

Inspection of a good school: The Priory Primary School

Dorsett Road, Friar Park, Wednesbury, West Midlands WS10 0JG

Inspection dates:

9 and 10 November 2021

Outcome

The Priory Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They are happy to be here and feel very safe. This is because they know that all staff care about them and want the very best for them. Pupils understand and accept others' differences. They say, 'We're like an all-inclusive buffet. We have all different types of children and our school cares for us all.'

Pupils say that bullying does not happen. This is because staff do not tolerate it. It is also because pupils know that it is wrong. The wider curriculum teaches pupils about a range of different values, such as tolerance. Pupils live these values every day and there is a culture of kindness.

All staff have high expectations of every pupil. Pupils live up to these expectations. They listen to staff and are actively engaged in their learning. This is because lessons are interesting, and staff are enthusiastic and clear about what the pupils need to do.

Pupils enjoy their learning and the wide range of other opportunities the school provides. Pupils take part in a range of sports, and all have the chance to learn a musical instrument. They are very proud of their success in public speaking competitions.

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

Leaders, staff and governors have high expectations for all pupils. The well-delivered broad and ambitious curriculum promotes these expectations. It has a clear focus on developing pupils personally as well as academically. Leaders provide extensive opportunities for pupils to develop their interests and talents.

When children enter Nursery, they learn how to communicate, play and socialise. This gives them a good start to their learning, and they are happy and settled. In Reception, children make a quick start to learning to read, write and count. They use the letter sounds they know to read and write simple words and can explore number bonds within five. The early years curriculum plans are detailed in most areas.

Reading has a high priority. Staff are well trained in phonics and early reading. They use assessment well to identify when children are starting to fall behind. They identify any gaps in pupils' learning and quickly help them to catch up. Pupils, including those who struggle to read, are developing the skills to read fluently and confidently. Older pupils benefit from exploring challenging texts. Teachers model clearly how to analyse texts to answer questions. As a result, pupils' understanding of what they read continues to improve. Pupils develop a love of reading from the time they start at the school. The timetable ensures that all pupils have time to enjoy reading daily. Pupils talk eagerly about the texts they share in their classes. They look forward to the sessions where guest readers, including the headteacher, read to them.

In mathematics, planning identifies all the mathematical facts, methods and strategies that pupils need to learn. Teachers have the necessary knowledge and expertise to deliver the curriculum effectively and to support pupils. In lessons, teachers check pupils' understanding immediately. They identify where learning is less secure and address misconceptions.

Leaders have provided teachers with training and support to help them plan other curriculum areas. In some subjects, they work with specialists or national associations to support their work. In history, this has helped to ensure that the curriculum builds pupils' growing knowledge and understanding of concepts such as invasion, empire and monarchy. In music, this has ensured pupils are able to play a wide range of instruments with confidence. The revised curriculum in some subjects has not been in place for as long, so pupils' knowledge and understanding in some subjects is less secure.

Leaders and all staff are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They carefully adapt the delivery of the curriculum so that it meets these pupils' needs. As a result, pupils with SEND learn the curriculum well.

Leaders plan a range of experiences to develop the whole child, and which take pupils beyond their immediate community. Pupils have travelled on a train to London to see the Houses of Parliament. They remember with delight their visit to Mary Arden's Tudor farm and to the pantomime. Pupils take part in public speaking events and have won local competitions. These experiences enhance their learning.

All staff say that leaders consider staff workload. Governors work with leaders to provide the support and challenge needed to develop the school. They understand the strengths of the school but are also clear about the actions required to improve the school further.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, staff and governors know how to keep pupils safe. Leaders make checks on all staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. All staff have received a range of safeguarding training to make sure they can identify any concerns. There are effective systems in place for staff to raise a concern. Leaders take swift action when staff do raise

concerns. They follow up concerns with outside agencies if they feel that pupils are not getting the support they need.

The curriculum teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all areas of the curriculum are as well established as others. This means that pupils do not have the same depth of knowledge in all areas. Leaders should make sure that any essential knowledge that may have been missed previously is caught up.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2016.

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.

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	131212
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10200078
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	413
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Diane Holden
Headteacher	Phillip Butcher
Website	www.theprioryprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 and 21 September 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance and previous Ofsted inspections.
- Inspectors held meetings with the: headteacher; senior assistant headteacher; assistant headteachers; special educational needs coordinator; designated safeguarding lead (DSL); subject leaders; governors, including the chair of the governing body; and spoke to the school improvement partner.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors looked at curriculum plans and discussed subjects and other activities with staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, who is the DSL. Pupils' case files were reviewed. The single central record of the checks on staff's suitability to work with children was scrutinised.
- Inspectors met with staff, including early career teachers, experienced teachers, and support staff, to discuss their workload and the support they receive to carry out their roles.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about how safe they feel in school and how they learn to keep themselves safe.
- Inspectors visited the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, to the pupils' survey and the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Helen Forrest, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Stephanie Moran

Her Majesty's Inspector

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