

Inspection of Story Wood School

Hastings Road, Perry Common, Birmingham, West Midlands B23 5AJ

Inspection dates:	8 and 9 July 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Jablai Saleh. This school is part of the Robin Hood Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Steve Taylor, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Martin Collard.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Story Wood School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Story Wood School and Children's Centre to be outstanding for overall effectiveness, before it opened as Story Wood School as a result of conversion to academy status. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils speak with pride about their school and embrace the values of respect, responsibility and resilience that shape their daily experiences. Staff set high expectations of pupils' behaviour which they rise to with smiles on their faces. Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to their learning, strive to work hard and behave really positively. The school builds trusting and caring relationships across the whole school community through the strong pastoral support. This helps pupils to feel happy, safe and excited to attend school.

The school sets high standards for pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The highly effective provision in reading, writing and mathematics right from the early years enables pupils to consistently reach these high standards by the end of key stage 2 in these subjects. Pupils achieve well across the wider curriculum.

The school supports pupils' personal development exceptionally well. Ambitious, inclusive and purposeful experiences contribute to pupils' increased confidence, independence and aspiration as they move through the school. For example, the 'squirrel points' provide pupils with real-life situations that require them to make decisions and set budgets. This helps to build their understanding of finances and economics.

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

The school has established a very positive learning culture. Foundations for learning are firmly set in Nursery where children develop curiosity through carefully laid out learning opportunities. Children become more independent and focused on their learning in Reception which prepares them well for Year 1.

Reading is a strength of the school. Pupils learn to read with fluency and comprehension. Children begin to develop their understanding of sounds in Nursery, and this builds successfully as they move through Reception and key stage 1. No one is left behind because the school uses extra sessions exceptionally well to support pupils who need additional help. Reading is promoted at every opportunity from early morning library sessions through to story time at the end of the day. Pupils are immersed in a wide range of reading materials ranging from classical texts to modern, non-fiction and poetry. This widens pupils' understanding of different cultures, life experiences and develops a love of reading.

There is an ambitious curriculum that aims to inspire and excite pupils to help them achieve highly. In mathematics this is achieved extremely well. The school provides staff with effective training to deliver the curriculum with skill and precision. It ensures that any gaps in pupils' understanding are identified and addressed swiftly. This helps pupils to develop very secure mathematical skills. They apply these skills with increasing fluency as they move through the school. Opportunities to apply their knowledge in problem solving challenges are plentiful. Pupils achieve highly by the end of key stage 2.

Pupils are excited to learn about topics including the Greeks and Romans. They explore a range of artists and regions including the cities of Baghdad and Paris. The school's checks on learning focus on the knowledge pupils develop through topics. Pupils can generally recall basic facts about their learning. However, in some wider curriculum subjects, the school has not ensured that pupils have sufficient opportunities to consider how what they have studied previously connects to what they are currently learning. This means that pupils' understanding across the wider curriculum lacks some depth and makes it harder for pupils to recall prior learning.

The provision for pupils with SEND is highly effective. The school ensures there is a precise understanding of pupils' needs and that staff understand these needs. The school is inclusive. Staff effectively adapt the curriculum so that pupils with SEND can access and succeed in their learning.

Pupils are enthusiastic about their school and learning. Their exceptionally positive behaviour means that learning takes place without disruption. The school provides excellent support for pupils who need help to manage their behaviour. Most pupils attend school well. The school's effective support is reducing absence rates for a few pupils who do not attend regularly.

Support for pupils' personal development is very special. Staff provide wonderful opportunities to widen pupils' life experiences. Pupils build confidence through camping out in the woodland area and sleeping on a battleship. They shine in their acting performances in the theatre. Pupils develop into kind and considerate individuals who value the differences of all.

There is a strong partnership between the school and the trust. Staff feel extremely well supported. They benefit from comprehensive training which helps to develop their practice exceptionally well. The trust benefits from the innovative practice established within the school. The trust and the local governing body provide excellent support and challenge to the school. This ensures that the school continues to improve. Parents value the support of the school, especially the care it provides for their children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to relate new learning to what they have learned before in foundation subjects. This makes it harder for some pupils to make links in and remember what they have learned. The school should ensure that pupils have more effective opportunities to develop meaningful links

between their current and prior learning to deepen their understanding across the curriculum.

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

Unique reference number	150876
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10379633
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	231
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Martin Collard
CEO of the trust	Steve Taylor
Headteacher	Jablai Saleh
Website	www.storywood.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the Robin Hood Multi Academy Trust in September 2024.
- The school currently does not use any alternative provision.
- The school includes an on-site nursery provision for three-year-olds.
- The school provides a before-school club on site.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection of the school since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, the early years leader, curriculum leaders and other staff.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, languages and computing. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult. The inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspectors reviewed a wide range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans and information on the school's website.
- 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 met with the members of the governing body, the CEO, the director of school improvement and the chair of the trust.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons at different times of the day and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They spoke formally with groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around school.
- The inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's surveys of staff's, pupils' and parents' views.

Inspection team

Ann Pritchard, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Kerry Rochester

Ofsted Inspector

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