

Inspection of a good school: Wheelers Lane Primary School

Wheelers Lane, Kings Heath, Birmingham, West Midlands B13 0SF

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 December 2023

Outcome

Wheelers Lane Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Wheelers Lane Primary School is a warm and welcoming school. The curriculum at Wheelers Lane is ambitious, as leaders have placed considerable emphasis on considering the key knowledge pupils need to learn. Teachers check carefully if pupils have retained this key knowledge and they achieve well, especially in key stage 2.

Alongside the curriculum, leaders have placed considerable emphasis on the development of pupils' wider opportunities. There is a very extensive offer for all pupils as part of their 'Wheelers Lane experience'. This includes theme weeks, where the curriculum has a particular focus to further enhance the pupils' learning. Leaders work extensively to ensure all pupils can access these experiences. Pupils very much appreciate these opportunities.

Pupils are happy at school thanks to the calm and orderly routines which leaders have established. They understand that difference is something to be celebrated. Leaders have established clear rules and expectations, such that pupils are clear about how they behave and how they should interact with each other. This means the school is a harmonious community.

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

Within the taught curriculum, leaders have high expectations for pupils' learning. They regularly review the key knowledge that pupils will learn. Reading is a priority in the school and there is a well-embedded reading scheme. This ensures that pupils rapidly gain the knowledge they need to become fluent readers. If there are pupils who are not making progress through the reading scheme, then interventions are in place to ensure they catch up rapidly. That said, there are a small number of older pupils who have not been supported to help them read fluently. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs identified accurately, and appropriate adaptations and support are put in place. Therefore, they achieve well.

In the foundation subjects, leaders have ensured that there is a regular process of review. Some of the curriculum development in certain subjects is at an earlier stage of development than others. Leaders are working on ensuring that the assessment of foundation subjects is precise across all subjects, and enables teachers to clearly identify any gaps in pupils' understanding.

Leaders work effectively with families to improve attendance. They work to support families and pupils where attendance causes concern, and this work has meant overall attendance rates are improving. The attendance team liaises closely with leaders responsible for safeguarding to ensure any concerns about attendance which link to safeguarding are shared. In this way, they work well together to keep pupils safe.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour, and these are well understood by pupils. This means the school is a well ordered and welcoming community. Effective work is undertaken to work with pupils who find it harder to meet the school's expectations for behaviour.

Wheeler Lane places significant emphasis on a broad curriculum. The school places considerable importance on giving all pupils, regardless of background, a coherent range of wider experiences to enrich their learning. These include residential trips, clubs, enrichment experiences in the curriculum and local visits. The work on the pupils' personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education is comprehensive and ensures they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governors discharge their responsibilities well. They are committed to the school and its ongoing development. Governors are clear about the school's performance and areas for development. They are informed about safeguarding and discharge their other legal responsibilities appropriately. Staff are highly committed to the school, and appreciate that leaders work well with them on matters of workload or developments to the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Support for some older pupils who have remaining weaknesses in reading is not as effective as it needs to be. As a result, some of these pupils are not catching up quickly enough and have challenges accessing the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that older pupils are urgently given additional support to improve their reading skills in school and at home.
- In foundation subjects, the use of assessment is less precise. This means that teachers and leaders are less secure on exactly what key knowledge pupils have learned and understood. The school should ensure that assessment processes in foundation

subjects enable staff to clearly identify and address any remaining gaps in pupils' knowledge.

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 April 2014.

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	134099
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10294567
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	645
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Tomina Noreen
Headteacher	Sara Pecheur
Website	wlprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been no relevant changes since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- 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.
- 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.
- As a part of this inspection, inspectors met with a representative of the local authority, governors, senior leaders, subject leaders and teaching staff, as well as other employees in the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in: early reading, mathematics, science and geography. They also looked at examples of pupils' work in other subjects. 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 also visited lessons in some other subjects.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's extra-curricular activities, enrichment programme and personal, social and health and economic (PSHE) programme with leaders and pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's behaviour and attendance records with school leaders.
- Inspectors met with members of staff and spoke to pupils, both formally and informally, at various points in the inspection. They took account of responses to a staff survey, a pupil survey, and Ofsted Parent View and the free-text responses. They spoke to a number of parents on the playground.

Inspection team

Andrew Madden, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ed Masterson

Ofsted Inspector

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