

Inspection of Chadsmead Primary Academy

Friday Acre, Lichfield WS13 7HJ

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Gemma Grainger. This school is part of Community 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 (CEO), Philip Hamilton, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Simon Atkins.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils attend Chadsmead Primary Academy eagerly and regularly. They say staff are kind and caring, and they are. The school puts relationships with pupils at the heart of all it does. Dedicated and committed staff members model the respect and consideration they expect pupils to show to each other. Pupils rise to these expectations impressively. This helps them feel safe and welcomed in school. It starts in the early years, where children settle into school life without delay and forge friendships with their peers.

Staff want all pupils to achieve well. The school is determined to make any improvements necessary so pupils reach the highest academic standards. The impact of this work is clear to see in some areas of the curriculum.

In lessons, pupils show high levels of concentration. They focus on their work and are not disrupted from learning by others. The excellent behaviour seen in lessons is also evident at social times. Pupils know and understand the school rules and take great pride in following them at all times of the day and when representing the school in the local community. Beautiful manners are commonplace. Pupils are confident, friendly and polite.

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

Reading has a high priority in school. The phonics programme is fully established, and sessions follow a set structure which is familiar to pupils. Staff check that pupils remember sounds they have been taught previously. There are systems in place to support pupils who find it more difficult to remember these. Additional input helps them to keep up with their peers. Many more pupils are now reading at the expected standard for their age. Books are carefully chosen to match each pupil's precise stage in the programme. This supports them to practise what they know and to become more confident and fluent readers.

The school has clear systems to identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They work closely with parents to set clear targets for them. These targets are addressed by taking part in small group work or one-to-one sessions as needed, delivered by well-trained staff. Pupils make good progress towards achieving these. However, when back in the classroom, writing activities do not always match pupils' precise stages of learning as closely. Some pupils are required to complete tasks that are too complex. These do not support them in practising what they know or enable them to embed their writing skills with tasks that are appropriate.

The school has made changes to the design of the curriculum. The school's approach to teaching individual subjects is bringing about improvements. This starts in the early years, where pupils get off to a good start with their education. The curriculum builds incrementally from what children learn in the early years. Staff use children's individual starting points to plan activities that build on what they have learned in Nursery. This helps children make good progress in a calm and purposeful environment. They settle extremely quickly and show good levels of concentration and perseverance.

Music is a strength. Pupils talk enthusiastically about what they have learned. They recall key information well. There are many opportunities for pupils to perform in school and beyond. The school places a high priority on pupils playing an array of musical instruments. It does all it can to remove any barriers that might be in place to ensure pupils are able to take up this offer. In a small number of other subjects, pupils do not remember prior learning as well. They are not able to recall the key knowledge the school has identified and have misconceptions. These misconceptions and gaps in learning are not identified quickly enough and hinder future success.

Pupils enjoy a variety of clubs and visits. They value and appreciate these. They relish the opportunity to work with other schools in the trust and are very proud to have recently won the 'Bake-off'. They know it is important to treat all people equally, but they are yet to have a deep understanding of different faiths and cultures. However, there is a high level of collaboration and support between pupils. It reflects the highly positive attitudes they have to learning and their commitment to behaving extremely well at all times.

Governors are committed and well-informed. They have the necessary determination and skillset to improve the school even further. They have a clear understanding of what the school does well and understand the areas where they could do even better. The trust plays a pivotal role in supporting this improvement.

Staff are highly dedicated to the school. Leaders are highly respected by staff, pupils and parents. They appreciate their determination to make Chadsmead the best school it can be in a nurturing, inclusive environment where their children are always put first and can truly thrive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not check well enough that pupils fully understand what they have been taught. This prevents pupils from building their knowledge securely on what they already know and leads to misconceptions in understanding. The school should ensure that teachers use assessment strategies effectively in all subjects to support pupils' next steps in learning.
- Some pupils, including those with SEND, are expected to complete writing tasks that are beyond their capability. This limits their opportunities to practise and use the skills they have to become more fluent writers. The school should ensure tasks closely match pupils' current ability so they can improve their skills in writing.

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	144498
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10344134
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	197
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of the Board of Trustees	Simon Atkins
CEO of the trust	Philip Hamilton
Headteacher	Gemma Grainger
Website	www.chadsmeadacademy.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 20 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- An external company provides wraparound care for pupils at the school.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school is part of Community Academies Trust.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 that into account in their evaluation of the school. Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, religious education and music. 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, geography and art and design.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the school standards committee (local governing board) and the chair of trustees.
- An inspector held a video call with the CEO of the academy 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 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.
- Inspectors 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 of staff's pupils' and parents' views.

Inspection team

Keri Baylis, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Darryl Asbury

Ofsted inspector

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