

Inspection of Emmanuel School

36 Wolverhampton Road, Walsall, West Midlands WS2 8PR

Inspection dates: 28–30 January 2020

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

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Christian teaching and values underpin all aspects of school life. Pupils learn to be kind, well behaved and respectful to others. The school adds value to their lives in many ways. Pupils do well in examinations. Most pupils achieve good GCSE results by the time they leave school.

Within the old and tired building, leaders and staff make the most of the limited facilities, some of which are shabby and need improving. However, pupils are safe and enjoy their time at school. Bullying is rare and dealt with straight away.

New curriculum planning has started to improve the way teachers plan lessons. Nevertheless, some lessons are not pitched at the right level and learning time is lost. Leaders know this but there is still more work to be done. A few of the independent school standards continue to be unmet.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, its ethos and their children's education. In their responses to Ofsted Parent View, 100% would recommend the school to others. One parent's comments summed up the views of many, 'My child is really happy at the school; she loves her teachers and is well looked after.'

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

Overall, pupils do well in examinations, and the school equips them with an ambitious and caring outlook on life. However, throughout the school, apart from early years, learning in some subjects is better than others.

In subjects such as citizenship, the order of learning is clear. As a result, teachers know what to teach and when to teach it. Lessons build on what pupils have learned in the past. Consequently, pupils' knowledge and skills build well over time.

However, in some other subjects, such as science, this is not the case. Leaders have introduced new curriculum plans, but they are not routinely followed by staff. At times, the order of learning is not logical. Staff are unsure what pupils have learned in the past, so they have to go back and fill gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. This slows learning. Leaders' checks on how well curriculum plans are being implemented in the classroom are not consistently improving how well the curriculum is delivered.

When the curriculum is delivered well, teachers set work that is interesting and enjoyable. They use open questions to explore pupils' understanding, deepen their learning and promote discussion. Pupils respond well to this. In particular, they enjoy joining in with debates about a range of issues. This helps to prepare them for life outside of school.

Sometimes, work set by teachers is not well matched to pupils' needs. This mostly affects the most able pupils and those who require additional support. These pupils sometimes find the work set too easy or too difficult.

The small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in all aspects of school life. Leaders seek advice from external agencies when required. This ensures that the needs of pupils with SEND are assessed accurately.

Children settle quickly into the early years. This is because staff build close relationships with parents. Parents value this. The curriculum is well planned over time so that activities build on what children already know. This helps them to make connections between different things that they have learned in the past. Teachers make learning fun and children get excited about education. In their current topic, for example, children have enjoyed learning about how to keep their teeth clean and healthy. The classroom and newly designed outdoor area are colourful and support learning. Caring relationships exist between adults and children. Children make friends and show interest in others.

Throughout the school, staff place a high priority on reading. Staff teach phonics well on a daily basis for younger pupils. Teachers provide extra help for any pupils who need it. Consequently, pupils read with confidence from an early age. The school is continuing to work on ways to raise the profile of reading across the school to encourage pupils to read more. 'Drop everything and read' sessions and 'story cafes' are regular features on the timetable.

On the whole, pupils listen to their teachers, follow instructions promptly and complete the work they have been set. This means that teachers can teach and pupils can learn. There is a calm atmosphere around the school, and pupils behave well in the corridors, in the sandwich hall and on the playground. Pupils, parents and staff speak very positively about behaviour in and around the school.

The school organises a range of activities to enrich the curriculum through the '20/20' programme. This is a series of activities that broaden pupils' experiences beyond the academic and vocational subjects. There are links to themes, including service and sport. Staff have organised trips, such as visits to London and Snowdonia. However, pupils would welcome the opportunity to visit more places more often. Pupils have a well-rounded knowledge of other religions, cultures and lifestyles. They understand and accept the similarities and differences in society. Pupils say, 'We can believe different things, but we have to respect each other.'

Leaders are aware of the poor condition of the school premises. Classrooms are in need of decoration, furniture is old and pupils have to play on a bumpy yard. However, leaders and staff do the best they can with what they have. Leaders have installed showers, but they are not ideal. Also, changing facilities are unsuitable. As a result, they are not used by pupils.

