

# Edgar Stammers Primary Academy

Harden Road, Coalpool, Walsall, West Midlands WS3 1RQ

## Inspection dates

12–13 March 2019

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- While many improvements are underway, the quality of teaching and learning is not yet consistently good across key stages 1 and 2. At the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has been below the national average for at least two years.
- The teaching of reading is not secure. Reading books are not always well matched to pupils' reading ability.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length and to apply and consolidate their writing skills. This prevents pupils from reaching higher standards in writing.
- Pupils do not read widely or frequently enough. Many pupils do not read beyond school. There are too few opportunities for pupils to discuss their reading. Too few pupils reach higher standards in reading.
- Leadership of the wider curriculum is not well established.
- A small minority of pupils do not consistently follow the school's expectations for good behaviour.
- Attendance is below average. Despite recent improvements, too many pupils miss school regularly. This hinders their progress.

### The school has the following strengths

- Good leadership and governance are improving the school. Leaders have high aspirations and the full support of a committed staff.
- Standards of attainment are rising. At the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standards is now close to the national average.
- Children in early years make strong progress and receive a good start to their education.
- This is an inclusive and caring school. Safeguarding arrangements are robust and staff are very committed to pupils' personal development, well-being and safety.
- The curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is good and this group of pupils make strong progress.

## Full report

**In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.**

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils in all classes receive the right level of challenge and support by:
  - making sure that all teachers use effective and consistent methods to help pupils to improve basic writing skills such as handwriting, spelling and punctuation
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply and secure their writing skills by writing more extended pieces of work, particularly in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2
  - making sure that pupils read books at a suitable level to help them to become fluent and confident readers
  - using more effective and consistent methods to help pupils to read widely, understand and talk about their reading in depth.
- Build on the improvements made to leadership and management by:
  - making sure that the leadership of the wider curriculum is well established and pupils make consistently good progress across subjects other than mathematics and English
  - working with parents and carers to encourage pupils to read widely beyond school.
- Build on the improvements made to the standards of behaviour for pupils by:
  - establishing good levels of attendance
  - ensuring that all pupils follow and respect the school's rules for good behaviour.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The executive headteacher, appointed in May 2018, has quickly won the respect of the staff, governors and pupils, as well as many parents. She has been particularly strong in providing clear direction, raising staff morale and setting an ambitious vision for all pupils. She is ably supported by the head of school, other leaders and a committed staff.
- During previous monitoring inspections, the overuse of supply teachers resulted in too much inadequate or weak teaching. This made it difficult for leaders and permanent staff to sustain improvement evenly in every year group and class. A great deal of time was spent dealing with staff instability and weak teaching.
- Much has been achieved, particularly in the last ten months. The school is now staffed with a full complement of permanent teachers. There is effective and consistent leadership at all levels. There is good capacity to sustain further improvements. Everyone is pulling in the same direction. There is strong 'team spirit' and a shared determination to sustain improvements to pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.
- A full and strategic programme of monitoring activities is in place. Senior and middle leaders effectively coach, mentor and influence the work of other teachers. They closely monitor pupils' progress and use the information to quickly adjust plans and direct additional support for pupils where necessary.
- Leaders are closely targeting teaching that still requires further improvement, particularly in classes where expectations for pupils' writing should be higher.
- Pupils' work in books and leaders' monitoring records show that there is more good and better teaching in every key stage. Pupils who have previously underachieved are beginning to catch up, particularly those of middle and higher ability. The progress of lower-ability pupils is not as strong in some classes, compared with others, particularly in reading and writing.
- Leaders have established a collaborative approach to professional development. As a result, teachers and teaching assistants work effectively and flexibly together to support pupils' learning and ensure that learning time is used well. This contributes to the purposeful learning atmosphere in many classes.
- Staff have benefited from clear guidance on how to improve their teaching further. This has eliminated all inadequate teaching. Newly qualified teachers appreciate the effective support provided by leaders to help them to strengthen their teaching and the use of assessment.
- School improvement plans set clear priorities for further improvement and reflect leaders' accurate view of the school's strengths and the work that still needs to be done. Priorities are being tackled systematically. For example, the English leader is currently evaluating whether the school's reading policy is working as effectively as it could.

