

Inspection of Woodlands Infant School

Woodlands Lane, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands B90 2PX

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 September 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

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Woodlands Infant School is a very happy place. Pupils, including children in the early years, thrive in this harmonious community. Leaders place the well-being of pupils, staff and parents at the heart of their work.

Staff have high expectations of all pupils. Pupils rise to these. They work hard and achieve well from Nursery to Year 2. Staff encourage the talents of pupils. As a result, pupils flourish to 'be the best me I can be'. Pupils are extremely well mannered. They are eager learners and behave well in lessons. Kindness is celebrated here. Pupils share equipment well at playtimes.

Pupils can explain what bullying is and what it is not. They say it is unkindness that happens several times on purpose. If bullying were to happen, pupils say they would tell an adult who would help them. Pupils feel safe in school.

Pupils know and practise the new 'pocket principles' values of being kind, responsible and ready to learn. They actively take on leadership roles. For example, from Reception, pupils vote for their peers to be well-being champions, eco bees and school councillors. Many pupils are proud to be class monitors who help to lead and organise daily activities.

Parents and carers rate the school very highly. They take pride in being part of the school community.

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

Reading has the highest priority and is a strength in school. Staff have good subject knowledge because of the professional development they have had. Staff focus on all pupils becoming fluent readers. Phonics teaching gets off to a quick start in Nursery and Reception. Leaders and teachers promote a love of reading in partnership with parents. They have established attractive and inviting reading areas around the school. Pupils learn about many different authors. They enjoy taking the class bear home with a book and hot chocolate. Pupils look forward to their 'birthday book' gift. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), rapidly learn to read with fluency.

Leaders have thought about how best to help pupils learn. For example, mathematics lessons begin with mental maths practice, which helps pupils to practise their previous learning. Teachers model new learning well. Staff use resources effectively to allow pupils to practise new skills. In physical education (PE), as with mathematics, staff have been well trained. Teachers regularly check what pupils know and can remember in most subjects. Leaders make sure that all pupils, including those with SEND, have access to ambitious learning experiences.

Learning areas are well organised. Right from the early years, children settle quickly into school. Outdoor learning in early years is inviting. For example, children enjoy playing with wet and dry sand and jumping on the trampoline. Teachers use these opportunities to good effect to develop children's vocabulary. Children learn to handle equipment and tools with care and precision. They confidently use play cameras and hoover in the role play area. Parents commented on the wide range of stimulating learning experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Inspectors agree.

Many curriculum plans are well sequenced. Where this is not yet the case, the early years leader is working in collaboration with subject leaders to ensure smooth transition from early years to key stage 1, in order to deepen pupils' knowledge and skills over time.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They aim high each day to reach 'super gold' on their class chart. From when they start in Nursery, routines help children to feel safe and secure. Relationships with adults are warm and caring. Any disruption to pupils' learning in lessons is rare.

Pupils learn about many different cultures and religions. They celebrate the diversity of cultures in school. Educational visits extend pupils' knowledge of different religions, history and the arts. Pupils enjoy whole-school trips to theatres. These create shared memories and cultural experiences.

Leaders ensure that pupils access a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils attend clubs such as coding and golf. Pupils' talents and interests are developed through the leadership roles they have from the Reception class. Pupils are proud of the kindness shown to others in school and in the community.

Pupils' knowledge about well-being is admirable. They care for their environment. They turn taps off, compost food waste, recycle paper and work with local charities. Pupils enjoy participating in competitions such as a wheelbarrow competition. They garden, pick litter and take tremendous pride in their school.

Governors know and understand their roles. They ensure that the school meets all statutory duties. However, recruiting new governors has been challenging, resulting in a number of vacancies on the governing body. A recent external review of governance is helping the governing body to recruit new governors with the required skills and experience to support and challenge leaders.

Staff agree that their well-being and workload is considered paramount by leaders. Staff are proud to work at Woodlands Infant School.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure safeguarding is prioritised in school. Staff receive regular training and updates about pupil safety, safeguarding and radicalisation.

Staff are aware of risks to pupils' well-being. They are quick to identify when a pupil needs extra support. Staff use the school's online system to record any small changes they note in pupil behaviour. Leaders engage with external agencies where required to support pupils and their families to keep safe.

The school's curriculum teaches pupils how to stay safe in school, in the community and online. Pupils feel safe in school, a view which is shared by parents.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the curriculum does not progress clearly from the early years into key stage 1. Where this happens, the new learning pupils encounter does not build as successfully as it might on what they already know. Leaders should make sure they consider the way in which knowledge builds over time across all subjects and key stages, and adapt their curriculum planning accordingly.
- The governing body has struggled to recruit new governors recently. Having some vacancies on the governing body has meant that governors do not consistently hold leaders to account. The governing body should continue in its effort to recruit new governors to strengthen its ability to support and challenge leaders.

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.

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	104053
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	10241264
Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	193
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Matt Laurent
Headteacher	Tania Wood
Website	www.woodlandsinfantschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 and 31 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Woodlands is smaller than the average-sized infant school.
- A new headteacher and chair of governors have been appointed since the last inspection.
- Leaders provide a before- and after-school club on site.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This is 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.
- During the inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and PE. Inspectors visited lessons, looked at pupils' work,

talked to pupils, talked to staff about the way the subjects were planned and taught, and observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.

- Inspectors looked at school documents, including information about the school curriculum, behaviour, attendance and governors' minutes.
- To check the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the school's policies and procedures. Inspectors met with safeguarding leaders and spoke to pupils and staff.
- Inspectors reviewed information published on the school's website.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around school, in classrooms and at playtime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors reviewed and discussed records of pupils' attendance.
- Inspectors had meetings with the headteacher, the SEND coordinator, subject leaders, governors, teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors visited the before- and after-school clubs and observed clubs taking place beyond the school day.
- The lead inspector spoke with a local authority representative.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors took account of Ofsted Parent View and considered the free-text responses. Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Pamela Matty, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Gail Brindley

Ofsted Inspector

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