

Inspection of Five Spires Academy

Cherry Orchard, Lichfield, Staffordshire WS14 9AN

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 July 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very happy at Five Spires Academy. Their success and well-being are at that heart of leaders' work. Leaders live out the school's mission of 'everyone inspire, everyone aspire' in all they do with pupils. Expectations are high for pupils' achievement, thanks to a curriculum that is engaging and regularly reviewed. For the vast majority, this curriculum is effectively delivered. This means that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well.

Leaders make sure that pupils behave very well. Their behaviour in class and around the school is exemplary. The youngest children quickly settle in the early years. They respond with enthusiasm to the skilful support that staff provide. Children benefit greatly from these secure groundings as they progress into key stage 1. Leaders provide pupils with wider experiences that enhance their knowledge and prepare them exceptionally well for the next stage in their education.

Pupils are eager to learn and enjoy supporting each other. They are confident that staff will help them to deal with any worries that they may have. Leaders deal with incidents of bullying thoroughly and effectively.

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

Leaders have devised a bespoke curriculum around a series of themes. They regularly review these and identify where improvements could be made. For example, in physical education an improved curriculum has been successfully introduced following a review.

In most subjects, there is a clear expectation of what pupils should learn and when. Sequences of lessons build knowledge about curriculum themes over time. However, learning is not as well sequenced in a few subjects, where the organisation of the curriculum means that some pupils struggle to pick out some overarching themes. This means that some pupils struggle to understand how their current learning fits in with what they have learned in the past.

Overall, teachers effectively check that pupils have learned and understood the planned curriculum. However, on some occasions they do not pick up and address misconceptions quickly enough. This means that some pupils are not ready to move on to more challenging work.

From the time that pupils start at the school, the phonics programme is prioritised. Pupils learn phonics quickly because adults teach it effectively. Well-trained staff listen carefully to pupils read, spotting and addressing errors accordingly. They talk with pupils about what they have read and understood. On rare occasions when pupils fall behind in their reading, staff act quickly to provide the necessary support to help them catch up. As pupils have a secure foundation in reading by the end of

key stage 1, they can progress to more complex reading skills, such as skimming and inference, in key stage 2.

Leaders are quick to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They work tenaciously with outside agencies to ensure their own internal assessments are as robust and accurate as possible. Support for these pupils is effective, making good use of the knowledge of teachers, leaders, parents, outside agencies and the pupils themselves. These pupils achieve very well.

Leaders have designed an exceptionally well-considered curriculum in the early years foundation stage. There are many opportunities for children to learn through play, which are invariably used very well. Staff make excellent use of opportunities to develop children's spoken language through the activities they lead. This means children show curiosity and enjoyment in all they do and show sustained concentration and development of fine motor skills. Children make excellent progress in the early years and are very well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Across the school and in lessons, pupils behave outstandingly well. They understand why they should embody leaders' values. As such, routines are understood by all, and contribute to a calm, welcoming and purposeful learning and social environment. Interactions with leaders, the timings of the school day and lunchtime arrangements all help to support pupils' understanding of safe and appropriate relationships. Leaders work highly effectively with pupils who need support to manage their behaviour. There are also a significant number of opportunities for pupils to develop their resilience and motivation. In addition to this, the school parliament takes a lead in ensuring that there are strong relationships between older and younger pupils. Pupils spoke highly of the effectiveness of this work.

Leaders provide pupils with a wealth of opportunities to explore and develop their passions and interests. Much of this is woven through the curriculum. For example, themed days such as a recent Mexican Day and an International Day were used to celebrate the diversity present within the school. This work is leading to pupils feeling proud of their heritage and helping pupils develop their confidence in sharing their own cultural traditions with their peers. The curriculum design for personal development is highly effective. This curriculum includes work on mutual respect, healthy relationships and tolerance. Pupils strongly exemplify these values.

Leaders work very effectively with those responsible for governance. The trust offers significant focused support, which has enabled leaders in school to realise their vision. Staff feel very proud to be members of this community. They are positive about the support they receive from leaders in terms of their well-being and workload, as well as the many opportunities for their professional development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are highly effective at keeping pupils safe. Staff receive regular and up-to-date safeguarding training. Recruitment checks are appropriate and thoroughly recorded. As leaders know their pupils well, they recognise rapidly when a pupil may be at risk of harm. They liaise extensively with parents and carers as appropriate for the support of their pupils. Leaders are tenacious in their work with external agencies to make sure that pupils are well supported.

Pupils understand well how to keep themselves safe in a range of circumstances, thanks to the carefully planned curriculum in place.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On a few occasions, leaders have not clearly identified and sequenced the key knowledge that pupils should learn in some subjects. This prevents pupils from building effectively on what they already know. Leaders should ensure that all subjects clearly identify the key knowledge that pupils should learn and how this will be sequenced.
- Occasionally, teachers do not check that pupils are secure in their knowledge of the most important curriculum content precisely enough. This means that pupils' misconceptions are not identified and addressed. Leaders should ensure that teachers use assessment consistently in all subjects to pinpoint what pupils know and can do, address misconceptions and then ensure that new learning builds securely on prior learning.

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.

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	141203
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10290614
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	206
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gavin Robert
Headteacher	Diane Raftery
Website	www.fivespiresacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 and 16 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the REAch2 Academy Trust.
- The school make use of one alternative provider to support with speech and language work.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 spoke with the headteacher and other leaders in the school.
- The lead inspector also spoke with a group of governors, including the vice chair of governors.

- An inspector also spoke with a trustee by telephone. He also met with a representative of the trust.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation relating to safeguarding. This included the school's central record of staff, records of safeguarding and samples of the records kept on individual pupils.
- An inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history and physical education. They spoke with the leaders of these areas of the curriculum. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils.
- Inspectors also spoke with leaders and looked at samples of work from other areas of the curriculum.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school. An inspector scrutinised leaders' records of pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- An inspector spoke with parents and carers as they dropped their children off at school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, including the free-text responses. They also considered responses to the Ofsted online survey for staff.

Inspection team

Andrew Madden, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Alexander Laney	His 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 2023