Year 1.

- Pupils are encouraged to write for different purposes across curriculum subjects. They write in a range of styles and for a variety of audiences. However, pupils' books show that progress in writing is variable throughout the school. Some teachers' expectations are too low, and many pupils do not write at an appropriate standard for their age.
- Pupils' progress is uneven across other curriculum subjects. Some pupils have not consistently secured the subject-specific knowledge and understanding that they need to progress well in the next stage of their education.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support and guidance for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. The additional support that teaching assistants provide, including in the Oasis class, helps pupils to develop confidence and to complete tasks independently. As a result, these pupils typically make good progress.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. It is at the core of the school's curriculum.
- Pupils told inspectors how they are valued and respected at Silver Springs. Good-quality relationships throughout the school help pupils to feel safe. Pupils are confident that there is always an adult they can talk to if they have any worries.
- The positive atmosphere in school supports pupils to grow in confidence, learn valuable social skills and approach their work with interest.
- The most vulnerable pupils are supported exceptionally well. This is a priority of staff and governors. Close liaison with outside agencies ensures that their physical and emotional needs are met successfully.
- Pupils take responsibility for keeping themselves and others safe. They know the dangers associated with the internet and social media. The school has taught them how to stay safe in different situations, including in the local area.
- Pupils are aware of bullying in its different forms. They say that bullying is rare in their school. Any incidents are dealt with quickly. At times, some pupils are unkind towards others but this, too, is dealt with quickly.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils follow the 'SHINE' rules. These are 'show respect', 'have excellent manners', 'include everyone', 'never hurt anyone' and make 'excellent choices'. Pupils say, 'There are no outsiders at Silver Springs.'
- Pupils are proud of their school. They take care to look smart in their school uniform. Pupils are considerate and respectful towards each other and extremely polite to visitors.
- Attendance remains below average but it is improving. It is an ongoing priority in the school improvement plan. Persistent absenteeism is reducing following support and

additional challenge for targeted families.

- Pupils manage their behaviour well at different times across the school day. The school is orderly and calm.
- Parents who shared their views with inspectors were highly positive about pupils' behaviour. The school's surveys of parents' views are also very positive about behaviour, as are those of staff and governors.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Attainment at the end of key stage 2 has improved. The 2018 provisional data indicates that pupils made strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics, which led to broadly average attainment in these subjects. However, the improved outcomes at the end of Year 6 are not consistently replicated across all year groups. This includes the most able and disadvantaged pupils. Inconsistencies in teaching lead to uneven rates of progress across the school.
- At the end of key stage 1, despite some improvements in the 2018 provisional data, pupils' attainment remains below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils in key stage 1 do not have the opportunity to capitalise on the strong start that they make in the early years.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has remained below average over the last three years. Leaders have not been successful in their efforts to improve outcomes in phonics for pupils in Year 1.
- Pupils' books show inconsistencies in how effectively pupils apply and develop secure knowledge and skills. There are examples of good-quality writing, in which pupils develop impact through their choice of vocabulary. In other pieces of writing, teachers do not ensure that pupils apply prior learning, for example in spelling, punctuation and handwriting.
- Pupils' books do not show clear progression from year to year in their mathematical knowledge and understanding. Although developing an understanding of calculation processes, there are inconsistencies across classes in how pupils apply their learning in reasoning and problem-solving activities.
- A cohesive approach to reading is raising standards. Key stage 2 pupils who read with inspectors showed fluency and interest in reading. Leaders are successfully promoting reading across other curriculum subjects. This is developing pupils' knowledge, including of vocabulary, and their comprehension skills.
- Although pupils have the opportunity to study a range of other subjects beyond English and mathematics, their progress in acquiring subject-specific skills is patchy across different year groups.

## Early years provision

## Good

- Children start in the Nursery class with knowledge and skills below those typical for their age. Good-quality provision across the Nursery and Reception classes successfully supports children to make a strong start in their learning. Although the proportion gaining a good level of development at the end of Reception remains below average, children make good progress. They are successfully supported to catch up from their starting points.
- The early years provision is well led and managed. The expertise of the early years leader is shared across an effective early years team. Their strong team approach makes sure that no time is wasted in helping children to develop knowledge and skills across all areas of learning. Observations confirmed that effective and timely interventions build well on children's prior learning. The school's assessment information shows improving outcomes.
- Adults are excellent role models. They demonstrate positive behaviour, respect and interest in children's learning. They actively promote children's curiosity and independence. They help to develop children's language and understanding of vocabulary. Children talk, work and play happily together. Children new to the Nursery class were seen following routines, such as tidying away equipment at the end of a session. They show that they understand teachers' expectations.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress because of the additional support that they receive. Leaders use additional funding effectively. The early years coordinator for the provision for children who have SEN and/or disabilities supports close liaison with outside agencies and timely monitoring to ensure that children's individual needs are met.
- Staff ensure that children in the early years are cared for well. Safeguarding is effective and welfare requirements are met.
- Parents are encouraged to contribute to their children's learning records and to support their children at home.

## School details

Unique reference number	137951
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	10045832

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	431
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Tony Powell
Principal	Deborah Mason
Telephone number	0161 338 2475
Website	<a href="http://www.silverspringsacademy.org.uk/">www.silverspringsacademy.org.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@silverspringsacademy.org.uk">admin@silverspringsacademy.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	27–28 March 2014

## Information about this school

- Silver Springs Primary Academy is larger than the average-sized primary school. It has increased in size since the previous inspection. The school is housed in new premises on the site of the previous building.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school is more than twice the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have support for SEN and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion with an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The school is part of the Great Academies Trust and sponsored by a local housing association.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. They also looked at pupils' work in books, records of children's learning in the early years and other information about pupils' progress and attainment.
- Inspectors listened to groups of pupils read and held discussions with further groups of pupils. They talked informally with pupils around the school.
- Inspectors considered the 26 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and talked informally with parents at the start of the school day. They also took into consideration 21 free-text responses submitted by parents. They considered 30 responses to the staff survey and 27 responses to the pupils' questionnaire.
- Inspectors met a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. They also had discussions with staff in school, including the leader responsible for the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, the designated safeguarding lead, the leader for the early years, and subject leaders for history and geography, science, computing, phonics, English and mathematics.
- Inspectors met with a representative of the Great Academies Trust.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school's review of its own performance, development plans and minutes of meetings of the governing body. They examined safeguarding documentation and various records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.

## Inspection team

Deana Aldred, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Bentham	Her Majesty's Inspector
Suzanne Blay	Ofsted Inspector

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