

Inspection of Kitwell Primary School and Nursery Class

Wychbury Road, Bartley Green, Birmingham, West Midlands B32 4DL

Inspection dates: 12–13 November 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Kitwell are well cared for. Leaders place pupils at the heart of all they do. Pupils' health and well-being are a high priority. Leaders know their pupils and families well. They provide effective social and emotional support for pupils and families when they need it. The school recently achieved a national well-being award.

Leaders want pupils to do their best. However, pupils are not doing well enough in reading, writing and mathematics, especially in key stage 2. Expectations are sometimes too low.

Pupils enjoy a range of rich experiences, such as working with the Royal Ballet and arts organisations. Pupils have opportunities to take part in clubs such as those for gardening, drama and cookery to enhance their life skills. They participate in different sports, competitions and tournaments.

The school ethos reflects a caring, nurturing environment. Pupils respond well to staff. Most pupils behave well and enjoy their learning. Some pupils find it difficult to manage their own feelings and behaviour, but staff support them well. Bullying is not tolerated. Pupils learn about bullying through the curriculum. They understand what bullying is and what it is not. They say that it does not happen very often, but if it did, they would tell a teacher. Pupils are confident that adults will help them.

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

Reading is a high priority. Pupils read regularly. They enjoy listening to teachers read to them. Leaders keep a close check on pupils' progress in phonics. They ensure that pupils read books that match their phonic ability. Adults provide additional support for pupils who need extra help. They help younger pupils develop confidence and fluency.

On occasions, the teaching of reading is not focused enough. Leaders are reviewing how reading is taught and asking teachers to try new approaches. When reading is taught well, pupils develop the skills to be successful readers. Teachers extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of vocabulary well. Leaders and staff promote a love of reading through author visits, books swaps and book clubs.

Pupils are not achieving well enough in key stage 2. This is because, across different subjects, planning is not effective enough. Senior leaders do not yet have a whole-school overview of the curriculum. Leaders have begun to review the school's curriculum and teachers are now beginning to plan a clearer sequence of learning in each subject. For example, in physical education (PE), a scheme has been introduced to strengthen the progression of skills. This development of the curriculum is very recent and needs time to really work properly.

Pupils' presentation, handwriting, spelling and punctuation are not as good as they

should be because teachers' expectations are too low. In mathematics, pupils do not recall basic number facts and multiplication tables easily. They find it hard to explain what they know and understand. Sometimes, pupils carry out formal calculations before they understand fully what they are doing.

Pupils learn about other cultures. They say that adults treat them fairly. Pupils understand that some pupils might need extra support to help them learn. They understand how to keep healthy. They are proud of being a 'playground pal', a sports leader or a member of the school council. Pupils can explain why they need to work hard at school to get a good job.

Most pupils concentrate well in lessons and try hard. On occasions, some pupils do not behave as well as expected. Adults address this promptly. Pupils respond well to the school's behaviour system.

Leaders identify the most vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils who are at risk of falling behind. They plan effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders ensure that pupils' additional needs are met well.

The governing body is newly formed. They have a clear strategy for monitoring the work of the school so that they can hold leaders to account. Governors are not yet fulfilling all of their statutory responsibilities. For example, they have not ensured that all of the information they should provide is on the school's website.

Children in early years get off to a good start. Most are prepared well for Year 1. Leaders plan a curriculum that meets the needs of children well. Adults use assessment to plan the next steps in children's learning. Children have a range of opportunities to practise reading, writing and mathematics. They learn how to share and take turns. They practise phonics every day. Adults help children to form letters accurately and write simple words. In the outdoor area, children act out and re-tell familiar stories. They collect objects to reinforce their understanding of number.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are aware of current and local issues that affect pupils and their families. They ensure that all staff are trained in these areas. Leaders make sure that families receive the support that they need. Leaders record concerns appropriately. However, the record keeping for individual pupils could be further improved.

Leaders have not ensured that all governors have completed the required recruitment checks. This has not affected the pupils' safety and was addressed with immediate effect during the inspection.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe through the curriculum. They demonstrate a good knowledge of e-safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils achieve standards broadly in line with the national average at the end of Reception and Year 2. However, this is not the case by the end of Year 6. Over time, pupils' progress and attainment across key stage 2 are inconsistent in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2019, progress in all three subjects was significantly below the national average. Attainment in reading and mathematics was well below the national average. Sometimes, teachers' expectations are too low. Leaders need to improve standards by the end of key stage 2. Leaders should be clear about the specific actions that they will take and the difference the actions will make.
- Pupils lack confidence to draw on their knowledge and understanding in mathematics. This inhibits their ability to apply what they know to calculations and problem solving. Leaders need to ensure that pupils' knowledge and understanding in mathematics are well embedded. They should ensure that pupils develop a range of strategies in order to apply and explain their knowledge and understanding in mathematics securely.
- The work in pupils' books shows that pupils' handwriting, presentation, spelling and punctuation are weak. Misconceptions are not addressed routinely and misspelling goes uncorrected. Teachers do not present a consistent model of handwriting. Leaders should improve the quality of pupils' handwriting, presentation, spelling and punctuation.
- Leaders are currently developing the curriculum. Subject leaders are beginning to pull together a clearer progression of skills in their subject areas. Leaders have recently introduced some new schemes of work, for example in PE. Teachers are trialling new approaches in the teaching of reading. These developments are relatively new and need time to embed. Senior leaders should develop a clear overview of what the whole school curriculum looks like so that they can check the quality of the curriculum more effectively.
- The new governing body has set out a clear course of action so that it can govern more effectively. Governors have not fulfilled their statutory duty because they have not ensured that all governors have completed the relevant recruitment checks. The school's website does not contain all the required statutory information for parents and carers and requires updating as soon as possible. Governors must ensure that, as a priority, they meet their statutory responsibilities.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 103339 |
| Local authority | Birmingham |
| Inspection number | 10130356 |
| 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 | 229 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Deryck Hall |
| Headteacher | Michele Shevels |
| Website | www.kitwellschool.com/ |
| Date of previous inspection | 1 March 2016 |

Information about this school

- Since the last section 8 inspection in March 2016, the deputy headteacher has left. The acting deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2019.
- The governing body runs the school nursery and a school breakfast club.
- Several new governors have joined the governing body.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors visited all classes, sometimes accompanied by a senior leader.
- The lead inspector observed staff listening to pupils read and observed phonics in early years and key stage 1.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher, the early years leader and several subject leaders. An inspector met with the leader responsible for SEND to discuss the provision for pupils. They also met with leaders responsible for behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors met with subject leaders in art, PE, reading and mathematics. They

looked at these subjects in detail, visiting lessons, looking at plans and talking to leaders, teachers and pupils about them.

- An inspector checked the school's record and procedures for the safe recruitment of staff. The lead inspector met with the headteacher, who is the designated safeguarding lead, to discuss safeguarding practice and check school records. Inspectors discussed safeguarding arrangements and practice with other staff and governors. Inspectors checked pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe and considered how safeguarding was taught through the curriculum.
- The lead inspector met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. She also met with a representative of the local authority.
- The lead inspector met with teachers to discuss workload and the support they receive.
- Inspectors observed pupils on the playground and around school. They talked to pupils about their learning and experiences at the school.
- An inspector talked to parents before school. The lead inspector considered the 18 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 13 written comments, as well as the school's own survey. The lead inspector also considered the 18 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at the school's website and considered a range of documentation provided by the school, including the school's development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, school policies, curriculum plans and published data.

Inspection team

Sue Cameron, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Michael Appleby

Ofsted Inspector

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