

Charnwood Primary School

Purcell Avenue, Lichfield, Staffordshire WS13 7PH

Inspection dates

14–15 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body have a clear vision and drive to improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement. Many improvements have been made since the previous inspection.
- Leaders new to their responsibilities are not yet fully effective in checking the impact of their work on improving the school.
- Leaders have accurately identified weaknesses in the school and put in place effective plans to address these issues.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school. Leaders and staff are vigilant and tenacious in ensuring that pupils are kept safe.
- Outcomes in key stages 1 and 2 have improved significantly. Pupils make good progress and in 2017, attainment at the end of Year 6 was similar to national levels. Although teaching is good overall, there are some inconsistencies. Teachers do not always support and challenge some of the pupils in reading to build quickly on their strong outcomes at the end of the Reception Year.
- Parents are delighted with the education their children receive. Teachers and pupils are justifiably proud of the school.
- Teaching is good due to teachers' sound subject knowledge and the effective training and support that they undertake.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It captures pupils' interest and creates enthusiasm for learning across a range of subjects. The school promotes fundamental British values and pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development successfully.
- Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning are a strength of the school. Pupils are friendly and considerate towards adults and each other. However, they do not always present their work as well as they should.
- Despite the best efforts of leaders, there are still too many pupils regularly absent from school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are well supported and make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils get off to a rapid start in early years and make good progress by the end of the Reception Year as a result of good teaching and provision.
- The school provides well for pupils' social and emotional development. As a result, they are well prepared for their next stage of education and life beyond school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further reduce the number of pupils who are regularly absent from school.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - supporting new school leaders to monitor their impact of their work.
- Continue to strengthen the quality of teaching in order to further improve pupils' achievement in reading and writing by:
 - refining the teaching of phonics so that all pupils can use their phonics skills well to read fluently
 - making sure that pupils' presentation is always of the highest standard.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The school has been on a significant journey of improvement following a period of instability and turbulence. Development has been particularly rapid in the last 12 months, following staff changes. Recent improvements across the school have been fundamental, from a challenging starting point, to improving pupils' outcomes.
- Senior leaders, led effectively by the headteacher, rigorously monitor the quality of teaching and provide valuable feedback to teachers on how to improve learning in lessons. This has raised expectations and has ensured that teaching is now consistently good across the whole school.
- The headteacher has a relentless drive for school improvement, particularly in developing teaching, learning and the use of assessment to ensure greater challenge for pupils. She is ambitious for every pupil to reach the highest possible standards. There is a strong culture of teamwork and staff share her vision for the best-quality education for all pupils.
- The performance of staff is monitored effectively by school leaders. There is a rigorous programme of lesson visits and book scrutiny involving senior staff and governors. Leaders new to their responsibilities are not yet fully effective in monitoring the impact of their work.
- The curriculum is rich and diverse. Pupils enjoy learning about many exciting topics. The high quality of the curriculum design is contributing effectively to pupils' successful achievement. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is well promoted through the curriculum. Pupils are taught explicitly about fundamental British values so they are well prepared for living in modern Britain.
- The school takes seriously its duty of care for pupils. Good systems are in place for pastoral support. Pupils recognise and appreciate the care that they receive from staff.
- The pupil premium is spent well to support disadvantaged pupils. Extra help given in lessons enables pupils to make good progress. The school ensures that disadvantaged pupils have the same opportunities to participate in activities as other pupils.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are well supported. School leaders use staff and resources well to enable these pupils to make good progress from their different starting points.
- Good use is made of additional funding for sport provision to widen opportunities for pupils and to promote more active and healthy lifestyles.
- Parents are highly supportive, and the vast majority stated in the school questionnaire that they are very happy with the school. One parent told an inspector that the school is 'brilliant, really supportive and is a listening school'.
- The local authority has provided support to the headteacher and governors in tackling staffing issues and weaknesses in teaching. As leadership capacity has strengthened and the school improved, the local authority has reduced the level of support provided so that the school now only receives tailored support.