Leaders and governors, many of whom sit on the proprietorial board, have high expectations of where they would like the school to be. They have made many improvements, such as in early years, and the positive effect of these can be seen. However, they are aware that differences remain between how well some subjects and some classes are taught. They understand that there is more work to be done to improve this across the school.

Leaders ensure that the school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The school considers and plans for the needs of pupils with SEND.

Staff value the training that they have received, particularly in relation to safeguarding. They say that leaders are mindful of their well-being and that workload is realistic. Staff enjoy working at the school and value working as a team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff take safeguarding seriously. It is their highest priority. Leaders have ensured that all staff have received relevant training. As a result, staff are very aware of what they need to do if they are concerned about a pupil's welfare. Pupils feel safe in the school. They say this is because their teachers look after them. Leaders check staff's suitability to work with children before they start to work at the school. When required, the school works with external agencies to provide additional support for pupils.

The safeguarding policy meets current government guidance and is on the school's website.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- In some areas of the curriculum, such as science, leaders have recently introduced new curriculum plans. However, currently, lessons do not systematically build on what pupils have learned in the past. This means that staff have to backtrack and fill gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. This slows learning. The school needs to continue to build on the work recently started to improve the sequence of learning across the school in these subjects.
- Teachers are not routinely using their knowledge of pupils' strengths and weaknesses to plan work that is closely matched to the needs of all pupils, including the most able and those who require additional support. This prevents these pupils from achieving as well as they could. Teachers need to make better use of what they know about pupils' prior attainment to plan work at the right level.

- Leaders broadly know that there is variability in the way that the different subjects and different classes are taught. They know that pupils do not achieve as well as they could in some classes and in some subjects. Leaders have made some improvements since the previous inspection. Leaders' evaluation of the delivery of the curriculum needs to inform the subsequent actions taken to improve the quality of education across the school.
- The changing facilities and showers are poor. Pupils do not use them. The school needs to improve these facilities.

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 are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	130323
DfE registration number	335/6009
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	10119213
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	83
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Emmanuel School (Walsall)
Headteacher	Jonathan Swain
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,524
Telephone number	01922 635 810
Website	www.emmanuel-walsall.co.uk
Email address	office@emmanuel-walsall.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–24 May 2018

Information about this school

- Emmanuel School is a small independent Christian day school operating from rented premises in Walsall. The landlord is the Afro-Caribbean Centre that shares the site.
- While the majority of pupils are from Christian families, the school admits pupils of a different faith, or no faith, providing parents support the school's Christian ethos.
- The school caters for boys and girls from Nursery to Year 11.
- The school has an after-school club operating on the site. This provision is managed by the school.
- The school does not currently make use of alternative provision.

- The last full standard inspection was in May 2018.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- The lead inspector held regular meetings with the headteacher and the school manager, who are also members of the proprietorial board. He met with two members of the governing body.
- We held meetings with the special educational needs coordinator and the leaders who are responsible for early years, attendance, behaviour and careers.
- As part of the inspection, we carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, citizenship and science. We met with groups of pupils, curriculum leaders and teachers to talk about the quality of education at the school.
- We made visits to classrooms. Many of these visits were with senior leaders.
- An inspector listened to several groups of pupils read.
- We spoke with pupils formally and informally about their learning and experiences at school. We looked at pupils' work in a range of different subjects to see how well the curriculum is applied. Two separate groups of pupils accompanied an inspector on a walk around the school.
- Documents relating to safeguarding were checked, including the checks that leaders make prior to employment on staff's suitability to work with children. We checked that safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented effectively across the school.
- The lead inspector toured the school premises to check their suitability.
- We talked to parents after school. The lead inspector considered the 15 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 16 free-text responses received during the inspection.
- The lead inspector considered the 10 responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.
- We considered a range of documents. We looked at the school's improvement plans, school policies, curriculum documents, published information about pupils' performance, behaviour records, attendance information and minutes of meetings linked to governance.
- The lead inspector looked at published information on the school's website.

Inspection team

Wayne Simner, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Ashley

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons; and
 - 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 23(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), the standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 23(1)(c) suitable changing accommodation and showers are provided for pupils aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school–
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

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