

Inspection of a good school: Foley Park Primary Academy

Northumberland Avenue, Kidderminster, Worcestershire DY11 7AW

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 July 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a strong sense of community at Foley Park. Pupils enjoy coming to school and look forward to their lessons. The school's motto of 'be the best you can be' is emphasised continually through school assemblies and in the high expectations staff have of pupils.

Pupils generally behave well. They listen carefully to their teachers and are keen to participate in learning. At breaktimes and lunchtimes, pupils smile as they play sports and games with their friends. Bullying is rare and pupils have full confidence in staff to deal with any issues or fallings out that occur.

Leaders have made improvements to the reading and mathematics curriculum. This has proved successful. However, in some other subjects, there is more work to do so that pupils can know and remember more over time.

There is an extensive range of extra-curricular clubs for pupils to participate in. Many pupils attend football, netball, cricket and yoga clubs. Children in the early years enjoy taking part in a 'movers and groovers' club.

Parents and carers are extremely positive about the school. As one parent commented in response to Ofsted's survey, 'This is a lovely school where you can tell the teachers genuinely care.'

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

Leaders recognise the importance of all children learning to read quickly and have rightly prioritised this. This year, they have introduced a new phonics programme to improve the teaching of early reading. Leaders have set out clearly the sounds children should know and remember by the end of each term. All staff have received training on the teaching of

phonics. This has ensured there is consistency in the way early reading is taught. Teachers check pupils' progress in phonics regularly. This helps to identify those who may be falling behind. If pupils do start to struggle, staff provide timely support to help them catch up. Pupils enjoy learning to read and their confidence in reading is developing.

In mathematics, leaders have mapped out topics in a logical way. The curriculum builds from the early years, where children use number lines and become familiar with numerical vocabulary. There are consistent routines in every lesson that help teachers to identify misconceptions and gaps in pupils' knowledge. Teachers use resources effectively in order to help bring learning to life. As a result, pupils are confident in what they know and remember in mathematics.

In some subjects, the curriculum operates on a two-year cycle. This means that, in history for example, two year groups will study a similar topic but cover different aspects of knowledge. While leaders have set out what it is that pupils should know, they have not considered how topics are logically sequenced. Consequently, pupils find it difficult to make connections in their learning and build on what they already know.

Some subject leaders are relatively new to their role. They receive support from the trust to help develop their subject expertise. Leaders recognise that, to strengthen the teaching of the wider curriculum, staff need further training to help develop both their subject and teaching knowledge.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Leaders ensure that learning plans are regularly reviewed so that targets are well matched to pupils' needs. Staff receive training on how to support pupils with SEND effectively. Pupils with SEND are well integrated into school life.

Pupils' absence and persistent absence remains high. Leaders work closely with families to try and support attendance, but this is not always successful. Too many pupils are still regularly absent from school.

Leaders have put in place a varied programme for pupils' personal, social and health education. Pupils learn about topics such as mental health, staying safe, respectful relationships and basic first aid. Leaders are keen that pupils have many different wider experiences while being at school. Pupils in key stage 1 have recently been on a trip to Weston-Super-Mare to learn about holidays past and present. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 have enjoyed visits to the Black Country Museum and the Severn Valley Railway. Pupils value the opportunity to extend their learning beyond the classroom.

Most staff say that leaders are mindful of their workload and well-being. However, a few staff expressed concern about the number of new initiatives implemented this year, including changes to the curriculum. Leaders recognise this but are clear about what needs to improve to help the school move forward.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Systems and processes for safeguarding pupils are well managed. Leaders ensure that staff receive annual training along with weekly updates on any emerging concerns. Staff display a good knowledge of key issues, such as county lines. All concerns are recorded on an online system. This is reviewed and monitored by leaders to ensure issues are picked up quickly. Up-to-date logs are kept for referrals to the local authority. These show that leaders act in a timely way to ensure pupils get the help and support they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum is not sequenced well. This means that pupils struggle to make connections in their learning and build on what they already know. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in all subjects is well structured so that pupils know and remember more long term.
- Teachers have not had sufficient training in how to teach foundation subjects. This means that teachers are not as well prepared as they could be to teach new topics and introduce new learning. Leaders should ensure that teachers are given sufficient training to enhance their own curriculum subject knowledge and improve their teaching.
- Too many pupils are absent or persistently absent from school. This potentially hinders their progress and does not establish strong routines for when they leave school. Leaders should take action to ensure that absence and persistent absence reduces.

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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Foley Park Primary School and Nursery, to be good in December 2015.

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	145483
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10227740
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	246
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gurinder Singh Josan
Headteacher	Claire Minns
Website	www.foleyparkprimaryacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the Victoria Academies Trust in February 2018.
- The headteacher was appointed in June 2021.
- The school offers both a breakfast club and wrap around after-school care provision.
- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors focused on the following subjects: reading, mathematics and history. Inspectors examined leaders' plans, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils about the way these subjects are taught.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents. These included information about behaviour, attendance, the school curriculum and improvement planning. The school website was also checked.

- The lead inspector talked to staff and leaders about safeguarding arrangements. He examined how leaders make employment checks on staff and scrutinised safeguarding records. He also asked how incidents reported by pupils are recorded and analysed.
- Inspectors observed informal times of the day to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors held meetings with the chief executive officer, the chair of the board of trustees and academy council, the Director of Schools, headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and pupils. They also talked informally to pupils and staff to gather general information about school life.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and free-text comments. They also considered responses to Ofsted's survey of staff.

Inspection team

Mark Howes, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Amjid Zaman

Ofsted Inspector

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