

Inspection of a good school: Walsall Wood School

Brownhills Road, Brownhills, Walsall, West Midlands WS8 7BP

Inspection dates:

9 and 10 November 2021

Outcome

Walsall Wood School continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a section 5 inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a section 5 inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is a caring and nurturing community. Pupils arrive smartly at school and are proud to wear their uniform. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond by behaving extremely well. Leaders have very high expectations of pupils and want them to achieve the best that they can. In lessons, pupils listen attentively and support one another. Pupils of all ages love to share what they know.

Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe. Pupils say that bullying is rare, but when it does occur, it is dealt with 'fairly' by adults in the school. Pupils understand the importance of tolerance and respect and can debate issues sensitively.

Pupils enjoy the wealth of activities that are available at breaktimes. Pupils take part in clubs, including handbells, choir and multi-sports clubs. During the inspection, their musical understanding was being enhanced through a drumming workshop delivered by a drummer from the rock band Status Quo.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They appreciate the school's nurturing and inclusive approach, which enables their child to be successful.

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

Leaders and governors are ambitious for all pupils. They want them to develop into well-rounded individuals. Pupils achieve exceptionally well. Year 6 pupils are well prepared for their learning in secondary school.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have developed the curriculum in all subjects. This work has been detailed and thorough. The plans for these subjects help teachers devise

lessons that build on what pupils have learned before. Teachers adapt teaching effectively to ensure that all pupils achieve well in their learning.

Children in Reception quickly become confident readers. A systematic approach to the teaching of phonics and early reading is in place. Leaders have carefully considered the books and resources they use to engage pupils in reading. Colourful murals on every classroom's wall focus on an author. Pupils get to know these authors and their books inside out alongside other high-quality texts. Reading is positively promoted throughout the school and, as a result, pupils develop a real love of reading. Most pupils enter key stage 2 able to read well.

Pupils are fluent and confident mathematicians. Pupils can confidently recall key facts and methods. This is because curriculum plans identify opportunities for pupils to practise and perform what they have learned. Pupils understand how previous learning helps them with their current work. Teachers regularly check what pupils know and can remember and promptly address gaps in understanding. In key stage 2, pupils are secure in their times-table knowledge and can talk through the methods they are using in their calculations. In the early years, careful thought has been given to how learning will support pupils in key stage 1. In Year 6, pupils study managing money. This helps prepare them well for their future.

In other subjects, careful thought is given to how learning builds on the excellent work taking place in the early years. For example, when teaching chronology in history, pupils build on what they learned in the early years. Pupils place events on a timeline confidently, and they understand, for instance, features of the Bronze age.

The school's curriculum is embedded consistently and securely across the school. Teachers share a common understanding of what is intended to be achieved through the curriculum. They deliver their curriculum plans with a high level of expertise, ensuring that pupils attain the highest possible standards. However, leaders have not yet had the chance to monitor all subjects to ascertain where further changes may need to be made.

Leaders work well with external agencies, including speech and language therapists, to ensure they meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders adapt teaching and provide resources which enable pupils with SEND to access the same learning as their peers. Pupils with SEND achieve exceptionally well.

Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils know about different faiths and cultures. Pupils learn about fundamental British values, including democracy. They understand the importance of individuals' right to vote. They enjoy taking on responsibilities, such as playground buddies.

Leaders and governors work well together. They take account of staff's workload and the well-being of staff and pupils. Staff say they feel valued.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that appropriate systems are in place to make sure that adults working in school are suitable to work with pupils. Staff are vigilant about the potential risks that pupils may face. Staff receive appropriate safeguarding training. They know what actions to take if they have concerns about a pupil's safety. Leaders work closely with external agencies to make sure pupils get the help they need. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They understand the school's safeguarding motto of 'speak up, stay safe'.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are in the process of monitoring all curriculum subjects. They are refining curriculum planning and the use of assessment. Leaders should ensure that the recent changes they have made continue to be evaluated.

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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2012.

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	104201
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	10200312
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	242
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Esther Martin
Headteacher	Jenny Garratt
Website	www.walsallwoodschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 November 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator, the reading, mathematics and history leaders and class teachers. The inspector met with three governors.
- Deep dives were carried out into reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors looked at curriculum planning and spoke to leaders about their subjects. The inspector conducted joint lesson visits with leaders, spoke to pupils about their work and wider school experiences and looked at a range of pupils' work.
- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of safeguarding information, including the school's policy, spoke to staff and pupils about safeguarding and looked at how pupils

learn to keep themselves safe. The inspector spoke to the safeguarding leader about recording and reporting of any safeguarding incidents.

- The inspector also checked the school's website.

Inspection team

Heather Phillips, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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