

Inspection of Holyhead Primary Academy

Holyhead Road, Wednesbury, West Midlands WS10 7PZ

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 January 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very happy to come to Holyhead Primary Academy. It is a thriving and inclusive community where everyone is important. Pupils have strong relationships with adults and each other. This helps them to feel safe in school. Pupils say that bullying is rare. Staff deal with it straight away if it does happen.

Pupils behave well in lessons. They concentrate on their work and listen attentively to staff. When working together in groups, they discuss their learning in a sensible way. Pupils also behave well on the playground, and as they move around the building. There is a positive and friendly atmosphere throughout the school.

The curriculum is exciting. It explores themes and uses technology in a way that really engages pupils. It also helps pupils to know and remember what they have learned. Pupils say, 'We enjoy learning something new every day.'

Pupils are proud of their school, and the variety of opportunities to be active in their school and the local community. Pupils were keen to show inspectors their edible garden where they grow food to eat and cook with. They also spoke enthusiastically about the links with their neighbours in the care home next door.

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

Leaders at all levels, including the trust and governors, are ambitious for all pupils. Personal development is at the heart of everything leaders do to develop pupils' full potential. Their core values, 'Excite, Explore, Excel', are well on the way to being realised through the broad and engaging curriculum.

Reading is a high priority in school. Leaders want pupils to learn to read and love to read. All staff have received training to give them the expert knowledge they need to teach phonics and early reading well. Plans identify the sounds children should know term by term. They also make clear the additional words that pupils should know to support their ability to read fluently. All pupils practise reading, both in lessons and when reading to an adult from their reading book. Some of the pupils who find reading more difficult, do not remember all of the additional words they have learned. Also, the books pupils read do not match consistently to the letter sounds pupils know. This means that a small number of pupils do not read fluently enough. Pupils have daily sessions where they escape in a story to develop the love of reading. Pupils, including those in early years, thoroughly enjoy these sessions. The range of stories and poems they listen to helps to widen their understanding of vocabulary.

In mathematics, plans clearly sequence learning so that pupils' knowledge builds over time. Staff demonstrate good subject knowledge and give clear explanations in lessons. They ask questions to check pupils' learning and identify when pupils do not understand. Pupils can explain what they are learning now and how previous learning helps their understanding.

The other curriculum areas are well planned. They identify the knowledge and skills that pupils will learn. The plans sequence learning from early years through to Year 6 in many subjects so that learning builds over time. This helps pupils know and remember what is important. In some areas of the early years curriculum, such as understanding of the world, the specific knowledge that pupils need to know and remember is not identified as clearly.

Leaders are ambitious for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They identify gaps in pupils' knowledge using well-chosen assessments. Effective strategies help the delivery of the curriculum. Staff also provide additional support to meet pupils' needs. As a result, pupils learn the curriculum well.

Pupils' personal development is exemplary. This is central to the curriculum and the wider opportunities the school offers. Carefully planned experiences combine with the taught curriculum and the assembly programme. Leaders work with a range of expert external partners to develop pupils' talents and interests to offer enrichment activities, for example drama with the Birmingham Hippodrome theatre and gymnastics with a specialist coach. Pupils also benefit greatly from the wide range of responsibilities they take on, such as the junior leadership team and the art ambassadors. Leaders monitor pupils' participation in the many clubs on offer. They make adjustments to ensure that all pupils can take part.

Parents are highly positive about leaders and staff. They value the help and support they receive from the school. Staff feel very well supported by the trust and leaders. They are assured that leaders consider their well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff have regular safeguarding training. This helps them to identify anything that is a concern. All staff know how to use the systems in place to report any issues. Leaders act swiftly when this happens. They work with outside agencies to ensure that pupils and their families get the support they need. They take whatever action is necessary to keep pupils safe.

The curriculum teaches pupils about keeping themselves safe online and in the community. Pupils know about healthy relationships, and who to tell if there is something worrying them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all of the books pupils read match closely enough to their phonics knowledge. In addition, some pupils do not recognise the common exception words they have

been taught. As a result, some pupils struggle to read fluently and confidently. Leaders must ensure that all books closely match pupils' phonics knowledge, and all pupils are secure in using the common exception words.

- Understanding of the world and expressive art and design within early years do not clearly identify the specific knowledge that children will learn. This risks hindering children's development in these areas. Leaders must ensure these areas of the curriculum identify clearly the specific knowledge that children will learn.

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	144630
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10212197
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	215
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sir Mark Grundy
Principal	Matthew Wynne
Website	www.holyheadprimary.academy
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school operates its own before- and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

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

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.

- The lead inspector reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, assistant headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, the chair of the governing body and representatives of the trust.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, music and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, spoke to teachers, visited lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors looked at curriculum plans and discussed other subjects, including geography, with staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher, who is the designated safeguarding lead, and the pastoral welfare manager, who is the deputy safeguarding lead. 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 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 spoke to parents.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, the pupil questionnaire and the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Helen Forrest, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Susan Hughes

Ofsted Inspector

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