Governance of the school

- Governance of the school is good. Governors' evaluation of the school's performance is accurate and they have a clear picture of its strengths and weaknesses. In partnership with the headteacher, governors have correctly identified the priorities which will improve the school further.
- There is a strong working partnership between governors and staff. This is seen especially in the effective way governors use their link roles to oversee and review specific subjects, or aspects of the school's work.
- Governors are highly committed to the school. They have all received suitable training for their roles. They frequently visit the school to ascertain progress first-hand, and to check the accuracy of the information they are given.
- The governing body ensures that school finances are secure and that spending decisions are based on ensuring the very best outcomes for pupils and the very best environment in which to learn. They fulfil their statutory duties well, taking them seriously.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are highly effective.
- The most vulnerable pupils are given a high priority. Record-keeping is effective and the school works well with external agencies to ensure that any concerns are quickly followed up.
- The long-established culture of keeping pupils safe remains very evident. Leaders ensure that a culture of safeguarding is embedded among all staff, and they leave no stone unturned in their duty to keep pupils safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching is good overall. There is a greater consistency of practice throughout the school, together with increasingly high expectations of pupils in most subjects. This helps most pupils to make steady gains in their learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants display strong subject knowledge and, in many cases, a real passion for learning. They plan learning carefully and they know their pupils well. Teachers use their knowledge of what pupils know and can do to ensure that work is well adapted to pupils' varying needs and abilities.
- Teachers assess pupils' work regularly. They use the results of assessments to check that pupils are not falling behind, or, if they are, to plan steps to help them to catch up.
- The teaching of phonics is effective in the early years. This provides children with a strong starting point. However, teaching of phonics throughout the rest of the school fails to target identified weaker reading skills effectively. As a consequence, from a good start in the early years, some pupils do not rapidly develop their reading fluency as they move through the school.

- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. They receive careful support from teachers and assistants who set high expectations for achievement. Staff constantly remind pupils of their specific skills and do not allow any barriers to prevent success for these pupils. Teaching assistants provide pupils with effective support which heightens their learning from their different starting points.
- Good relationships exist between teachers and pupils. This fosters positive attitudes to learning and encourages pupils to try their best.
- The quality of presentation of work in books by pupils is generally good. However, occasional lapses in the presentation of work seen in books mean that this aspect could be improved further in terms of consistency.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- A caring and nurturing approach is apparent throughout the school. This assists pupils' personal development and independence as they progress through school, which, in turn, aids their learning in class.
- Pupils show respect, tolerance and kindness to each other. Pupils work collaboratively, sharing ideas and resources well. New pupils are welcomed and supported by other pupils and adults across the school.
- This is a caring and inclusive school. Pupils told the inspector that they feel safe and well cared for, and they are confident that any problems will quickly be sorted out by adults.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. Pupils understand how to manage risk and what to do if there is an emergency evacuation. They understand the risks of using the internet and social media and this is reflected in a good understanding of how and why they should keep personal information private.
- Staff skilfully support the emotional and social needs of pupils. They are quick to identify pupils who need additional care and guidance in school. This includes working with parents and their children to improve their well-being.
- The needs of pupils and families are identified early and support is provided where necessary. The breakfast club and after-school club are well organised, with a choice of activities on a weekly basis.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school and in lessons because of the high expectations of staff. Pupils take responsibility for their behaviour and respond positively to the school's behaviour management system.
- Playtimes and lunchtimes are well-supervised occasions that ensure that pupils can play and socialise happily together.

- Pupils are polite and well mannered. They are respectful of each other and courteous to adults.
- Although improving, pupils' attendance remains below the national average for all pupils. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has reduced but still remains high. Leaders have put in place systems to track pupils' attendance more robustly but it is too soon to see any significant impact.
- Pupils are fully aware of the different forms of bullying. They are clear that instances of anti-social behaviour are very rare and resolved very quickly by an adult.
- Younger pupils are developing opportunities to be independent, making choices in their learning and taking responsibility for themselves and others.
- All parents who responded to the inspection survey thought that the school does a good job in making sure that pupils are well behaved.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils at the school are now making better progress in reading, writing and mathematics than in previous years. Current assessments and work in books indicate that progress is strongest across the school in mathematics. Leaders are focused on taking action to ensure that progress and attainment are equally high in reading and writing.
- National test results at the end of key stage 2 in 2017 indicated positive and encouraging improvement for the school. The sharp rise in progress made by Year 6 pupils in reading, writing and maths at greater depth was as a result of the actions taken by leaders.
- By the end of key stage 1 in 2017, assessments highlighted that pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly in line with that of other pupils nationally.
- Disadvantaged pupils make slightly less progress than their peers but are catching up well in reading, writing and mathematics. This is a strength of the school's work and ensures that vulnerable pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. Teachers and teaching assistants know the issues that slow down pupils' learning. They ensure that the work set for these pupils will help them to overcome difficulties and to achieve well. Several parents told inspectors that they were pleased with the way that the school has helped their children to succeed.
- The school's own assessment information for the previous and current academic year demonstrates that the progress that pupils make in all year groups and across most subjects is strong.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check over time is in line with the national average. Girls and boys made similar progress in writing and mathematics but boys did less well in reading.
- The majority of children enter the school with levels of development below those typically seen. There has been an improvement in the number of children achieving a

