

Inspection of a good school: Seabridge Primary School

Roe Lane, Newcastle-Under-Lyme, Staffordshire ST5 3PJ

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 November 2021

Outcome

Seabridge Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe and well looked after at school. They value the school's inclusive atmosphere and respond well to the school's routines and high expectations. Pupils work hard in lessons and enjoy playing together.

Leaders and staff work as a team to ensure pupils know the 'SEABRIDGE' values: Solidarity, equality, ambition, believe, resilience, independence, determination, generosity and enthusiasm. They thread these school values through all aspects of school life. They support pupils to be the best they can be in everything they do.

Pupils show respect to those around them. They understand that everyone is unique and that everyone has a right to an opinion. Pupils say that bullying does not really happen as everyone tries to be kind. Pupils trust adults to sort out any falling out. Teachers are quick to deal with any low-level interruption or unacceptable behaviour.

Leaders, staff and the Shaw Education Trust work hard to ensure that pupils' personal development is carefully considered and planned for. Trips, visits and sporting activities are used to widen pupils' horizons and raise their aspirations. For example, pupils develop independence and experience a different culture through a residential trip to France.

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

Leaders have rightly focused on the quality of education in English, mathematics and science following disrupted learning in these subjects due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Plans in these subjects set out exactly the knowledge and skills pupils need to learn at each point. In other subjects, such as physical education (PE) and French, plans are less precise and do not build as effectively on prior learning. This makes it harder to make connections in other subjects, so pupils remember more over time. Leaders are improving these curriculum plans.

Leaders have recently adopted a new Department for Education (DfE) approved scheme for teaching phonics. Adults ensure that pupils quickly learn phonics from the start of Reception and read books that match the sounds they know. Sharp focused support is quickly given to any pupil who struggles. A strong reading culture is evident in the school community. For example, one of the rewards for excellent work and behaviour is being able to select a book of their choice to keep. Pupils are given a golden token which they can use in the school's high-quality text 'vending machine'.

Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to develop their communication skills. This focus on language and vocabulary is highly effective because it starts in the Nursery and continues throughout the school. An example of this is the school's own radio station which is broadcast live to the local community. Regular guest interviews are conducted by pupils which allows them to enhance their journalistic and media skills. Guests have included the 'World's Strongest Man' and Olympic sports personalities.

Leaders have transformed mathematics and science teaching. Staff are very clear about what to teach, when and how to teach it. Leaders ensure staff benefit from training and development opportunities. The school continues to develop how it challenges the most able pupils. In these subjects, careful thought has been given to how learning in the early years is the foundation for success in later school years. In other subjects, this has not yet happened.

When needed, staff make adaptations to their teaching for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, in mathematics, teachers effectively deploy learning support assistants so that all pupils are included. In the early years, concrete resources are used to support children's understanding.

Adults show pupils how to work together and help them develop confidence. Pupils behave well in and out of lessons. As a result, learning is rarely disrupted. Attitudes to learning are positive.

Pupils have lots of chances to widen their learning beyond the classroom. They participate in a range of clubs and activities including working with the Royal Shakespeare Company, Bikeability and forest school. The careful consideration leaders give to pupils' personal development is a strength of the school.

Staff are proud to work at the school and say leaders ensure their workload is manageable. Trustees exercise their statutory duties well. The academy councillors (local governing body) are realistic and honest about which aspects of the curriculum need further improvement.

Parents and carers have mixed views about the school. While many are highly positive and full of praise for individual teachers, more widely, some parents raise questions about the effectiveness of communication between staff and parents. Also, some say they do not get enough guidance about homework to help them support their children's learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a detailed understanding of pupils' needs. They are vigilant to signs that pupils may be suffering harm and report concerns quickly. Leaders record meticulously concerns and seek the right help to keep pupils as safe as possible. Staff follow up relentlessly concerns with outside agencies if they feel pupils are not getting the support they need. Appropriate checks are made before staff start work at the school.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe throughout the curriculum. For example, they learn about firework safety. Pupils are aware of the different forms bullying can take, including cyber-bullying.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently coherently planned and sequenced in some subjects. However, it is clear from the actions of leaders that they are in the process of bringing this about. Transition statements were therefore applied. Leaders should ensure all subjects are carefully planned and this should include activities that stretch and challenge the most able pupils.
- Several parents raised concerns about home-school communication, particularly in relation to homework and knowing the best ways to support their children at home. Leaders should ensure that communication with parents is timely, clear and appropriate.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school to be good in March 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.

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	144439
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10201010
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	440
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andrew Meehan
Headteacher	Helen Bebbington
Website	www.seabridgeprimary.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	1 and 2 March 2012

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Currently there is an interim executive headteacher at the school who has been appointed by the trust to work at the school due to the long-term absence of the substantive headteacher.

Information about this inspection

- 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 has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector met with the interim executive headteacher, the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator, the reading, mathematics and science leaders and class teachers. The inspector met with representatives from the school's academy council and the Shaw Education Trust.
- Deep dives were carried out into reading, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, inspectors looked at curriculum planning and spoke to leaders about their subjects. The inspector conducted joint lesson visits with leaders, spoke to pupils about their work and wider school experiences and looked at a range of pupils' work.

- The inspector also looked at the curriculum in French and PE.
- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of safeguarding information, including the school's policy, spoke to staff and pupils about safeguarding and looked at how pupils learn to keep themselves safe. The inspector spoke to the safeguarding leaders about recording and reporting of any safeguarding incidents.
- The inspector also checked the school's website.

Inspection team

Heather Phillips, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021