

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Harpfield Primary Academy

Palmers Green, Hartshill, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST4 6AP

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 November 2024

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The principal of this school is Jemma Adlington. This school is part of the Creative Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Marc Jordan, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Abbie Rumbold.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a friendly and welcoming school with a real family ethos. The many pupils who join at different points in the school year quickly settle in to the 'Harpfield way.' The school aims high for all pupils to achieve and behave well. Central to this is the way the school quickly gets to know pupils and their own personal needs. This work is paying dividends. It is clear that pupils are doing very well in school and are making rapid progress.

The school's values are at the centre of all its work. Pupils learn to be 'CREATIVE: collaboration, respect, equality, ambition, trust, independent, voice and empathy'. These are all words used in order for pupils to understand how to learn and behave well at all times. Relationships are strong. Pupils know they have a trusted adult to turn to if they have any problems.

The school develops pupils' talents and interests through the huge array of clubs that are available. There include sports, singing, Shakespeare, arts and crafts and board games. The 'take the stage' club is particularly popular. Many of these clubs have been specifically requested by pupils.

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

The school has developed an ambitious and engaging curriculum. The curriculum is very well thought out. The school has identified the important knowledge pupils need to learn. There is a clear sequence of learning that builds on what pupils have learned before. Pupils practise and revise what they have previously learned in a variety of ways. For example, these include 'Friday five' and 'memory Monday' sessions. The curriculum connects subjects together and makes links to the local area. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) acquire deep knowledge across a range of subjects.

The curriculum in the early years ensures that the youngest children get off to a flying start. Adults are experts in developing the youngest children's language and vocabulary. This vocabulary is then built upon further in key stages 1 and 2. For example, in art and design pupils in key stage 2 have a deep understanding of technical vocabulary such as 'scaling' and 'negative space'.

Teachers are adept at delivering the school's curriculum. They use a range of techniques to check that pupils have learned well. For example, they check on pupils learning in lessons regularly using technology, which monitors the pupils' responses. This means that any gaps in learning or pupil misconceptions are quickly picked up and addressed.

The promotion of reading is at the heart of the school's ambitious vision. Books and texts are celebrated and shared. Pupils read regularly in school and at home. They enjoy sharing their favourite books and authors. The school's carefully sequenced phonics programme is delivered well by skilled teachers. Regular checks ensure that pupils are reading books that are accurately matched to their phonics knowledge. Pupils practise the sounds they have learned in their writing. Staff identify gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge quickly. Because of this work, pupils in key stage 2 are fluent readers and can now use their understanding of texts to answer questions.

The school identifies and supports pupils with SEND expertly. Pupils with SEND access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Teachers skilfully adapt the curriculum for pupils with SEND. Many pupils with SEND achieve as well as their peers and others are well supported to be able to catch up.

The school is tireless in its commitment to securing good attendance for all pupils. It is also highly effective in supporting those pupils who need it with their behaviour. Leaders work with families and external agencies to address low attendance and improve behaviour where needed.

Pupils are very well prepared for the next steps in their education and life in modern Britain. The school's life skills programme is particularly effective in this regard. Pupils are very well supported with their mental health and well-being. The personal development offer is incredibly ambitious and extensive. The school has planned for pupils to experience a wide range of exciting and memorable experiences. Pupils have a range of opportunities to lead and play a part in school life. These include head boys and girls,

pupil leadership team, librarians and prefects. Pupils are knowledgeable and tolerant of the beliefs of others and different relationships. They say, 'It doesn't matter what you believe, just be kind.'

The trust and academy council have rigorous systems in place to challenge and support the school. As a result, they are knowledgeable and highly effective. They share leaders' unequivocal commitment to providing the very best all-round education for the pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in January 2015.

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	138497
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10343977
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	231
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Abbie Rumbold
CEO of the trust	Marc Jordan
Principal	Jemma Adlington
Website	www.harfieldprimaryacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 November 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is part of the Creative Education Trust, which consists of 17 schools.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the principal, deputy principal, subject leaders, groups of staff and pupils.
- The inspector met with a member of the academy council and two trustees. The inspector held a meeting with the director of quality assurance for the trust.

- 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 visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also spoke to pupils about their work.
- The inspector heard pupils in key stage one and two read.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. He also took into consideration the online staff and pupil surveys. The inspector spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day.

Inspection team

Barry Yeadsley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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