- Leaders and governors make sure that the funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. Detailed plans are in place for individual pupils, with specific support in classrooms and nurture groups where needed. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together to ensure that these plans have a positive impact on pupils' achievement and well-being. This has ensured that the progress of disadvantaged pupils is now in line with the progress of other pupils nationally.
- The primary school physical education (PE) and sports premium funding is used effectively to develop teachers' skills and to provide greater opportunities for pupils to access a wide range of sports and participate in competitions. Information about the use of funding and the benefits for pupils is presented clearly on the school's website and is easily accessible for parents.
- The school has mapped out its curriculum to make sure that all subjects are taught within a yearly cycle of themed units. Activities and visits are planned, within each unit, to inspire pupils' curiosity and engagement. For example, visits to the Black Country Museum are part of a local history unit. A Stone Age 'Wow' day introduces a unit of work on historical change in Britain. However, the key knowledge and skills required in each subject, within each theme, are not yet clearly identified and built on across the key stages. Therefore, leaders cannot evaluate how well pupils are achieving across a wide range of subjects.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governance has improved significantly since the previous inspection in November 2016. A new chair of governors was appointed in April 2018. She has an extremely accurate understanding of the school's recent improvements and the work that still needs to be done.
- Governors work closely with the director for primary academies from University of Wolverhampton Multi Academy Trust (UWMAT), which has played a central role in the school's continued improvement. UWMAT has been effective in providing the school with necessary expertise, from across the trust's network, to support school improvement. This has enabled staff to share best practice and learn from other strong schools. The trust's director has been diligent in exercising his duty to oversee the school's journey out of special measures.
- Members of the governing body bring a range of expertise and skills. They have a good strategic oversight of what is happening. This is helped by some of them visiting on a regular basis to see the school in action and meet with their link subject teachers. As a result, they are well placed to offer leaders effective support and challenge.
- Governors have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning. They understand that standards of attainment are not yet good, particularly in key stage 1.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Making sure that all pupils are safe and secure is at the heart of the school. All staff know what to do if they have any concerns about the safety and welfare of pupils. Staff are vigilant and understand their roles in relation to child protection procedures.

- Leaders take swift, decisive actions to protect pupils and make sure that any safeguarding concerns are dealt with. Strong links with external agencies and other local schools are evident. The family support worker has an excellent understanding of the issues facing the local community. She has the trust and confidence of the staff and of the community. She offers extensive, effective support to families where needed. The records and day-to-day notes reflect this. Leaders are aware of the risks of radicalisation within their local context. There are comprehensive procedures in place to respond to any concerns. Staff have been given advice and guidance to alert them to the signs and symptoms of radicalisation. All staff have received 'Prevent' training.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching across key stages 1 and 2 requires improvement. Since the previous monitoring inspection, teaching has improved because of leaders' focused support and effective use of professional development. However, this has not yet led to consistently strong progress for all groups of pupils.
- Too few teachers provide pupils with opportunities to write at length for different purposes. Systems are not in place to check that writing tasks are helping pupils to master their writing skills and extend their knowledge and understanding of the writing process. This prevents pupils, especially the most able pupils, from developing a deeper understanding about how to write effectively in different contexts. Too few pupils reach higher standards in writing.
- The teaching of handwriting, spelling and punctuation is not fully effective in all classes. Teachers' expectations vary across the school. In some classes, basic errors in spelling and punctuation are left unaddressed over long periods of time and pupils' poor letter formation is left uncorrected. This prevents lower-ability pupils from catching up quickly and mastering basic writing skills.
- Frequent additional teaching in smaller groups is now provided for pupils who are struggling to catch up with their writing. There is evidence, for example in Year 1, that lower-ability pupils are beginning to make better progress and catch up in their learning.
- The teaching of phonics is effective and adults show good levels of expertise. Pupils use their phonics skills well to help them to read. Early reading books are matched to phases of development within the phonics programme. However, although pupils get off to this good start, once they read their own books these are not always at the right level of difficulty. Individual reading books are not well monitored and pupils have little guidance on what they need to do to develop as readers. As a result, pupils do not develop fluency and confidence and do not demonstrate a love of reading. Too few pupils reach higher standards in reading, particularly by the end of Year 2.
- The English leader is working hard to address these issues. It is clear that staff are beginning to read more children's literature aloud, and frequently, to pupils in all classes. As a result, pupils are hearing and learning new vocabulary and grammatical structures. However, it is too early to see an impact of this on pupils' attitudes to and understanding of their reading.

