

Inspection of Poppyfield Primary Academy

Bishop Street, Hednesford, Cannock WS12 4RY

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Rebecca Scordis. This school is part of Victoria Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Sharron Philpot, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gurinder Singh Josan.

What is it like to attend this school?

Poppyfield Primary Academy is a school at the heart of the community. Pupils arrive happily every day because dedicated and caring staff ensure that they feel safe in school, feel cared for and that learning is an enjoyable experience. This starts in the early years, where children settle quickly and get off to an exceptional start with their education. A typical comment from parents and carers is that they 'couldn't ask for more'. It reflects the high regard they have for the school.

Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. They treat each other routinely with respect and kindness. Behaviour in lessons is exemplary. No pupil is distracted from learning, and they show excellent levels of interest and engagement in all they do.

The school has high ambitions that all pupils achieve as well as they can. This is realised very well in many subjects. 'Challenge packs' ignite an interest in learning and pupils talk confidently and articulately about all they know.

The school has introduced innovative and varied ways for pupils to engage with the local community. Pupils understand they can make a difference. Their voices are always listened to. The school does all it can to develop active, interested and responsible citizens of the future.

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

Children in the early years show excellent levels of perseverance, independence and cooperation. Interesting and varied learning opportunities support children to concentrate impressively well. There is a strong focus on developing communication and language. This is effective. Children talk confidently and eagerly about tasks they are engaged in. Staff are highly skilled in supporting pupils when needed but knowing when not to interrupt the children's own problem-solving discussions unless necessary.

The expert teaching of phonics supports this further. The school wastes no time in teaching pupils the skills of early reading. This includes pupils in nursery, if staff identify children who are ready. Staff receive training that supports them to teach phonics well. Targeted teaching to pupils' precise needs ensures that they make the progress they are capable of. Careful identification of pupils at risk of falling behind ensures that they receive extra support swiftly.

Many other areas of the curriculum are effective in helping pupils realise its intentions. Approaches to improving pupils' speaking and listening in lessons are developed well. Pupils are encouraged to expand on answers and challenge responses in a safe and appropriate way. However, in a small number of subjects, the school has not identified precisely what pupils should know and remember when they reach the end of units of work. This means staff are not able to identify what pupils understand.

The school places a high priority on the care and nurture they provide for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Every effort is taken to ensure that these pupils are supported and included. This is reflected in how settled and confident the pupils are. However, activities in lessons are not always adapted effectively to ensure that these pupils make as much progress as possible.

Pupils are taught exceptionally well about being respectful, celebrating differences and valuing them. The school's values of unity, integrity, courage, curiosity and excellence are visible in all the pupils say and do. They understand them well. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. They contribute to the local community in meaningful ways. This includes making excellent links with the local care home, petitioning the local member of parliament for a zebra crossing, planting trees in the local area and placing bird boxes in the school grounds to encourage birds on site. They learn incredibly well from the local environment and impact positively on protecting and improving it. Pupils benefit from a wide range of visitors to school, as well as trips and visits outside of school. This further develops their understanding of the world they live in. The school council suggests charities they would like to support. The school does all it can to encourage this, involving the whole community.

The school is led with passion and dedication and with an impressive vision for creating the type of educational establishment they want it to be. Pupils are extremely proud of their school. It is clear to see why. Staff are proud of the school too. They feel valued and cared for because they are. This includes by the trust, and the academy council, whose members support the school to be the highly effective and happy place it is. They have a very positive impact on its development and success.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not ensured that assessment is used well enough in a small number of foundation subjects. This means it is not clear if pupils have understood the planned curriculum. The school should ensure that each subject has clearly defined expectations of attainment so pupils' understanding can be assessed effectively.
- For some pupils with SEND, the school has not ensured that adaptations in teaching are effective enough. This means pupils do not progress as well as they might. The school should ensure that all lessons are adapted effectively so pupils can achieve the individual targets they are working towards.

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	147082
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10294651
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	177
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gurinder Singh Josan
Headteacher	Rebecca Scordis
Website	https://www.poppyfieldacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a free school that opened in 2019.
- It currently has pupils on roll aged 3 to 9 (Nursery to Year 4).
- It intends to have the full range of primary pupils by 2025.
- This school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and subject leaders.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, religious education and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors 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.
- Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work in a range of subjects, including English, history and geography.
- The lead inspector spoke with the chair of trustees, and three members of the academy council.
- The lead inspector spoke with the chief executive officer of the trust.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons at different times of the day and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They spoke formally with groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the lead 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 lead inspector reviewed a wide range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans and information on the school's website.
- Inspectors talked informally with pupils and staff to gather general information about school life. In addition, they took account of the responses to Ofsted's surveys capturing staff's, pupils' and parents' views.

Inspection team

Keri Baylis, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Michelle Bishton

Ofsted Inspector

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