

Inspection of Warley Infant School

Bleakhouse Road, Oldbury, West Midlands B68 9DS

Inspection dates: 29–30 January 2020

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Inadequate

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The quality of education at Warley Infant School is poor. Leaders have not acted quickly enough to tackle the issues identified at the previous inspection. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are low. Pupils are often given work that is too easy or too hard for them. When this happens, some become bored and start to misbehave. The new acting headteacher has put in place actions to improve pupils' education, but these actions have not had time to work yet.

Many pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. Pupils feel safe. Any incidents of bullying are dealt with appropriately. Pupils know who they can go to in school if they feel worried or have a problem. Staff have a caring attitude towards the pupils. They praise pupils in class when they have done well. This builds pupils' self-confidence.

Early actions to improve relationships with parents are already having a positive impact. The acting headteacher has met with many parents and has listened to their concerns. Parents say that they are confident that the new acting headteacher will lead the school well.

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

Pupils do not receive an acceptable quality of education at this school. Actions taken since the previous inspection have not been effective. In the very short time she has been in post, the acting headteacher has started to take action to address weaknesses. Effective external support is in place. The acting headteacher is very open to the feedback and guidance she is receiving.

The school's curriculum in a range of subjects, including reading, writing, mathematics and geography, is not planned well enough. As a result, pupils are not able to build on what they have already learned. This is also the case in the early years, where the curriculum does not clearly identify the skills and knowledge children need to learn at key points across the year.

Pupils do not always remember things they have previously been taught. This is because learning is not always revisited when it needs to be. Too often, teachers do not pick up on and point out pupils' misunderstandings, so pupils repeat errors and become confused. In the early years, the purpose of learning activities is not always clear enough, and children quickly lose interest in the task they are doing.

The school's approach to the teaching of reading is not effective. Many pupils are very behind where they should be in their phonics knowledge. There are no effective strategies to help pupils keep up or catch up. The books that pupils take home to read do not help them to practise their reading skills. Pupils say that they enjoy reading but cannot name many popular books or authors. Pupils have too few

opportunities to read with an adult. Teaching that is intended to help pupils to consolidate or extend pupils' reading skills falls short, because the work planned does not build well on what pupils can already do.

Pupils are not systematically taught how to write. They do not have enough chance to practise the writing skills they have learned. The acting headteacher has identified that spelling and handwriting need improvement across school, and a spelling programme has recently been introduced. However, staff are not yet skilled in helping pupils to improve these important aspects of their learning.

Teachers are beginning to have a better understanding of the needs of pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in their class. However, teachers do not always plan appropriate work, or provide appropriate resources, for these pupils in class. This means that the work is often not accessible for these pupils.

Behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes is positive. Pupils generally move around the school in a calm manner. However, in class, pupils are quite easily distracted, and there is some low-level disruption. Some staff get pupils back on task quickly and well, but others do not.

Pupils take part in a range of school visits. They have opportunities to take on roles such as monitors and class councillors. Pupils have made links with their local community. For example, they have taken part in the 'Big Spring Clean' litter picking project. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to attend clubs based on their interests or talents.

The acting headteacher has taken steps to reduce staff workload by making changes to the way teachers mark pupils' work. Staff say that workload is beginning to become more manageable.

Governors take their responsibilities seriously and understand their strategic role. However, they do not have a clear enough view of the school's weaknesses. This is partly because the school's plans for improvement are not clearly focused on what needs to be improved or how these improvements will be measured and monitored. Governors do not have a clear enough view of the impact of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe in school. They know who to go to if they are worried or have a problem. Staff are well trained and know the systems for reporting any concerns. All the correct checks on staff and visitors are carried out, and the school site is secure. Pupils are supervised throughout the school day. Systems for monitoring staff and pupils' usage of the internet are in place and concerns addressed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not well planned. This means that teachers are not teaching new knowledge in a logical order or giving pupils the skills they need to progress. Leaders need to make sure that all areas of the curriculum, are coherently planned and implemented consistently well.
- Many pupils are not being taught phonics at an age-appropriate level. They are not reading often enough. Pupils do not have the opportunity to take good-quality books home to enjoy and have a limited knowledge of favourite books and authors. As a result of these weaknesses, many pupils have weak reading skills. Leaders need to ensure that pupils are taught phonics at an appropriate level and to improve the quality of reading lessons in order that pupils learn to read effectively. They need to ensure that the books that pupils take home help them to practise their skills.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can do. This is particularly the case with regard to the quality of pupils' writing and the depth of their work. This means that the work pupils are asked to do often does not develop or extend their knowledge or skills. Leaders need to ensure that teachers' expectations are ambitious and to provide them with the training they need to be able to improve pupils' learning.
- Too often, pupils become distracted and this leads to low-level disruption, particularly when pupils are not given work that is suitable for their needs. Not all staff are skilled at managing pupils' behaviour and redirecting them to their learning. Leaders should ensure that the work that pupils are given matches their needs and that staff have the training and support they need to manage pupils' behaviour consistently well.
- Improvement planning is not clearly focused enough on what the school needs to do to improve, who will do it and when. This makes it difficult for governors to hold leaders to account and provide them with appropriate support and challenge. Leaders should ensure that the school's plans for improvement are clear, measurable and shared with governors and with staff.
- Pupils with SEND do not always have their learning needs met appropriately in lessons. This means that they do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders need to ensure that pupils with SEND have work set that matches their needs, that they have access to appropriate resources to support them in lessons so that they can succeed, and that they can access the same learning opportunities as their peers.

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 school and you are 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

Unique reference number	103963
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10122479
Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Alison Warren
Headteacher	Emma McGahey
Website	www.warleyinfants.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has had an acting headteacher in post since January 2020. She was previously the deputy headteacher.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education, and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- We met with the acting headteacher, school leaders, governors and the school improvement adviser. We looked at a range of documents, including curriculum plans, school development plans and pupils' attendance, behaviour and safeguarding records.

- We looked at the 25 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, and 26 free-text responses. We also looked at the responses to the staff survey.
- The inspection focused particularly on reading, writing, mathematics and geography. We spoke with subject leaders, teachers and pupils about their work and other aspects of life in school. We also reviewed pupils’ work in their books.

Inspection team

Mel Davies, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Rachel Davis

Ofsted Inspector

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