

# Inspection of a good school: Springhead Primary School

Kingsley Road, Talke Pits, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST7 1RA

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Inspection dates: 6 and 7 June 2023

## **Outcome**

Springhead Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Springhead School is an exciting place in which to learn. Leaders plan a range of rich opportunities, which pupils enjoy. For example, pupils talk animatedly about residential visits and working with actors from a local theatre. They say they love coming to school.

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum, with high expectations for all pupils. They want the curriculum to inspire pupils' imagination and confidence, supporting them to achieve well. Leaders' ambitions are realised. Pupils do well in school. However, some aspects of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) curriculum need further work.

Leaders have adopted an inspirational approach to learning, including working with a national theatre company. For instance, teachers use drama in a highly skilled way to promote discussions and deepen pupils' understanding of new vocabulary. This helps pupils to understand new concepts well.

Pupils are happy and safe in school. Behaviour is very positive across the school. This is because everyone understands and follows the school's rules. Pupils value the different rewards they receive. For example, this term, Year 6 pupils proudly wear the different-coloured hoodies they have chosen. Staff deal with any bullying allegations quickly.

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

Springhead School is expertly led and managed by caring leaders. Leaders regularly make checks on how well the school is doing and respond accordingly. As a result, they make informed decisions that improve the school and serve pupils' interests in a timely manner. Central to their decisions is the school's vision, which is to ensure that pupils become successful learners, responsible citizens and effective contributors in their community. Staff say leaders provide the training they need, are conscious of their workload, and do all they can to support them.

Leaders have developed a coherent and well-sequenced curriculum. They have thought carefully about what they want pupils to know. Learning from one unit of work connects to another, which deepens pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, in history, leaders have identified what historical knowledge they want pupils to learn, and why. In addition, they have then woven in famous local people and historical events. As a result, pupils develop a sense of pride in their local area.

Throughout the curriculum, there is a focus on developing pupils' vocabulary. Staff ensure that pupils develop the vocabulary they need to express themselves clearly. Pupils engage in meaningful discussions. They present their ideas clearly and can explain their thinking. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes quickly develop an extensive vocabulary. Older pupils debate complex issues with confidence.

Leaders have established systems so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified and assessed accurately. Leaders and staff make sure that pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. This happens because teachers skilfully plan adaptations to lessons if they are needed.

Reading is the top priority for all staff. There is a rigorous approach to teaching early reading, which starts in the Nursery. Younger pupils read books that match their phonics knowledge. Leaders have chosen books for older pupils that inspire and cover a broad range of genres. Pupils know that reading is very important in school and the reasons why. They appreciate the help that teachers give them to improve their reading skills.

Teachers expertly design and deliver activities that help pupils to recall what they have learned in the past and to connect it to new learning. Assessment is used exceptionally well by teachers. They notice when pupils do not understand something and address any misunderstandings immediately. When a pupil needs more support, teachers arrange specific interventions. For example, in reading, some pupils take part in catch-up and keep-up sessions.

Pupils attend school regularly and say they love coming to school. This shows in their positive attitudes in lessons. Pupils listen well, engage in discussions, and quickly respond to teachers' requests. Sometimes, a few pupils need extra help to manage their behaviour. In these instances, leaders write support plans so that pupils get the help they need. As a result, pupils' behaviour improves, and they re-engage with learning.

Leaders make exceptional provision for pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures through the curriculum. They learn the importance of being a good citizen. For example, they collect food for a local food bank and raise money for different charities. The pupil 'talking groups' are an innovative way to seek pupils' views. Leaders act on their views to improve the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff know the pupils and their families very well. They understand the context of the school community and what pupils need to know in order to keep safe.

The well-planned curriculum gives pupils the knowledge and skills they need to keep safe. The school's rules reinforce these important messages every day.

Leaders ensure that all staff are well trained and know how to raise concerns. Leaders are quick to follow up any concerns raised by staff. They are determined to get the right help for their pupils and their families, when needed.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Some elements of the EYFS curriculum do not clearly identify what children should be learning. As a result, in some aspects of the EYFS curriculum, it is not always clear what children need to learn to prepare them for learning in Year 1. Leaders should review the EYFS curriculum and clearly identify what they want children to learn in readiness for the Year 1 curriculum.

## **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 November 2012.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124097
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10256979
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	201
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Mr John Pye
<b>Headteacher</b>	Brian Anderson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.springhead.staffs.sch.uk">www.springhead.staffs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	31 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school has a Nursery class, which admits three-year olds.
- School leaders do not make use of any alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector held meetings with a representative from the governing body, the headteacher, curriculum leaders, a representative from the local authority and the leader of SEND.
- The lead inspector reviewed documents published on the school's website and additional documents provided by leaders during the inspection.
- The lead inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the lead inspector discussed the curriculum with

subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader. Pupils' case files were reviewed.
- The lead inspector met with staff to discuss their workload and the support they receive to carry out their roles.
- The lead inspector observed pupils in lessons and at other times of the day to evaluate their behaviour.
- The lead inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's parent survey, Parent View, and the staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Amanda Green, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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