

Inspection of a good school: Sherbrook Primary School

Grainger Court, Cannock, Staffordshire WS11 5SA

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 October 2023

Outcome

Sherbrook Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school wants the best for every pupil and is committed to getting it right. Staff are kind, caring and supportive. Pupils value this. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Staff work well with external professionals to ensure that all pupils are included in all aspects of school life. Parents speak highly of the care and support that staff provide for their children.

The school prioritises the development of pupils' communication skills. Staff make effective use of objects, symbols and sign language. Adapted visuals are located in all areas of the school to help pupils to communicate their needs and wants effectively.

Pupils feel safe and happy at school. Pupils have opportunities to sing in the school choir and have the chance to perform at a local theatre. Pupil leadership roles include the pupil council, mental health champions and eco-champions.

There are clear strategies in place to support pupils to behave well. They have a trusted adult they can speak to if they have any concerns. Staff maintain routines and implement the behaviour system consistently. They support pupils to manage their emotions. As a result, pupils are becoming increasingly independent.

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

The school has revised and strengthened the curriculum over time. The curriculum identifies the essential knowledge that pupils need to learn, which is carefully sequenced. This is done particularly well in mathematics, where key concepts are broken down into smaller steps of learning. In some subjects, specialist advice from external agencies, such as occupational therapists, is used to enhance the curriculum. Every pupil has individual learning targets, which are woven into the curriculum. This means that the individual needs of pupils are being catered for well.

Lessons provide regular opportunities for pupils to repeat and revisit what they already know. Staff use a range of sensory and practical activities to engage pupils. In most lessons, staff regularly check what pupils know and remember. For example, in physical development, rebound therapy and sensory circuits are matched well to pupils' abilities. This helps pupils to develop their physical and self-regulation skills. However, this is not the case in some other areas of the curriculum. Some teachers do not use assessment well enough to plan activities that match pupils' knowledge. Therefore, some pupils do not build on what they already know as well as they might.

The school prioritises reading. Pupils enjoy story time, plays, music, rhymes and non-fiction texts. Staff have a secure knowledge of phonics teaching. Pupils read books that are matched to the sounds they learn. There is support in place for pupils who are at the early stages of reading. The programme focuses on developing pupils' awareness of and interaction with sounds in the environment. As a result, pupils are developing their confidence and becoming more fluent readers. However, pupils who are fluent readers are limited in developing their comprehension skills. This means they do not have access to a full range of structured learning opportunities to fully develop their language skills.

Behaviour during social times and lessons is positive. Where pupils are dysregulated, staff manage these situations well and are calm in their approach. Staff are trained well to de-escalate and manage behaviour, as well as to implement strategies to support pupils' self-regulation and independence. The use of sensory aids such as rocker chairs, wobble cushions or fidget toys supports pupils to regulate and manage their own behaviour.

Pupils engage well with a wide range of clubs on offer and the opportunities provided by the school to enhance their personal development. All pupils get access to weekly forest school and swimming sessions. In Years 5 and 6, pupils take part in a residential visit and a theatre-based experience. Trips to places of worship and themed days give pupils an opportunity to explore and celebrate difference. Pupils learn about positive relationships and being kind to each other. All of this prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.

Staff report high levels of well-being. Governors are well informed about leaders' work and offer appropriate challenge and support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- For fluent readers who are no longer accessing the phonics programme, the reading curriculum is not supporting them to fully develop their reading comprehension skills. This means that pupils do not develop a full range of communication and language skills. The school should ensure the reading curriculum supports fluent readers to develop their language comprehension skills effectively.

- Assessment is not being used well enough to match learning activities to pupils' level of need. This means pupils cannot access the learning as well as they might. The school should ensure that assessment is used consistently well by all staff to precisely match learning opportunities to the needs of all pupils.

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 school to be good in March 2014.

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	124514
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10290568
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	135
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lesa Maunders
Headteacher	Carol Shaw
Website	www.sherbrook.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Sherbrook Primary School is a generic special school.
- At the time of the inspection, the majority of pupils in attendance at the school had a primary need of either autism spectrum disorder or speech and language and/or communication needs.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

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 received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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 lead inspector met with the headteacher and the governing body.
- Inspectors held meetings with a range of leaders to discuss provision for pupils with SEND, pupils' behaviour, attendance and pupils' wider development.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical development. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils, formally and informally, about their learning and experiences at the school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses received during the inspection. Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey and pupil survey.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation. This included the school's self-evaluation, school development plan, school policies, curriculum documents, SEND records, attendance records, behaviour records and minutes of meetings held by the governing body.

Inspection team

Amjid Zaman, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Simon Smith

Ofsted Inspector

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