

Inspection of Carmountside Primary Academy

Woodhead Road, Abbey Hulton, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST2 8DJ

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 July 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils know and apply the school values of 'Respect, Believe, Achieve' well. Most show these in all they do. Pupils understand respect both as a value and an action. They believe in themselves as unique individuals. They trust staff to help, guide and support them. They achieve well. Pupils are safe, happy and enjoy learning and playing together. Staff and pupils play many playground games together at lunchtime. They enjoy each other's company.

Pupils say behaviour is mostly good. They are right. Occasionally a few pupils have an outburst of poor behaviour. Staff manage these well. They have many strategies in place to help these pupils learn to manage their feelings. Staff make sure pupils' learning is not disrupted.

Pupils know that repeated unkind behaviour becomes bullying. They say there is bullying, mostly name-calling, but are clear that staff sort it. Records show this to be true.

Pupils enjoy the subjects they learn, especially science. They achieve well. Children in the early years are inquisitive and interested learners. They are keen to find out about themselves and the world around them. This continues throughout school. Leaders enrich learning with trips and experiences including theatre visits, sports festivals and nature reserves.

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

Leaders have created a school where staff feel ownership of the curriculum and the way they teach. Governors are dedicated to driving school improvement. Teachers appreciate the way leaders look after their well-being and their workload.

Staff create a warm, caring and calm space for the youngest children who start school at the age of two. The relationships between staff and children are strong. They are an important factor in helping children feel safe and secure. Because of this, children in the early years mix with each other and learn together well. By the time children move into Year 1, leaders make sure children have the knowledge and skills to be successful learners.

Leaders have introduced set ways for teachers to deliver learning within and across lessons. Staff follow these expectations well. This helps pupils to know what to expect and to concentrate well in their lessons.

Subject leaders have created a well-defined sequence of learning for their subjects. They have given deep thought to the content and the order in which this is taught. Leaders have made sure that staff teach this well. Consequently, pupils build up their learning in small steps. This helps them to make strong progress through the curriculum.

Staff do not have high enough expectations for handwriting and presentation of work. Consequently, too many pupils do not form their letters correctly. Their work is sometimes hard to read and lacks pride. Teachers do not always challenge pupils when this happens.

In most subjects, teachers use assessment well to identify the things that pupils have yet to learn. Where this happens, teachers adapt their teaching swiftly to make sure pupils remember the important information they need to. However, this is not the case for all subjects. In some lessons, teachers do not check that pupils can remember previous learning before moving on. This leads to gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Staff take the time to get to know pupils well. Parents and carers value this. Staff develop a deep knowledge of each pupils' strengths, abilities and individual needs. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are particularly well supported. Leaders make sure staff have the information they need to support the needs of these pupils. Pupils with SEND access the full curriculum and achieve well.

Leaders have got it right when it comes to teaching pupils to read. Staff are experts in teaching phonics. Pupils access the right books, at the right time, to help them read with ease and speed. This includes those who struggle with reading. Staff move pupils on at the right time. This helps to develop pupils' understanding of the text they read. Pupils told inspectors that they like reading. However, they do not talk about books they have previously read with much knowledge or passion.

Leaders help pupils to develop a sense of responsibility to themselves and others. This starts with the daily toothbrushing routine for children in the early years. It culminates in later years with pupils becoming school councillors or reading ambassadors. Pupils told inspectors they enjoy these experiences. Pupils value their learning on different faiths and cultures. They spoke of themselves as individuals of a particular faith and of no faith. They appreciate that they 'do not have to believe to know and understand' about how people choose to live their lives.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have robust safeguarding systems in place. They share these clearly with staff. Staff know what to do and they do it. Leaders' and staffs' swift actions, alongside their work with a range of agencies, makes a real difference to pupils' safety and well-being. Leaders make sure staff are safe to work with pupils.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in different situations. These include fire, water, road, electrical and use of technology. Pupils know the importance of sharing their worries with someone. The schools' 'worry monster' helps here. Pupils spoke about their worries disappearing with support from staff.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not use assessment well enough to check pupils have remembered what has been taught. This means pupils struggle to remember what they have learned in previous lessons or year groups. Leaders need to support teachers to use a range of assessment strategies to check pupils' understanding. They should use this information to adapt their teaching and curriculum planning where necessary to make sure all pupils remember the important information they need.
- Staff do not have high enough expectations for handwriting and presentation of work. This means some pupils form letters incorrectly and work is poorly presented. Leaders should continue to implement the physical development programme alongside the recently introduced handwriting policy so that teachers consistently have high enough expectations for handwriting and presentation in all subjects.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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

Unique reference number	139846
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10227520
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	257
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Neil Williams
Headteacher	Lisa Challinor
Website	www.carmountsideprimary.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	18 and 19 September 2018

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school is due to join the Societas Trust early in the autumn term 2022.
- The school has pre-school provision for two- to four-year-olds.
- The school has a breakfast club operating on the site. This provision is managed by the school.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and a range of senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and music. For each deep dive, they 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 considered early mathematics and spoke to leaders of personal, social and health education (PSHE) including relationships and sex education (RSE), and health education. Inspectors also considered religious education (RE) and looked at samples of pupils' work in these subjects. English, history and geography work was also looked at.
- The lead inspector met with three members of the governing body, including the chair of trustees.
- Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils read.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at breaktimes. They spoke formally with groups of pupils as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around school.
- The lead inspector reviewed responses to Ofsted's online parent and staff surveys.
- Inspectors visited the breakfast club and an after-school club.
- Inspectors met with leaders to discuss the school's safeguarding procedures. They reviewed policies and records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance. Inspectors spoke to pupils, parents and carers, and staff about pupils' safety.
- The lead inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and information on the school's website

Inspection team

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