- There is a clear focus and approach to the teaching of mathematics, which is helping pupils to make strong progress. Pupils enjoy the routines in place to secure basic mathematical skills and understanding. Pupils who have previously fallen behind in mathematics are catching up quickly. Teachers identify and respond to pupils who are capable of working at higher standards. They provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to recall and apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems.
- There are some examples of strong links between the various curriculum subjects. For example, pupils apply their mathematical skills to design pieces of art with sophisticated symmetrical patterns and tessellations. Pupils demonstrate resilience in their learning and show creativity and imagination when tasked with these problems. This fosters positive attitudes to learning and demonstrates their enjoyment of the broad curriculum offer. However, it is not clear how well pupils make progress against the different subject requirements as they move through the school.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Systematic programmes are in place to support pupils' mental health and well-being. As a result, pupils are increasingly able to handle difficulties and know who to go to for help.
- Leaders have taken effective actions to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and promote a core set of values for pupils to aspire to. Pupils respond well to the school's core values of respect and tolerance. In lessons, pupils work together and support each other well. Relationships are good. This was captured by one pupil who said, 'Teachers want the very best for us and they do everything to help us.'
- The school's values are integral to curriculum planning. For example, pupils talk maturely about Frida Kahlo's art and philosophy as part of their world art and music studies. They talk confidently about their understanding of democracy. Attractive displays of pupils' work around the school, such as 'Democracy week' are a testimony to this. These help to improve pupils' self-confidence and social development as well as preparing them for the future.
- Lessons and activities to promote pupils' awareness of risk are well planned into the curriculum. For example, pupils talk confidently about e-safety lessons and assemblies. They are well aware of the risks of online communications and this topic is given a high profile. They learn from regular external speakers, for example from organisations such as the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that they value the 'friendliness' of school. They say that bullying is rare and is dealt with by staff.
- The majority of parents who spoke to inspectors and responded to Ofsted's online survey are positive about the school. They feel that communication between the school and parents is good. Many parents particularly value the opportunities to come into classes to read with their children and to attend parental workshops.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Over the last year, leaders have improved pupils' behaviour considerably. Pupils agree, although they still say that there is room for improvement. One pupil commented, 'Some pupils still do not stick to the rules and they do not listen when they are told off.'
- The atmosphere around school is calm and orderly. Pupils come into school ready to learn and classroom routines are well established. However, when adults are not immediately visible, there are times when pupils do not manage their behaviour well.
- Most pupils take pride in their work and are proud of the school. However, there is some low-level disruption when the quality of teaching is weaker. When the work is not well matched to pupils' needs, pupils lose interest and fail to complete their work or produce work that is poorly presented.
- Actions taken by the school have led to improvements in the attendance of specific groups. For example, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils has improved so that the difference between their attendance and that of other pupils has almost disappeared. However, the attendance of pupils overall remains below the national figure for primary schools.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Increasing proportions of pupils, in every year group, are reaching or exceeding the age-related standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Work in pupils' books and the school's assessment records show that the progress made by the most able pupils is improving in most classes, particularly in mathematics. Even so, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, across classes, mean that pupils still do not make consistently strong progress, especially in reading and writing.
- Standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 show steady improvement over three years. In 2018, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standards in all three subjects was close to the national average.
- However, at the end of key stage 1, standards of attainment have been consistently below the national average, particularly in writing. This reflects poor progress from pupils' starting points in Year 1. Over the last year, effective actions have been taken to tackle this. Improvement is evident in the work in current pupils' books. Further work is needed to ensure that consistently good progress for all pupils is sustained, particularly in writing and reading.
- In 2018, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standards in the Year 1 phonics screening check continued to improve and was close to the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that these improvements have been maintained.
- The progress of pupils with SEND is good in most classes. Resources are used well to support learning. The new leader of provision for these pupils has evaluated pupils' needs and starting points effectively. More focused support is in place as a result.
- In the past, disadvantaged pupils have not achieved well enough. Leaders and

