

Inspection of Dudley Wood Primary School

Dudley Wood Road, Dudley, West Midlands DY2 0DB

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Inadequate

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this school and feel safe. This is because they have positive relationships with staff and each other. They say that the best thing about school is the teachers and 'how much people care'.

Pupils listen attentively in lessons and work well together in groups. However, the quality of education is inconsistent. In some subjects, pupils do not learn as well as they could. Sometimes, the work they do is too easy for them and does not make them think deeply enough. Pupils who find reading more difficult do not always get the right support they need to catch up quickly. In early years, children are not given activities that help them build on their learning from one day to the next.

Pupils behave well in the classroom and on the playground. Pupils are proud of being respectful and having 'good manners'. Bullying does sometimes happen, but staff act immediately to sort out any problems.

Pupils learn a wide range of subjects. They particularly like music lessons, where they learn to play different instruments. Pupils have now returned to swimming lessons. They also enjoy other activities, such as choir and tag rugby.

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

Leaders, including governors, want the very best for all the pupils in their care. However, the school has experienced a turbulent time during the past few years, including, but not solely, related to the pandemic. Until recently, the school has not been well supported by the trust. This has made it difficult for leaders to make the improvements necessary to provide a good quality of education.

The school is now approaching a more stable period. Leaders have worked hard to begin a much-needed overhaul of many areas of the curriculum. They have focused on subjects such as music and art. In these subject areas, staff have had training to improve their subject knowledge. This has helped them to plan lessons appropriately so that pupils learn and remember the right things. For example, in music, Year 1 pupils use vocabulary such as 'dynamics' and 'baroque'. However, in other areas, including mathematics and early years, leaders have not identified the key knowledge that pupils need to learn and by when they need to learn it. Neither curriculum leaders nor staff have had the training they need. As a result, staff do not always know what to emphasise in their teaching and pupils do not know and remember what they need to.

Staff's subject knowledge in phonics varies and there is a lack of consistency in teaching early reading. Consequently, some pupils fall behind and cannot read fluently or confidently. These pupils do receive extra support, but it is not always effective in helping them to catch up. The teaching of reading throughout key stage 2 is more consistent. Pupils develop their understanding of a wide range of vocabulary and other key skills. However, some pupils across key stage 2 are still at

the early stages of reading. These pupils do not receive a sufficiently structured approach to intervention and support.

The quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) also varies. For some pupils, effective support and a carefully planned curriculum help them to make good progress. For example, children with social, emotional and mental health needs in Year 4 benefit from well-focused intervention and adaptations. This ensures that they access and learn the curriculum. Others do not learn as well as they should. This is because assessments of what pupils can do are not used well enough to plan the next steps. Some pupils struggle because tasks are too difficult for them, while others are given work that is too easy.

Pupils' attendance at school is improving. Leaders work closely with families and are vigilant in tracking attendance. They make their expectations clear, and support pupils in returning to school when they have been absent. Pupils behave well in school. Bullying is not tolerated, and pupils know this. There is no disruption to learning due to poor behaviour choices.

Pupils enjoy a range of opportunities to broaden their experiences. For example, there is an active eco-committee that has organised a whole-school tree-planting event to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee. Some pupils play in a cornet 'super group', and others take part in an increasing range of competitive sports. Pupils also talk enthusiastically about forest school and opportunities to raise money for charity.

Governors know the school well. They have worked hard to ensure that leaders are now getting the support and financial resources they need to make the necessary improvements.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make checks on all staff working with children to make sure that they are suitable to do so. They also deliver training to all staff to help them to identify anything of concern. Staff know what to do if they are worried about a child and to whom to report this. Leaders follow up any issues and make sure that families get the right help and support to keep pupils safe.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe while in the community and when online. They know whom to talk to if something worries them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The teaching of phonics is inconsistent. Not all staff have the subject knowledge they need to teach early reading effectively. Additional support to help pupils catch up is not strategically planned. This means that some pupils do not read

fluently or confidently enough for their age. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the necessary subject knowledge to teach phonics effectively. Leaders should also make sure that a consistent approach for both teaching phonics and catching up is established.

- Leaders in some curriculum areas, including early years and mathematics, have not identified the knowledge they want pupils to know and remember. As a result, pupils do not always remember the most important parts of the intended curriculum. Leaders should ensure that all staff know what to emphasise so that pupils know and remember more.
- Some pupils with SEND do not receive a good quality of education. For some, the work set is too easy and for others it is too difficult. This means that some pupils with SEND do not progress well through the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that all staff provide an appropriate level of challenge and support for pupils with SEND so that they achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Until recently, professional development has not always focused on the right things. As a result, staff's subject knowledge in some key areas of the curriculum is weak. Leaders need to make sure that all staff have the training they need to improve their subject knowledge and deliver the intended curriculum well.

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	144078
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10212330
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	429
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Pam Garrington
Headteacher	Sarah Guest
Website	www.dudley-wood.dudley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is currently part of the Learning Link Multi-Academy Trust, which has been given a financial notice to improve by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspectors deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

This was the first routine inspection the school had 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.

- 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, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, governors (including the chair of the governing body) and representatives of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and music. 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 spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects and looked at pupils' work, including in geography, history and art, with leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher, who is the designated safeguarding lead, and the assistant headteacher. 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 and carers. They considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, and those to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupils' survey.

Inspection team

Helen Forrest, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rachel Henrick	Her Majesty's Inspector
Mel Davies	Ofsted Inspector
Mary Maybank	Ofsted Inspector

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