

Inspection of Summerbank Primary Academy

Summerbank Road, Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST6 5HA

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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The headteacher of this school is Clare Pearson. This school is part of The Societas Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Jon Lovatt, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Carol Dudson.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this caring and welcoming school. They are positive about their learning and work hard in lessons.

Deep-rooted compassion and a clear understanding of the barriers that some pupils face do not hinder the drive to ensure that every pupil thrives and achieves well across the curriculum. By the time pupils leave the school, they achieve exceptionally well.

Children in the early years get an excellent start. This underpins their future learning. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils is well considered.

Staff know that pupils' social and emotional development and sense of belonging in this vibrant, multicultural and diverse community are highly important. Pupil 'language ambassadors' are proud to welcome and support pupils who are new to the school. This helps all pupils to feel happy and safe.

Pupils live out the school's motto 'Together we grow'. This is achieved through the variety of opportunities on offer to broaden their horizons, including a range of clubs and trips. As a result, pupils learn valuable life skills, such as being open-minded, reflective and principled. Pupils show respect and a genuine compassion for one another. This prepares them very well for life beyond school.

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

The school's curriculum is ambitious. It clearly outlines the specific knowledge pupils need to learn, for every subject and every year group. This supports teachers to know exactly what to teach and when. Pupils learn in a precise, logical order. As a result, they develop their skills and deepen their understanding as they move through the school.

Staff use ongoing assessment well to check whether all pupils have grasped the concepts or skills that they have been learning. In most subject areas, staff then use this knowledge to identify and address any gaps in future lessons. However, in a small number of wider curriculum subjects, the school is in the process of developing the systems to check whether pupils remember these concepts over time.

Inclusion is at the heart of the school's ethos. Staff swiftly identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Effective training ensures that all staff know how to adapt the learning in all areas of the curriculum to enable all pupils to learn together and achieve shared goals.

Reading is the stimulus for learning throughout all areas of the curriculum. Teachers read and discuss high-quality texts with their classes. As a result, pupils develop their comprehension and a passion for reading. The school has a sharp focus on ensuring that pupils learn to read well. Staff promote children's early language development effectively. The school has implemented an effective phonics programme. This starts in the early years and continues into key stage 2. Staff are well trained to deliver phonics teaching effectively. They develop pupils' phonics knowledge well and use assessment to help them to address any gaps that pupils may have. Reading books match pupils' phonics knowledge accurately. This supports pupils to read with fluency. There are plenty of high-quality and diverse books available to pupils throughout the school. Pupils choose books to help them practise their reading, as well as books that interest them.

Pupils' relationships and attitudes are highly positive. Learning is rarely disrupted. Pupils embody the positive behaviours set out in the school's personal development and philosophy for children curriculum. As a result, the school is a highly inclusive community where pupils treat others with respect. Although pupils try hard with all aspects of their learning, some pupils do not always record their written work using fluent, legible handwriting.

The school has constructed an early years curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all children the knowledge, self-belief and cultural capital they need to be ready for the next stage of their learning. Staff present information clearly to children, promoting and facilitating appropriate discussion. Staff respond and adapt their teaching as necessary to meet the needs of the children according to their stage of development. The environment changes as the children develop and learn to ensure that children are continually challenged. This ensures that all pupils progress well with their learning.

Changes to the local governing board since the last inspection have strengthened governors' knowledge and skills to enable them to support and challenge the school effectively. They keep pupils' interests at the centre of their decision-making. Staff are well supported by the school and the trust, which enables them to focus on teaching. Parents appreciate the wide range of opportunities pupils have and feel well informed about what pupils learn.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils are not forming letters and numbers correctly in their written work. This means that, at times, their work is difficult to read. The school should ensure

that pupils are able to meet its expectations for handwriting so that they are ready for the next stage in their education.

- There have been recent changes to summative assessment processes in a few foundation subjects. Teachers do not always have a detailed enough understanding of what pupils know and remember over time in these subjects. The school should ensure its new assessment systems provide an accurate understanding of pupils' long-term recall of knowledge across 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.

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 [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	142988
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10256835
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	448
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Carol Dudson
CEO of the trust	Jon Lovatt
Headteacher	Clare Pearson
Website	www.summerbank.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	8 and 9 February 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined The Societas Trust in September 2017.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and senior leaders.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the trust.

- The lead inspector met with representatives from the local governing body and trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also examined pupils' work in science and pupils' handwriting books.
- An inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors considered a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. Minutes of governing body meetings, minutes of trust board meetings and reports from external reviews were also scrutinised.
- Inspectors looked at records of pupils' attendance and behaviour. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school and talked to them about behaviour, bullying and welfare.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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 inspectors talked to parents at the start of the school day and considered the free-text responses to Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also reviewed the responses to the staff survey and gathered the views of staff and pupils through discussion.

Inspection team

Cathy Young, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Richard Wakefield	His Majesty's Inspector
Sarah Dukes	Ofsted Inspector

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