

# Inspection of Summerhill Academy

Plummers Hill, St George, Bristol BS5 7JU

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Inspection dates: 1 and 2 March 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Good**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

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

There is infectious energy running through Summerhill Academy. Leaders have created a can-do culture. The ambitious curriculum supports pupils well to know more and remember more. Leaders have high expectations of pupils. Pupils make strong progress from their starting points. Staff love coming to school and are proud of pupils' achievements.

There is a strong sense of community within and beyond the school walls. Pupils, parents and staff are proud of their school. Pupils have a strong understanding of and respect for the diverse community they belong to. The school's values of 'be kind, safe and respectful' are followed consistently by everyone.

Pupils behave sensibly and low-level disruption is rare. They care about their work and take pride in what they do. Improving pupils' behaviour was a priority at the previous inspection. Leaders have tackled this well. Pupils accept that bullying occurs, but very rarely. They know adults will deal with it well.

Pupils feel safe at school. They know they can share concerns with adults if the need arises. Staff know pupils well. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this knowledge of pupils and families has deepened.

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

Leaders at all levels have taken effective action to improve the school since the previous inspection. Staff describe it as like working at an entirely different school. The principal has the support of staff and parents. Staff feel valued and invested in. Leaders use a wealth of information to support the school on its improvement journey. Their accurate evaluation of the school has helped this support to have maximum impact.

Pupils are excellent ambassadors of the school. Leaders' work to support pupils' personal development is exemplary. They value this support on a par with academic subjects such as reading and mathematics. Pupils discuss topics such as consent and the importance of respecting each other's personal and physical space with incredible knowledge and maturity. Themes such as different types of bullying, fundamental British values and the school's place in the community are well known by pupils. It is at the heart of what they do and learn.

Over time, the number of pupils who start school with gaps in their phonics knowledge has increased. Leaders are rightly tackling this as a whole school priority. They have provided training for staff and invested heavily in reading books to meet this increased demand. Leaders pinpoint gaps in pupils' knowledge. Staff ensure phonics lessons focus on the sounds pupils need to learn and provide reading books that match the sounds pupils know. However, staff's subject knowledge of phonics is not yet consistently strong. As a result, there is variability in the quality of the phonics support pupils receive.

The school's reading curriculum is more embedded. Leaders have prioritised developing pupils' oracy and vocabulary acquisition. This work is paying off. Teachers guide pupils to use sophisticated sentences. Pupils use these seamlessly in their conversations with adults and their peers. They speak with increasing confidence, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who speak English as an additional language. Pupils describe reading as a 'lifelong lesson', recognising its importance in everyday life.

Across other subjects, the curriculum is well established. Teachers are familiar with what they need to teach and when. The curriculum is sequenced in a helpful way, building on pupils' prior knowledge effectively. Staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Pupils work with increasing independence. Teachers keep a close eye on how pupils with SEND are getting on. They use this information to decide what pupils need to learn. However, they do not consistently pinpoint these pupils' precise next steps.

Pupils behave well and enjoy their lessons. Leaders monitor pupils' punctuality and attendance closely. They have taken positive steps to improve the attendance of pupils whose rate of attendance was lower than their peers, particularly disadvantaged pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff's recruitment processes are robust. Leaders carry out the necessary checks to ensure they only appoint adults suitable to work with children. They ensure staff have the training they need to spot and record any potential signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. Leaders monitor concerns about pupils' welfare closely. They take swift, decisive action, passing on concerns to external agencies when needed.

Leaders and staff know pupils and their families well, including those who have struggled during the COVID-19 pandemic. This helps leaders to provide families with support and help promptly.

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

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

- Teachers' knowledge of phonics is not consistently strong. Support for pupils varies in quality which restricts progress for those with gaps in their phonics knowledge. Leaders should continue to deepen teachers' knowledge of phonics, so more pupils complete the phonics programme as soon as possible.
- Teachers do not use assessment information as accurately as they could for pupils with SEND. It is not always clear what these pupils will learn next. Leaders need

to tighten up this aspect of the school's work so that pupils with SEND make increasingly strong academic progress.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138658
<b>Local authority</b>	Bristol City of
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211734
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	258
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Paul Olomolaiye
<b>Principal</b>	Chris Barratt
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.summerhillacademy.org.uk">www.summerhillacademy.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 and 12 April 2018

## Information about this school

- The academy uses one alternative provider.
- Summerhill Academy is a junior school. Most pupils move from the nearby infant school at the beginning of Year 3.
- The academy runs breakfast and after-school clubs.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education, history and art and design. Inspectors met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.

- The lead inspector met with two members of the academy’s safeguarding team to consider how they keep pupils safe. Together, they also discussed the use of an alternative provider. The lead inspector also scrutinised the single central record.
- Inspectors considered pupils’ behaviour throughout the inspection.
- The lead inspector spoke with the chief executive officer and the director of education from the multi-academy trust. He spoke with two trustees, who also have responsibilities in the academy council and the scrutiny committee.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for the pupil premium grant and pupils’ attendance, behaviour and personal development. A team inspector met with a group of curriculum leaders. Another team inspector met with the early career teacher.
- The lead inspector considered responses to the Ofsted staff and pupil questionnaires, alongside 33 responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. This included 19 free-text responses from parents and carers.

### **Inspection team**

Nathan Kemp, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Rachel Hesketh	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Angela Folland	Her Majesty’s Inspector

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