governors have taken effective action to ensure that pupil premium funding is used effectively. As a result, the progress of disadvantaged pupils is at least in line with the national average for other pupils nationally. An increasing number of disadvantaged pupils are reaching higher standards by the end of key stage 2.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- The skills and knowledge of many children joining the early years are below what is typical for their age and, for some, well below. Many children struggle with language and communication skills. All staff take part in a programme of highly focused professional development to help them to respond to these challenges across the Nursery and Reception Years. As a result, teaching is highly responsive to children's needs and children make consistently strong progress.
- Children are well prepared to start Year 1, particularly those children who have attended the school's Nursery and Reception Years. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development has steadily increased over the last three years. It is now close to the national average.
- Children with SEND are supported very well and staff work effectively with other partners to make sure that these children's needs are met. Transition from early years into Year 1 is managed sensitively and staff work hard to ensure that children continue to make strong progress from their starting points.
- Staff use additional funding effectively to support children's needs and make sure that they catch up with others quickly. As a result, any differences between disadvantaged children and others are almost closed by the time children leave Reception Year.
- Children throughout the early years behave well and are eager to learn. They listen attentively to teachers reading stories which excite and engage them. They recite familiar stories, nursery rhymes and songs. Reception children like to share books together and talk about their favourite characters. This promotes a love of reading for meaning.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Adults encourage children to use their knowledge of phonics when they read and write. They are encouraged to form letter shapes as they sound them out. Activities to support children's control and coordination are part of daily routines, indoors and outdoors. Further work is needed to ensure that children are secure in forming letters as they move from mark-making into early writing.
- Parents are very positive and say that staff are approachable and friendly. Parents value the information and workshops provided by the school, especially those that help them with phonics and reading.
- Relationships between staff and children are strong. Children play happily together and are kept safe. Safeguarding and statutory welfare requirements are met.
- The early years leader is highly skilled and very knowledgeable about this stage of children's learning and development. She places strong emphasis on developing children's speech and language skills. The impact of her relentless work to improve provision, including staff training and support, can be seen in children's outcomes.



## School details

Unique reference number	139610
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	10058455

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	335
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mary B McGrath
Headteacher	Caroline Jobling
Telephone number	01922 471 390
Website	<a href="http://www.edgarstammers.walsall.sch.uk/">www.edgarstammers.walsall.sch.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:postbox@edgarstammers.walsall.sch.uk">postbox@edgarstammers.walsall.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	29 November 2016

## Information about this school

- Edgar Stammers Primary Academy joined Education Central Multi Academy Trust (ECMAT) in July 2013. This is now known as University of Wolverhampton Multi Academy Trust.
- The executive headteacher and the head of school were appointed in May 2018.
- The school is larger than the average primary school. Children attend full-time in Reception Year, but for morning or afternoon sessions only in the nursery classes.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average. The proportion with an education, health and care plan is below average.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes to observe pupils' learning and look at work in their books. Inspectors discussed their findings with school leaders and feedback was provided to teachers.
- Discussions were held with school leaders, staff, the chair of governors and three other governors and the director for primary academies from ECMAT.
- Inspectors met with all teachers and a group of teaching assistants to seek their views. They also considered a range of documentation relating to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors met with three groups of pupils and spoke informally with pupils during the two days. An inspector heard some pupils read.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day. They also considered 51 responses from Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including the 20 responses made through the free-text service and one letter from a parent to the lead inspector.
- Inspectors looked at the school's evaluation of its own performance, its improvement plans, a number of key school policies and the school's information about the attainment and progress of all pupils.

## Inspection team

Marilyn Mottram, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
John Bates	Ofsted Inspector
Collette Higgins	Ofsted Inspector

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