

Inspection of Delves Junior School

Bell Lane, Delves, Walsall, West Midlands WS5 4PU

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 January 2022

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Delves Junior School is a rapidly improving school where leaders have high aspirations for all pupils. The school's motto 'to dream, believe and achieve' drives leaders' work. Pupils are happy and safe. They are well cared for and want to come to school. Bullying is not tolerated at the school. Leaders act swiftly and effectively to resolve any concerns.

Pupils are well supported to be confident, resilient learners. Leaders have carefully designed the curriculum so that pupils achieve well academically and personally. Pupils know that being respectful means being kind and listening when others are speaking. Pupils gain wider experiences and develop their talents through a range of enrichment activities, such as after-school clubs and the 'Delves Offer'.

Leaders have created a highly positive culture where pupils take ownership of their behaviour. Everyone is encouraged to care for and help each other. In classrooms, pupils are highly motivated and focused on their learning. They share ideas sensibly with their peers and show resilience when solving problems. Play leaders and well-being champions help pupils to play well together during social times. One parent said her children 'feel safe, well cared for and most of all included', which was typical of many parents' and carers' comments.

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

Leaders have planned an ambitious curriculum for pupils. They ensure that teachers have excellent subject knowledge. Pupils are taught the vocabulary needed to deepen learning. Teachers check pupils' learning often. Pupils who struggle or need harder work receive the right support. As a result, teaching is highly effective and pupils achieve very well.

Leaders prioritise reading. The reading curriculum is carefully planned. Pupils enjoy reading. They are taught to read well in school. Pupils who need to catch up in their reading receive effective support from adults. Leaders are revising the range of books used to teach reading so that they closely match the sounds pupils are learning in an age-appropriate way.

In most subjects, the curriculum is carefully sequenced so that pupils build up knowledge over time. Subject leaders check on pupils' learning. In subjects including mathematics, history and geography, teachers have high expectations of what pupils should achieve. They plan next steps carefully to meet pupils' needs, based on what pupils know and can do already. Pupils enjoy mathematics. They enjoy finding out about people and places in history and geography lessons. The development of the curriculum in some subjects, such as computing and Spanish, has been delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders are not as far ahead with this work as they would have liked. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils are effectively supported to access the same curriculum as

other pupils in school. They achieve well. Parents are positive about the care and support their children receive.

Provision for pupils' personal development is a real strength of the school. However, some of this work has been hampered due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As restrictions have eased, leaders have prioritised support for pupils' mental health and well-being. Activities such as visits to the theatre and after-school sports clubs have been reinstated. Pupils recently enjoyed a theatre visit to see the pantomime 'Cinderella'. They talked excitedly about the forest school and football club. Pupils develop a range of life skills, such as empathy and teamwork. They recognise and respect others' differences. The curriculum prepares pupils well for the next stage in their education. Pupils are encouraged to dream about their future careers; they have high aspirations. Leaders engage with businesses, the local football club and the local university to enhance the opportunities they offer to pupils. Strong pastoral support means that pupils and families get timely and effective help and support.

Governors know the school well. They are committed to the school and its pupils. Leaders are highly effective in supporting staff to manage their workload well. Any issues are identified and dealt with swiftly and appropriately. Staff appreciate the recent changes to assessment that have significantly reduced their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff know what to do if they have concerns about a pupil. They are aware of specific areas of concern, such as protecting pupils from criminal exploitation, neglect and sexual harassment. Leaders seek the right support for vulnerable pupils, including support from external agencies.

Leaders make sure that appropriate pre-employment checks on staff are undertaken before they are appointed. Pupils learn about safety in the home and the local community. They also learn about how to maintain healthy relationships and keep safe when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have recently introduced a revised curriculum structure in Spanish and computing. They now need to evaluate the impact that these curriculum changes are having on what pupils learn. Leaders should support subject leaders to evaluate the impact of curriculum implementation on what pupils know and remember.
- For a few pupils who have fallen behind in their reading, books do not match closely enough to the sounds they are learning. This hampers their progress in catching up quickly. Leaders should ensure that books are well matched to the sounds pupils are learning. They should monitor the impact of this work closely, so that these pupils

quickly gain the knowledge and skills that they need to become confident, fluent readers.

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	104170
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	10211756
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	364
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Girish Mistry
Executive Headteacher	Amanda Arnold
Website	www.delvesjunior.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 and 21 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in geography, history, mathematics, reading and Spanish. This included visiting lessons, looking at pupils' work, examining curriculum documents and talking with pupils and staff. They also looked at work from a sample of other subjects. Inspectors considered information on the school's website.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding arrangements. This included examining the record of pre-employment checks on school staff.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class and at other times during the day.

- During the inspection, inspectors had formal meetings with the executive headteacher, head of school, assistant headteacher, subject leaders, the SEND coordinator, the designated safeguarding lead, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, the pupil survey and the staff survey.

Inspection team

Lorraine Lord, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Karen O’Keefe	Ofsted Inspector
Lindsay Nash	Ofsted Inspector

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