good level of development, by the end of Reception. Most children enter Year 1 ready to learn.

- Pupils' mathematical skills are well developed. In most classes they willingly practise their basic mathematical skills, and are keen to use them to investigate and solve mathematical problems. Increasingly, pupils are quick to explain how they have worked out specific calculations, and why they have chosen specific approaches to solving problems.

Early years provision

Good

- The vast majority of children start in the school's Nursery and Reception class with skills and knowledge below, and occasionally well below, those typical for their age. There has been an improvement in the number of children achieving a good level of development by the end of Reception. Most children enter Year 1 ready to learn.
- Over the last three years there has been an upward trend, with more children reaching a good level of development. Last year, national data indicated that the progress children made brought them to the national figure. This represents very strong progress from their starting points.
- Good ranges of stimulating activities, both indoors and out, are provided by staff in the early years foundation stage classroom. These help to make children confident and inquisitive about the world around them.
- Teachers and the other staff understand the needs of the children exceptionally well. Staff check children's knowledge and understanding when they join the school and frequently throughout the year.
- Children are eager to explore and learn. They enjoy the opportunities provided to investigate and they learn happily together. Leaders are highly skilled in developing areas of provision to maximise learning opportunities for all children, based on accurate and ongoing assessments.
- Safeguarding in the early years foundation stage is effective. The children know how to keep themselves safe in their environment and will make safe choices to manage their own well-being and health.
- Leadership in the early years foundation stage is strong. Staff complete accurate assessments and use them effectively to ensure that learning is planned carefully to develop children's progress. Relationships are strong. Staff get to know children well and provide activities that build on children's own interests.
- The children respond well to instructions from adults, who have high expectations of them. The children know and follow clear classroom routines so that learning time is not wasted. They choose from a range of activities and show resilience when they focus on a task for an extended period of time.
- As a result of effective and careful leadership, early years staff have formed good and mutually supportive links with the parents and families of the children they teach. Parents reported that communications were very good and staff were always available if parents had a query or a concern about their child.

- All teachers monitor children's progress rigorously and record this accurately. Learning journals across Nursery and Reception show that children make strong progress from their starting points. Teachers have an accurate picture of children's abilities and learning needs and adapt teaching and learning opportunities skilfully to further their development.
- Children's behaviour is excellent. They quickly learn to understand the class routines and the behaviour expected of them. Children learn how to listen to staff and to each other. This is clearly evidenced in the impressive way they share and take turns when using equipment and in conversation.

School details

Unique reference number	124185
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10037888

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jane Meade
Headteacher	Mrs Katie Stanley
Telephone number	01543 227560
Website	www.charnwood.staffs.sch.uk
Email address	headteacher@charnwood.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 April 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There has been a high turnover of teaching staff since the previous inspection.
- The school is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The percentages of disabled pupils and of those who have SEN and/or disabilities are above those of most schools.
- The school runs a breakfast club and a number of after-school clubs.
- The large majority of pupils come from a White British background.

- The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- There is a local governing body at the school which takes responsibility for challenging and supporting leaders to develop educational outcomes for pupils, as well as being a link to the local community.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 20 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these observations were undertaken with senior leaders.
- The inspectors scrutinised work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met with two groups of pupils to gain their views of the school. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and at the end of the school day, as well as in lessons.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their reading and listened to them read.
- The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the chair of the governing body and other governors, staff and with the local authority representative.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team and middle leaders.
- Inspectors reviewed the 24 staff questionnaires returned during the inspection.
- Inspectors took account of the 45 parental views expressed through the Parent View survey. Inspectors also spoke to a number of parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Ed Masterson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Ellis-Martin	Ofsted Inspector

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