

Inspection of a good school: Forest Park Primary School

Woodall Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST1 5ED

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 October 2023

Outcome

Forest Park Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Louise Irving. This school is part of Orchard Community Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Rob Johnstone, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gillian Howell.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils benefit from their time at Forest Park Primary School. Every day, pupils try to 'be the best they can be'. Staff care. They listen to and act on any worries or niggles pupils have. Pupils are happy and safe.

Leaders set high expectations for all pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils meet these expectations. In lessons, they work hard and achieve well. Pupils are well behaved. They know the school rules and the consequences of not following them. A 'level five sanction' is serious, while 'sparkle points' reward good behaviour. Staff apply the school rules consistently and fairly. Any pupil in need of additional help to behave well is supported effectively.

Pupils enjoy acquiring new talents and interests, including in badminton, photography and choir. Visits to pottery museums, a space centre, art galleries and a Roman settlement help pupils to deepen their learning. Pupils enjoy voting for eco-leaders, head boy and head girl, librarians and sparkle monitors. These leadership roles help pupils develop important teamwork and communication skills.

Parents and carers are full of praise for the school. One parent's comment received on Ofsted Parent View was typical of many when they said, 'Staff are very approachable, polite and helpful.'

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

The school provides an ambitious curriculum for all pupils. It reflects the diverse heritage of the school community and local area. Learning is clearly mapped and organised in a way so that it builds up over time. Teachers are well trained to teach the curriculum. They present new information in ways that engage and motivate pupils. New vocabulary is well taught. Pupils learn and understand new words such as 'propaganda' when learning about the First World War. They take great pride in how they present their work. Teachers check how well pupils learn in lessons and over time. They encourage pupils to correct errors to improve their work. However, there are some inconsistencies in the school's approach to teaching mathematics. Pupils do not always get enough opportunities to apply their learning in a range of contexts. This means that pupils do not achieve as well as they could in mathematics.

Younger children settle quickly into school. They learn about the rhythm of a day and the days of the week by singing songs and rhymes. Adults carefully support and care for children. They encourage effective pencil grip and engage children in conversations about their drawings. Together, they share books together and talk about feelings. Children fully use the outdoor environment to grow and develop.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are swiftly identified. There is a clear route that ensures that pupils receive rapid support when needed. Staff are skilled in providing effective adaptations to learning for pupils in classrooms. Strong engagement with external partners means that pupils get the specialist support they need. Pupils with SEND achieve very well in school.

Pupils read and are read to in school every day. They visit libraries regularly for storytelling sessions and book swaps. The '100 book reading challenge', hot chocolate with bedtime story, class book swaps and masked reads all promote a love of reading. Staff are well trained in the school's approach to teaching early reading and phonics. Staff identify and support pupils who fall behind in their reading. However, this support does not always ensure that some pupils catch up quickly enough with their peers. For these few pupils, they struggle to read appropriately for their age.

A wide range of experiences beyond the curriculum broadens pupils' horizons. They learn about festivals and celebrations, such as Diwali, Easter, Eid and Holi, when visiting places of worship. Opportunities to learn about other religions, including Hinduism and Sikhism, help pupils to develop tolerance and respect. Eco-warriors keep the school site tidy. They are proud of their Eco-Schools Green Flag status. Specific programmes and theatre workshops help older pupils learn about how to keep safe when out in the community. Pupils learn about a range of risks they may face growing up and how to manage these. Voting for leadership roles and the school council helps pupils to understand democracy. All this helps them to be well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Staff are very happy and supportive of one another. They highly value the support from leaders to manage their workload and well-being. Staff morale is high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are some inconsistencies in the school's approach to teaching mathematics. This means that pupils do not get enough opportunities to apply their mathematics in a range of contexts. Pupils do not always achieve as well as they could in mathematics. The school should ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge to deliver the mathematics curriculum consistently and effectively so that pupils achieve well.
- A few pupils who receive additional reading support are not catching up quickly enough with their peers. This means that they struggle to read appropriately for their age. The school should accelerate the progress these pupils make in reading so that they catch up and become confident readers.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Forest Park Primary School, to be good in June 2013.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	146459
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10290653
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	464
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gillian Howell
CEO of the trust	Rob Johnstone
Headteacher	Louise Irving
Website	www.forestpark.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Forest Park Primary School converted to become an academy school in May 2019. When its predecessor school, Forest Park Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is part of Orchard Community Trust.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.
- The school provides a before-school club for all pupils.

Information about this inspection

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector observed children reading to a familiar adult and reviewed reading resources.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation on the school's website.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times during the day.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinators, the designated safeguarding lead, curriculum leaders and representatives of the trust.
- The inspector took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Lorraine Lord, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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