

Inspection of Lightwoods Primary School

Castle Road East, (Second Site At Wolverhampton Rd, Cnr Clent Road, B68 0LP),
Oldbury, West Midlands, B68 9BG

Inspection dates: 26–27 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This school has undergone severe turbulence in the last 18 months. At the time of the inspection, there was no substantive headteacher in place. Two assistant headteachers have taken on the running of the school. Governors and the local authority have not provided enough effective support for these leaders. As a result, standards at the school have declined. Safeguarding procedures are not effective. There is a lack of leadership capacity within the school. Despite these issues, staff ensure that pupils continue to do well.

All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils' conduct is good. They work hard and aim to do well. Lessons are calm and orderly. Pupils play well together at social times. Bullying incidents are rare and pupils have every confidence in their teachers to sort any that might occur. Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school.

Pupils benefit from an extensive range of activities that develop their personal interests. The many activities include trips, visits, residential and after-school clubs. Many pupils make good use of these clubs and further their learning outside of lessons. Pupils speak with passion about their trips and visits.

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

Leaders have created a curriculum that offers a wide range of subjects for pupils to study. However, most time is spent on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. These lessons are well planned to ensure that pupils know more and develop good skills in each subject. Here, pupils achieve outcomes that are above national averages. Some subjects, such as history, geography, modern foreign languages (MFL), art, music and religious education (RE), are taught as part of a topic curriculum. In these subjects pupils do not have enough opportunities to embed the subject-specific learning over time. Some teachers lack the subject knowledge and skills to teach these subjects effectively.

Pupils achieve very well when subjects have sufficient curriculum time and plans are well-sequenced. This is the case in English, mathematics, science and phonics. Teachers plan interesting lessons. Lesson plans set out clearly what pupils should learn over time. Pupils remember their learning and apply this in later work.

Leaders have prioritised reading. Pupils have daily story time and enjoy reading. Pupils choose from texts that are well matched to their reading ability. The plans for the teaching of reading are sequenced to focus on developing pupils' phonics abilities. Most staff spot pupils who may need extra help. Interventions are swift and ensure that pupils catch up quickly.

Some lessons do not take enough account of what pupils can already do. The most-able pupils do not regularly receive work that stretches their thinking well enough. When this happens, these pupils do not achieve as well as they are able to.

Pupils behave very well. Lessons are free from disruptions. Break and lunchtimes are calm and orderly. Strong relationships between pupils and adults are evident throughout the school. Pupils, parents and teachers agree that pupils' behaviour is good.

The leadership of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) lacks precision. Procedures and strategies to support pupils with SEND are not defined clearly enough. In most lessons, pupils with SEND receive strong support and they do very well. However, this is not consistent.

Reception children settle well in school. They are happy and have very positive relationships with adults. Children enjoy learning and playing in classrooms and in the outside spaces. They learn about the link between letters and sounds as soon as they start school. Staff help children to have the skills they need to begin early reading. Children are curious and enjoy their language-rich environment. Staff regularly check on children's progress. They quickly spot children who need extra help and support them to catch up. Children achieve well by the end of Reception Year.

Pupils' personal development is promoted well. The curriculum provides pupils with varied learning opportunities in and outside of the classroom. Pupils told us that specific lessons help them to learn about themselves and others. Some pupils would benefit from a greater understanding of different faiths and cultures. This is because the RE curriculum is not ensuring that pupils retain what they learn.

Leadership at the school lacks capacity. This is because there is not a substantive headteacher at the school. Two leaders have taken on the running of the school in the interim period. However, these leaders have not had sufficient training and support from the governing body or the local authority to fulfil this role effectively.

The governing body lacks training and expertise to be effective in its duties. The local authority has not acted swiftly enough to address the issues at the school. Consequently, standards at the school have declined. While most staff are supportive of leaders, they are concerned about the lack of strategic leadership at the school. Parents have also voiced their concerns about the current management situation.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

All staff understand and use the systems in place to raise a concern about a pupil. However, leaders do not act quickly or effectively enough to ensure that these concerns are followed up. Referrals to outside agencies have not been timely. As a result, some pupils have been left at risk of harm.

Leaders have not ensured that the checks they make about new employees are recorded in sufficient detail. Leaders addressed these issues during the inspection.

There is a lack of clear oversight and leadership of this aspect of the school's work. This results in an ineffective safeguarding culture.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The safeguarding culture at the school is not effective. Leaders and governors need to ensure that systems and procedures in place keep all pupils safe. Leaders need to make sure that they refer any concerns they have about a pupil in a swift manner to the appropriate outside agencies and keep accurate records of any actions they take.
- The school's curriculum and timetable focus heavily on core subjects. Leaders need to make sure that foundation subjects, including MFL, art, music and history, are well planned and sequenced so that pupils gain the knowledge, skills and understanding to embed their learning over time.
- In some lessons, pupils with SEND do not routinely receive the support they need. This is because there is a lack of leadership of this aspect of the school's work at a strategic level. Leaders need to ensure that a skilled member of staff takes oversight of this aspect. Also, leaders must ensure that all staff receive the appropriate training to effectively support pupils with SEND in their lessons so that these pupils learn well.
- Some teachers do not routinely provide the most-able pupils with work that stretches pupils' thinking and deepens their learning further. Leaders need to make sure that all teachers receive the training needed to challenge high-achieving pupils effectively so that they make the progress they are capable of.
- The school lacks strategic leadership and leadership capacity. Many staff have taken on extra responsibilities during this difficult time. They have not had the training or support to fulfil these duties effectively. Governors and the local authority need make sure that the school's leadership is strengthened so that issues at the school are addressed and that there is sufficient capacity to bring about the necessary improvements.

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	103947
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10058498
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	330
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Andrea Walters
Headteacher	Position vacant at the time of the inspection
Website	www.lightwoods.sandwell.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- At the time of the inspection there was no substantive headteacher. Two assistant headteachers have taken on the daily running of the school for the last 18 months.
- Lightwoods Primary School operates from two different sites which are approximately one mile apart from each other. One site is for key stage 2 pupils, the other includes Reception and key stage 1.
- There are no pupils at alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- We met with senior leaders, a range of subject coordinators and teachers. We met with two members of the governing body, including the chair, and a member of the local authority.
- We scrutinised the school’s safeguarding arrangements and documentation, including the single central record. We met with the designated safeguarding lead and deputy. We scrutinised files and safeguarding records. We spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- We visited the school’s early years provision.
- We visited both school sites.
- We completed various inspection activities to gather evidence about the quality of education. There was a focus on reading; mathematics; history; science; and personal, social, and health education (PSHE). This included lesson visits, looking at pupils’ work and discussions with teachers and with pupils about their learning. Other subjects were also considered as part of the inspection.
- We observed pupils’ behaviour during lessons and at break and lunchtimes. We gathered pupils’ views about their school.
- We listened to pupils read.
- We considered 44 parent responses to Ofsted’s Parent View questionnaire as well as 42 free-text responses. We considered 19 written responses from staff.

Inspection team

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