

# Inspection of a good school: Offley Primary Academy

Offley Road, Sandbach, Cheshire CW11 1GY

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Inspection dates:

15–16 January 2020

## **Outcome**

Offley Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils love coming to school. They develop a wide range of knowledge across subjects and across key stages. Pupils love to read. They know that being able to read well helps them to learn. Pupils develop positive attitudes about themselves and other people.

Being physically and mentally well is given a high priority at the school. Pupils enjoy taking part in the wide range of activities on offer at school and in their wider community. They are keen to help others. Pupils thrive in the various roles of responsibility that leaders afford them.

Staff know pupils well. They are ambitious for pupils. Pupils know that staff care about them. Pupils feel safe. Staff deal with bullying effectively. Skilled staff provide extra support for pupils who need it. This is particularly true for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Staff skilfully ignite the natural curiosity of children in the early years. Children are enthusiastic about their learning. They quickly develop strong phonic knowledge. By Year 1, pupils are confident readers.

Pupils across the school behave well. They respond well to the positive encouragement that they get from staff. Expectations of behaviour are high. Pupils focus well on learning. They are respectful to adults and to each other.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders and governors expect all pupils to achieve well. When pupil achievement is below expectation, leaders carefully consider the reasons for this. They make changes to the curriculum to address any shortcomings. Staff value the support that they have had from leaders to develop the curriculum and their own subject knowledge.

Children achieve well in all areas of learning in the early years. They begin to learn to read as soon as they start in pre-school. By Year 1, almost every pupil reaches the expected standard in the phonics screening check. Despite this strong start, external data over time suggests that, by the end of Year 6, pupils have not achieved as well as they should have done. In 2019, this was particularly true in reading and mathematics. However, the quality of the curriculum in reading and mathematics for current pupils does not reflect these outcomes.

To improve the curriculum, leaders have made effective use of support from the multi-academy trust. Leaders now ensure that the quality of education is high in all subject areas. They ensure that current pupils build on what they know, especially in reading and in mathematics, as they move through the school. Most current pupils achieve well.

Leaders have helped teachers to focus on reading. Consequently, teachers now use a consistent approach for the teaching of reading across the school. Pupils who do not have secure knowledge of phonics receive extra support from skilled staff. Pupils regularly read quality books that challenge them. These books are carefully matched to their reading knowledge. Staff effectively support all pupils, including those with SEND, to build up their reading knowledge. Most pupils across the school read fluently and accurately. That said, some pupils in lower key stage 2 still lack fluency in their reading.

Leaders have developed a new approach to teaching mathematics. This meets the needs of pupils in the school. As in reading, pupils now build on the secure mathematical knowledge that children develop in the early years. Teachers help pupils to develop a deep understanding of each mathematical concept. This is particularly true for pupils with SEND. Pupils recall facts easily. This helps them complete their work with fewer errors. Some pupils, however, lose confidence when tackling more complex mathematical problems.

Similarly, leaders have also developed the other areas of the curriculum. Leaders set out clearly what pupils are expected to know in each year group. As well as developing secure knowledge in each subject, pupils apply what they have learned. In geography, for example, pupils use accurate geographical vocabulary in their work. They give clear explanations of natural phenomena. In addition to this, pupils reflect on the impact of environmental change. They demonstrate empathy for other people living in different parts the world when natural disasters occur.

Pupils demonstrate strong personal skills and positive attitudes in lessons. These are also evident in their discussions with one another. Leaders are aware that some pupils become anxious in formal situations, such as tests. They lose confidence in recalling what they know. To support pupils to cope better in these situations, leaders focus on developing pupils' resilience.

Leaders provide a rich and varied diet of extra-curricular activities. These help to develop pupils' social and emotional skills. Pupils take part in a wide range of school clubs. They participate in community events, such as singing or litter-picking. Pupils support the work of leaders in the school. For example, they help to improve the curriculum by offering their ideas and views.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff and governors make sure that pupils are safe. Staff notice when vulnerable pupils need extra support. Staff share concerns about these pupils with relevant personnel. Leaders work closely with pupils' families and a range of agencies. They make sure that pupils get the right support.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in school and in the wider world. They have a good understanding of how to protect themselves from potential danger when they are online. Adults help pupils when they feel worried.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils in lower key stage 2 have had multiple teachers in a short period of time who have not focused enough on developing pupils' fluency in reading. This means that some younger pupils in key stage 2 have not practised their reading as regularly as other pupils have. Leaders need to make sure that all pupils continue to build up their reading fluency as they move through the school. They need to ensure that these pupils catch up.
- Some pupils struggle with complex mathematical problems. They make errors in their work because they do not have a secure understanding of earlier learning. Teachers need to check that pupils' learning is secure, before pupils apply their mathematical knowledge to more difficult tasks.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged Offley Primary School to be good on 30–31 March 2011.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	144056
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire East
<b>Inspection number</b>	10122047
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	456
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of local governing body</b>	Robert Knight
<b>Principal</b>	Jill Robertson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.offley.cheshire.sch.uk">www.offley.cheshire.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21 January 2016

## Information about this school

- The school became an academy in 2017.
- The school is part of the St Bart's Multi-Academy Trust.
- A new chair of the local governing board was appointed recently.
- The current principal was the headteacher in the predecessor school.

## Information about this inspection

- I spoke with the principal, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and a group of governors. I also spoke with senior officers from the St Bart's Multi-Academy Trust, including the chief executive officer.
- I looked at a range of documentation for safeguarding, including the record of required checks carried out on school staff. I spoke with pupils about safeguarding. I also reviewed staff training logs and case files. I met with the person responsible for safeguarding to discuss how the school keeps pupils safe.
- I observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes. I also observed them in the breakfast club and as they moved around the school.

- I spoke with pupils about their experiences at school.
- I looked at the 109 responses to Ofsted’s parental questionnaire, Parent View, and the 78 free-text responses from parents to find out their views of the school. I spoke with parents and carers as they dropped children off at school.
- I focused closely on reading, mathematics and geography. I talked to the leaders of these subjects. I visited lessons. I looked at examples of pupils’ work. I talked with teachers and pupils about what pupils were learning.

### **Inspection team**

Claire Cropper, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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