

Inspection of Whitehall Junior Community School

Delves Road, Walsall, West Midlands WS1 3JY

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade that can be relied upon	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

At the heart of Whitehall Junior are the values of determination, honesty, respect, passion, teamwork and self-belief. Pupils demonstrate these through their learning and play. Pupils appreciate the care staff show them and feel happy and safe in school. Staff place a high priority on supporting pupils' and families' well-being. They provide a wealth of support to ensure that pupils and families get help when needed.

Leaders and teachers are ambitious for all pupils. They have successfully developed a curriculum to enable pupils to achieve well, especially in reading and mathematics. Pupils are proud of their library and love to read and share books there. The library also provides opportunities for the whole school community to come together.

Leaders are continuing to develop the curriculum to ensure that pupils achieve well in all subjects. The school is very inclusive. The effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) means that they are fully included in school life and make good progress.

Pupils behave well and are eager to learn. Teachers make sure that pupils follow the school rules, but also support pupils who need help to manage their behaviour. Staff protect pupils from bullying and sort out any issues quickly.

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

Leaders identify that many pupils lack basic reading skills when they start at the school, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic began. As a result, leaders have revised how reading is taught, to help pupils catch up and become confident readers. Well-trained staff teach phonics to help pupils learn letter sounds, to enable them to read with more fluency. Whole-class reading sessions focus on developing pupils' comprehension skills. In addition, reading and story time sessions provide pupils with further opportunities to read a wide range of texts. Pupils love visiting the library at breaks and lunchtimes, where there is often a queue. This whole-school focus on improving reading, including pupils' love of reading, has been very successful, and pupils now make good progress in reading.

Leaders have set out clearly what pupils should learn and when in many subjects. Leaders have identified the key knowledge that they want pupils to remember. Teachers use this planning well. They carefully check that pupils can recall the key knowledge through 'revisit, repeat, remember' at the start of lessons. They then reteach the knowledge that pupils cannot remember. This helps pupils to successfully build on what they have learned before and make good progress. For example, in history, pupils are able to use what they learn about ancient Egypt in Year 3 to help them understand and make comparisons to the Mayans in Year 6. However, leaders have not set out the learning or knowledge pupils should remember clearly enough in some subjects. Where this is the case, pupils struggle

to understand what is being taught because they lack previous understanding of key knowledge in the subject.

The SEND leaders work closely with teachers to help them successfully include pupils with SEND in all aspects of school life. SEND leaders also support teachers effectively to identify pupils' difficulties so that the right support can be put in place to help them to learn. Staff receive additional training to help support pupils with more complex needs. The effective provision for pupils with SEND helps them to achieve well.

Pupils benefit from a comprehensive personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. Through this programme, pupils learn about diversity, other faiths and cultures, safe relationships and different communities. Pupils show a mature appreciation of the differences in society and are very respectful of them. However, pupils do not develop links between their PSHE learning and fundamental British values. Pupils do not have a secure enough understanding of the importance of British values, so are not fully prepared for their next steps in education. Pupils enjoy the clubs they can attend, such as archery and football. Whole-school events, such as the Queen's Jubilee street party and the Commonwealth Games themed sports day, help pupils to learn about significant British and world events.

Pupils really enjoy coming to school. They have very positive relationships with staff and want to please them. This means that behaviour around the school and during lessons is calm and purposeful. When some pupils struggle to manage their behaviour, staff support them well to help them return to their learning or play quickly.

Governors have benefited from a range of training and support to enable them to carry out their statutory roles and responsibilities well. They challenge leaders effectively to make sure that their actions are improving the school. They are also very mindful of leaders' and staff's well-being. They support the opportunities for staff to have well-being days. Staff appreciate the support they receive from leaders and governors. They also appreciate the additional training opportunities and support they receive from being part of the Cadmus Federation.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff are fully committed to keeping pupils as safe as possible. They report any concerns about pupils, 'no matter how small', straight away. This means that leaders can immediately spot if a pupil is at risk of harm. Leaders act quickly to get pupils help and support when needed.

Leaders have a deep understanding of challenges and needs within the community. They also make sure that staff understand the community needs too, through comprehensive and regular safeguarding training. Staff teach pupils about the

dangers around them, about how they can protect themselves and about whom to turn to for help.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum planning does not clearly identify and sequence what knowledge pupils need to know and remember from one year to the next in some subjects. Pupils are not able to confidently recall and then build on what they have learned previously as well as they should in these subjects. Leaders should make sure that all curriculum planning carefully identifies and sequences the knowledge pupils need to learn in each year group to enable them to build on their prior learning more successfully.
- Teachers do not ensure that pupils are able to make secure links between their PSHE learning and fundamental British values, including their knowledge of diversity, other faiths and citizenship. Consequently, pupils have a limited understanding of the importance of British values. Leaders should ensure that teachers help pupils to make clear links between their PSHE learning and fundamental British values to fully prepare them for the next stage of their education.

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	104162
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	10257978
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	340
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Colleen Jones
Headteacher	Elizabeth Attwood
Website	www.whitehall-j.walsall.sch.uk/
Dates of previous inspection that can be relied upon	13 and 14 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school joined the Cadmus Federation in January 2022.

Information about this inspection

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

- The inspectors met with representatives from the federation, the governing body, the headteacher and senior leaders from the school.
- This was the first routine inspection to be relied upon that 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.
- Deep dives were conducted in reading, mathematics, computing and design and technology. The inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and

looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke with subject leaders for geography, history, science and art.

- The inspectors took account of parents' comments and responses to Ofsted Parent View. Comments in pupil and staff surveys were also considered.
- The inspectors spoke with leaders and staff about the effectiveness of safeguarding. This included meeting with the designated safeguarding leads to discuss record-keeping, and talking to staff about training and how to record concerns. Inspectors spoke with pupils about how they are taught to stay safe. Inspectors reviewed behaviour and attendance records.

Inspection team

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