

Inspection of a good school: Walmley Infant School

Walmley Ash Road, Walmley, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B76 1JB

Inspection dates:

2 and 3 July 2024

Outcome

Walmley Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy, highly inclusive school. The right of everyone to be respected and treated equally is central to its ethos. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are valued members of the school community. They are actively involved in all aspects of school life. Parents and carers speak highly of the support and kindness shown by staff.

There is a calm and purposeful learning atmosphere around the school. Pupils behave well. This starts in the early years, where children are taught to live and breathe five rules: 'Kind hands, kind words, kind feet, be safe, be ready to learn'. Pupils of all ages try their best to live by these. They get along well together. They are comfortable, safe and secure.

The school is ambitious for all pupils. Expectations for learning are clear. Pupils work hard and achieve well, especially in early reading and mathematics. They are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Sport and physical activity are important parts of school life. One pupil proudly explained, 'Being active makes our brains and bodies stronger.' Pupils enjoy a wide range of clubs and events, including boccia, archery and street dance. These experiences broaden pupils' interests.

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

The school has designed and implemented an ambitious and exciting curriculum from Nursery to Year 2. The curriculum is well sequenced, ensuring that pupils' understanding builds over time. Developing pupils' vocabulary is prioritised. Staff use assessment information effectively to make sure that pupils are secure in their learning.

Staff skilfully engage children's interests. For example, in early years children learn about historical concepts such as 'the past' by exploring events in their own lives. They eagerly

share their personal timelines, using words such as 'past' and 'present' accurately. This prepares them well for history in Year 1. By Year 2 most pupils demonstrate a strong understanding of historical chronology. For instance, as they discuss the history of flight, they remember significant dates and people such as Bessie Coleman and Amelia Earhart.

The tasks that pupils complete are carefully selected and resourced with high-quality materials. In mathematics, pupils make effective use of concrete resources when partitioning numbers in different ways. They use learning aids, including pictorial representations when solving more complex problems. These approaches help them to achieve the aims of the ambitious curriculum. In a small number of key stage 1 subjects, the curriculum is at an earlier stage of development. It is not yet fully implemented as intended. As a result, it is too early to see the impact on pupils' achievement.

Reading is a high priority. The phonics programme is well established and effective. All staff are consistent in their delivery. They quickly identify and support any pupils who need extra help so that they keep up with their peers. The books that pupils have are carefully matched to the sounds that they know. Pupils in Year 1 master their phonics knowledge very well. Pupils show a love of reading and enjoy the social areas where they choose to share reading with friends. This helps them to become increasingly confident readers.

The school quickly identifies any children with SEND. Accurate assessments are made and bespoke plans are put into place. Staff are skilled at making adaptations in lessons. Pupils with SEND access the same learning as their classmates, with an appropriate level of challenge. They achieve well.

The school has worked hard to develop the indoor and outdoor learning environments in the early years. Children in Nursery and Reception show high levels of engagement with the new outdoor provision. For example, they practise their early writing and number work as they play in the supermarket and scientific investigation hut. However, the indoor nursery environment is not yet as well equipped or designed as it could be to support the aims of the ambitious curriculum.

Pupils benefit from the school's broad curriculum. They talk about favourite artists, such as Clarice Cliff, and musical styles, such as soul and jazz. The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. The curriculum is carefully designed to help pupils to understand and respect different faiths and beliefs. Pupils are proud of their knowledge of human rights. The school thoughtfully prepares pupils for the future.

Leaders and governors prioritise the well-being of staff. They are very mindful of staff workload. Everyone is highly motivated to do their best for the pupils in their care. Governors have a secure understanding of the strengths and the areas to continue to develop.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In key stage 1, a small number of subjects are at an early stage of development. This means that, at times, the curriculum is not yet fully implemented as intended. The school should ensure that the curriculum is implemented as intended so that pupils achieve well in all subjects and improvements are sustained.
- The indoor learning environment in the nursery is not as well designed or equipped as it could be to support children's learning. The school should continue with its plans to ensure that the learning environment in nursery is appropriately designed and equipped to support the aims of the ambitious early years curriculum.

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

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2018.

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	103544
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10322699
Type of school	Infant
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	324
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Victoria Davis
Headteacher	Helen Murphy
Website	www.walmleyinfantschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, two assistant headteachers have been appointed.
- The current chair of the governing body was appointed in September 2023.
- The school manages before- and after-school provision.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. She also met with the chair of the governing body and one other governor.

- The inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To further look at the curriculum, the inspector met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculums in science, music and physical education.
- The inspector observed a selection of pupils reading to members of staff. Other pupils were heard reading their work during lessons.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: checked the school's single central record; spoke to senior leaders about safeguarding procedures; took account of the views of 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 inspector met with groups of pupils to talk about their learning and life in school. The inspector also met with parents at the end of the school day.
- The inspector considered a range of documents, including leaders' self-evaluation and improvement plans. The inspector checked records of attendance and behaviour. The inspector also observed pupils' behaviour at playtime and lunchtime and talked to them about behaviour, bullying and welfare.
- The inspector reviewed responses to Ofsted Parent View and the pupil and staff surveys. The inspector also gathered the views of pupils and staff on site through discussion with these groups and from their online questionnaire responses.

Inspection team

Marilyn Mottram, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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