

Inspection of Old Hill Primary School

Lawrence Lane, Cradley Heath, West Midlands B64 6DR

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 April 2022 and 25 May 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Old Hill Primary School. Leaders have fostered a happy and positive environment where pupils feel safe. Adults know pupils very well and care about them. There is a strong sense of community. Staff, pupils and parents and carers are proud of the school.

Pupils are polite and respectful towards each other and towards adults. They welcome visitors to the school and are keen to talk about their experiences and memories. They reflect the school's values and happily take on additional roles and responsibilities, such as those of librarians, shed monitors and school councillors. Pupils grow in confidence and independence as a result of these opportunities.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They enjoy positive friendship groups and they look after each other. Bullying is rare. Staff step in quickly to sort things out when necessary. This makes the school a happy place to work and learn.

Leaders pay attention to ensuring that pupils achieve their potential. Pupils enjoy studying a range of subjects and make good progress in learning the curriculum. They are well prepared for the next phase of their education by the time they leave the school.

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

Leaders have worked hard to develop the school's curriculum. They have designed a curriculum that builds pupils' knowledge logically over time. Teachers often recap on key information. This helps pupils to remember important prior knowledge. Pupils then expand their knowledge by learning more advanced concepts. For example, in science, pupils learn about forces such as pushes and pulls. Once they understand these basic concepts, they go on to learn more complex content, such as how magnets repel or attract each other.

Leaders prioritise developing staff's subject expertise. They provide resources and training to help teachers understand what they need to teach and when. This training has boosted teachers' confidence and knowledge of how to teach the curriculum well. However, there is still some variation in staff expertise. Sometimes, adults do not select appropriate tasks or resources that help pupils learn well. This hinders some pupils in making the progress that leaders expect.

Leaders have prioritised developing and improving pupils' reading skills. They have recently introduced a new approach to teaching phonics. Some staff are still developing their expertise in delivering this new approach. Children learn phonics as soon as they join the school, and most pupils can read fluently by the end of Year 2. Staff identify any pupils who need extra help and put extra support in place. This means that almost all pupils are able readers by the time they leave the school.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Leaders ensure that pupils' needs are identified early. They work closely with parents and external agencies to ensure that these needs are met. Staff use a range of resources and strategies to support pupils' learning. As a result, pupils with SEND learn a broad range of subjects and make good progress through the curriculum.

Children in early years have a calm and focused start to their school life. Adults know and engage with children very well. Leaders think carefully about the topics being covered and ensure that these topics are purposefully linked with all areas of the early years curriculum. Children remember what they have learned and are eager to talk about their new knowledge. For example, they enthusiastically describe how caterpillars grow and change over time.

Pupils display positive attitudes towards their education. They listen carefully and work hard in lessons. However, too many pupils do not attend school regularly enough. Leaders challenge poor attendance, and work with families to provide needed support, but there is still more work to do.

The school's personal, social, health and economic education curriculum teaches pupils about the importance of tolerance of, and respect for others. Pupils learn about significant historical figures, such as Nelson Mandela and Mary Seacole. Leaders plan many opportunities for pupils to celebrate difference and diversity. This help prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

Governors care about the school. They have clear roles and responsibilities and maintain oversight of their statutory duties. However, the level of scrutiny they provide has been negatively impacted by the pandemic. For example, they have not focused as fully on how well pupils know and remember the curriculum in a range of subjects.

Staff feel well supported by leaders. They appreciate efforts that leaders have made to reduce their workload and appreciate leaders' work to promote well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has clear procedures in place to safeguard pupils. Leaders ensure that all adults understand their role in keeping pupils safe. Staff receive regular training and safeguarding updates. Adults know what to do when they have concerns about children. Leaders respond quickly to such concerns and take appropriate action to help pupils. This includes working with external agencies when necessary.

Pupils learn about keeping themselves safe. They learn about the features of positive and negative relationships and know whom to speak to when they have worries. Pupils say that they feel safe in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is variation in staff's subject knowledge. Teachers are not as expert in some subjects as they might be. Leaders should ensure that staff know how to teach all subjects well.
- Governors' work has been disrupted by the pandemic. They have not focused fully on the impact of leaders' action to address key strategic priorities. Governors should ensure that they are more robust in their scrutiny of leaders' actions to improve the quality of provision.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This limits their learning. Leaders should continue to work with families to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly.

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	103952
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10211990
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Pauline Riley
Headteacher	Sally Fenby
Website	www.oldhillprimaryschool.com
Date of previous inspection	22 January 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a before- and after-school club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school does not make use of 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 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.
- Inspectors initially inspected the school on 5 and 6 April 2022. On 25 May 2022, two of Her Majesty's Inspectors returned to the school to gather further evidence. The evidence gathered from all three days was used to inform the final judgements.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders.

- Inspectors held meetings with the chair and representatives of the governing body. They also spoke to representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, around the school and at lunchtime. They spoke to pupils about their opinions of behaviour at the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with safeguarding leads. Further discussions took place with pupils, staff and governors to check the school's arrangements for safeguarding. Inspectors also reviewed safeguarding records and checked the school's single central record.
- Inspectors considered responses on Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text responses. They also took account of responses to the staff and pupil surveys.
- Inspectors visited the before-school provision and spoke to pupils who attend it.

Inspection team

Jonathan Leonard, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kirsty Foulkes	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rachel Henrick	Her Majesty's Inspector
Heather Simpson	Her Majesty's Inspector

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