

# Inspection of Accrington Spring Hill Community Primary School

Exchange Street, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 0JD

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Inspection dates: 28 and 29 November 2023

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils, including children in the Reception class, enjoy coming to school. Staff greet them warmly at the start of each day. Pupils said that their teachers care about them. This helps them to feel safe. Pupils delight in modelling the school's values, which they are keen to celebrate each week with their families in assembly.

Following a period of instability, pupils are benefiting from the school's increasingly stable leadership and staffing arrangements. The school has high aspirations for pupils' achievement. Pupils strive to live up to these expectations, and they try their best during lessons. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning, and they behave equally well during social times.

The school has overhauled its curriculum to ensure that it is suitably ambitious for pupils. However, weaknesses in the previous curriculum mean that some pupils have developed gaps in their learning over time. These pupils are not as well prepared for the next stage of their education as they should be.

Pupils enjoy developing their talents and interests in a number of activities, including choir practice, boxing, and science club. They are eager to take on responsibilities in school. For example, pupils told inspectors that they were proud to support their community through their work with a local food bank.

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

The school has made the transformational, positive changes required to improve the quality of education for pupils. The school has ensured that there is a well-thought-out curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The school has clarified the essential knowledge that pupils should learn across the curriculum. Teachers have received suitable training, which has enhanced their subject-specific knowledge. This is supporting teachers to deliver the curriculum with growing confidence. Pupils achieve increasingly well. However, despite these rapid improvements, there remain weaknesses in how well aspects of the curriculum are delivered. This hinders how well some pupils learn.

The school is supporting some teachers to hone and develop further their expertise. This is helping teachers to design appropriate learning that supports pupils to remember the curriculum over time. Where the delivery of the curriculum is less effective, this prevents some pupils from building on prior learning as securely as they should.

In those subjects where the curriculum is delivered well, teachers check carefully that pupils have understood earlier content before moving on to new learning. Nevertheless, in those subjects that remain in development, the school is in the process of refining its assessment systems. This prevents some teachers from

accurately identifying the gaps in pupils' knowledge. Furthermore, due to weaknesses in the previous curriculum, some older pupils struggle to remember earlier learning.

Children in the Reception class settle in quickly. Staff's sharp focus on vocabulary helps children to develop their language and communication skills. The school has introduced a suitable phonics programme, and staff have been trained to deliver this programme consistently well. Children in the early years begin learning phonics as soon as they join the school. Teachers design appropriate activities to enable pupils to practise the sounds they have learned. Pupils who struggle with the phonics programme, including children in the Reception Year, receive extra help from staff when needed. This is helping more pupils to read confidently and fluently.

Staff provide a range of activities to enhance pupils' enjoyment of reading. For instance, pupils relish the opportunity to vote for their chosen story at the end of the school day.

The school has developed a rigorous approach to identifying pupils' additional needs. Staff are well trained to understand how to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. This helps pupils with SEND to learn the curriculum alongside their peers.

The school teaches pupils about staying safe, particularly when they are online. The pastoral team works with pupils to overcome any difficulties they may have. Pupils understand the importance of treating everyone fairly, irrespective of their differences or beliefs. The school develops pupils' understanding of the wider world, for instance through organising interesting trips linked to the curriculum. Moreover, visitors to the school help to inspire pupils to have high hopes for their futures.

The school's strategies to improve pupils' rates of attendance have been successful. The school works diligently to involve parents and carers with their children's learning. For example, parents can attend workshops, coffee mornings and adult learning classes to better understand how to support their child. Parents value the relationships they have built with staff.

Staff recognise that the school has had to make a number of changes quickly. Staff benefit from appropriate guidance and support from leaders to carry out their roles effectively. Staff feel valued and supported by leaders.

Following positive changes to strengthen the knowledge and expertise of the governing body, governors provide a suitable level of challenge and support to the school. They are committed to improving further the quality of education that pupils receive.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers are still developing their expertise to deliver aspects of the curriculum successfully. This hinders how well some pupils acquire and develop a deep understanding of subjects over time. As the school implements its refined curriculum, it should ensure that teachers are supported to deliver subject content consistently well.
- In those subjects where the curriculum remains in development, the school is still shaping its approaches to assessment. This prevents teachers from identifying some pupils' misconceptions and the gaps in their prior learning as quickly as they should. The school should ensure that, as it develops assessment systems in these subjects, teachers are suitably equipped to check that pupils' earlier learning is secure.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119185
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10269122
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	376
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Susan Penman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Kershaw
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.springhillschool.co.uk">www.springhillschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school does not use 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.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and other members of staff.

- Inspectors met with some governors and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority and the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, English, mathematics, history and music. 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 samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors looked at school documentation for other subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils read to a trusted adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during playtimes and while in lessons.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding 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.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys. Inspectors met with parents to gather their views and opinions about the school.

### **Inspection team**

Sarah Barraclough, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Joe Dryland	Ofsted Inspector
Gary Bevin	Ofsted Inspector

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