

Inspection of a good school: Springcroft Primary School

Grindley Lane, Blythe Bridge, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST11 9JS

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 November 2021

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend Springcroft. Pupils learn how to keep safe. For example, they learn how to keep safe online, through Bikeability sessions and through lessons about specific mental health issues. The school's 'Helping Our Pupils' Emotions' (HOPE) project is a high priority. Pupils say there are always adults to go to if they want to talk. Pupils appreciate this support and say it makes a positive difference to their well-being.

All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils are respectful to adults and to other pupils. Pupils say bullying is very rare. When there are any issues, pupils are confident staff sort things out quickly.

In some subjects, for example mathematics and physical education (PE), pupils benefit from a well-planned curriculum. This helps pupils to know and remember more. However, the curriculum is not well planned in all subjects. Consequently, pupils do not always remember their learning because curriculum leaders have not identified precisely what they want pupils to know and remember.

Pupils relish the opportunities to take on the many roles and responsibilities that are available to them. The house captains, well-being champions and play leaders take their roles seriously. They are given training to fulfil their roles to the best of their abilities.

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

The school has had some recent challenging staffing issues, leading to gaps in key leadership roles. Governors have acted to support the headteacher. However, this lack of leadership capacity has resulted in the curriculum in some subjects being less well developed. Leaders have made effective links with local schools to share best practice.

This is beginning to have a positive impact on the recent improvements, for example in mathematics.

The changes to the mathematics curriculum are supporting pupils to know more and remember more over time. The plans are detailed and map out the key learning for pupils. Staff are beginning to make sure that pupils revisit their learning, through well-sequenced lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and achieve well.

Early years staff help children to develop a secure understanding of mathematical concepts. Children are enthusiastic about mathematics. They confidently set each other problems. For example, one child said to their partner, 'Do you think two, one, three is in the right order? No, it's not. It should be one, two, three.'

Children in Reception make a quick start to learning to read. Staff are skilled in teaching phonics. Leaders have clearly mapped out what letter sounds children should know at different points in the year. Pupils read books that match the sounds they have been learning. Teachers use assessment well to identify those children who may need additional help.

Leaders have developed a positive reading culture across the school. All pupils have stories read to them regularly. They enjoy this time and listen attentively. Pupils across the school choose to read challenging texts and enjoy sharing their own reading recommendations.

In PE, pupils benefit from a well-planned curriculum. They learn new skills and practise these before applying them well in games and matches. However, the curriculum is not well planned in other subjects, for example art, history and geography. The key knowledge and skills which pupils should learn over time are not clearly set out. As a result, pupils do not always remember their learning well enough.

Pupils' personal development is a strength. Leaders are rightly proud of the breadth of experiences and opportunities offered. They have introduced ways to develop pupils' individual strengths and talents. Year 3 pupils learn to play brass instruments and all pupils have opportunities to learn woodwind, drums, piano, guitar and strings. Leaders listen to pupils' views when deciding on which clubs they offer. As a result, the school now offers laser tag and footgolf.

Leaders think carefully about ways to reduce staff's unnecessary workload. Staff feel they are listened to and that leaders support them to promote their mental health and well-being.

Governors' and senior leaders' actions have stabilised the school's financial and staffing positions. They have a secure understanding of how well English and mathematics is delivered across the school. However, they do not yet have an accurate view of how well pupils are doing in other subjects.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that curriculum planning and sequencing may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. All staff receive regular training. They are vigilant in spotting any pupils at risk of neglect or harm. They report any concerns quickly. Leaders keep detailed records of any concerns and incidents, along with any follow-up. Record-keeping is detailed and well organised.

Leaders follow correct procedures when appointing new staff. All relevant recruitment checks are completed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is not ambitious enough and is not well planned in some foundation subjects. It does not set out the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn over time. Consequently, pupils do not develop the knowledge and skills they need in these subjects. Leaders need to make sure that the curriculum in all subjects is ambitious and well mapped out, clearly identifying the key knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn as they progress through the school.
- Governors understand how the curriculum is planned in reading, writing and mathematics, but their knowledge of curriculum planning in other subjects is more limited. Governors need to monitor curriculum development in all subjects more closely to ensure that they have a clearer understanding of the quality of education.
- Some curriculum leaders have not yet had the training and support to be able to lead their curriculum areas effectively. This means that these subject leaders do not have the expertise to sequence the curriculum in a way that helps pupils to know and remember more of what they have learned. Leaders need to ensure that all subject leaders have the necessary knowledge and understanding to lead the development of the curriculum in the subject for which they have responsibility.

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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2016.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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

| | |
|--|--|
| Unique reference number | 124163 |
| Local authority | Staffordshire |
| Inspection number | 10199850 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 207 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Duncan Chadwick |
| Headteacher | Stephen Drew |
| Website | www.springcroft.staffs.sch.uk |
| Dates of previous inspection | 14 and 15 June 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school currently has a vacant post for a deputy headteacher.
- The school has a before- and after-school club that is run by the school.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, subject leaders and other members of staff. The inspector also met with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- Meetings were held with curriculum leaders, class teachers and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead, examined school records and discussed safeguarding cases.

- The inspector completed deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the views of staff in Ofsted's online survey.
- The inspector also spoke with pupils informally during the school day, including at the before- and after-school club.

Inspection team

Eve Morris, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021