

# Inspection of Longwill Primary School for the Deaf

Bell Hill, Northfield, Birmingham, West Midlands B31 1LD

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Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
The quality of education	<b>Outstanding</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

At Longwill, being deaf is a reason to be proud. Pupils thrive, surrounded by belief and pride. Inspirational deaf and hearing staff inspire pupils to believe they can achieve anything and give them the knowledge and skills they need to succeed. Consequently, pupils develop into proud deaf learners ready to take on the world.

Barriers encountered by being deaf are systematically broken down. From day one, all pupils are taught to be confident British Sign Language (BSL) users. Most leave with qualifications in BSL. The way in which leaders identify and meet pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities is exemplary.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in class and around the school. On the rare occasions when behaviour is challenging, caring staff act swiftly. They find out why the behaviour has happened and put the right support in place. Throughout the school, there is a calm, purposeful and safe environment. Some pupils feel bullying never occurs, while others think it happens sometimes. However, they all agree that if it does happen, staff deal with it.

Pupils are taught to understand their rights and feel confident to stand up for themselves. An impressive range of clubs, such as chess, eco-warriors and science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) club develop pupils' own interests and hobbies. Carefully planned trips and residentials promote pupils' confidence, resilience and self-belief.

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

Since the last inspection, inspirational leaders have continued to drive improvements at the school. Leaders and staff, supported by a strong governing body, are rightly proud of their school. Expectations are high for all pupils. Pupils work hard to achieve the ambition that leaders and staff have for them. The commitment to ensuring that every child is proud to be deaf lies at the core of this fantastic school.

Pupils have different types of hearing loss and deafness. In some cases, they have additional needs, such as autism spectrum conditions or medical needs. Highly skilled staff sign in every lesson to make sure that pupils understand their learning and make progress. School staff work alongside specialists, such as speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, and health services, to put the right support in place.

Children get off to a great start in the early years. 'Stay and play' sessions, along with frequent meetings with parents and preschool services, ensure that the provision is produced with families and well planned. High expectations from the start mean no moment is wasted in teaching reading or BSL. Consequently, children quickly learn the skills they need to access different subjects. Caring staff listen to

the views and opinions of all children. Children learn that their voice matters and there are people around them willing to listen.

As many pupils cannot hear or process sounds, leaders and teachers have created their own approach to teaching visual phonics for deaf children, 'Visual Phonics by Hand'. This impressive phonics scheme enables more and more pupils to quickly learn to read. When pupils start in the nursery, they learn the signs for different phonics. Guided reading sessions and whole-class signed reading sessions inspire pupils to develop a love of reading. Staff training is regular, helping all staff to share the commitment that all pupils will become confident readers who love books.

Subject leaders continue to improve and refine their curriculum. They have clearly identified the vital knowledge that all pupils must learn. Lessons are well planned and build precisely on what pupils have learned in the past. Teachers carefully assess how much pupils have learned and remembered from the past. Across all subjects, expectations and ambitions are equally high.

Sequences of lessons help to build pupils' knowledge around key concepts. For example, in history the theme of invasion is covered by looking at civilisations across different centuries. In other subjects, such as relationships, personal, social, health and economic education, lessons build knowledge and the ability to problem-solve and develop independence. In computing, digital literacy knowledge is developed over several years so pupils can use various systems to communicate and engage with the wider world.

All leaders and staff are committed to preparing pupils for the world around them. Deaf studies are a real strength of the school. Staff teach about communication skills, assistive technology, and deaf community and cultural awareness. The school's 'smILE' project provides opportunities for all pupils to practise their skills in the local community. Forest school, nurture groups, and garden festivals are just some of the many opportunities that enrich the pupils' experiences.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have a strong understanding of the specific risks that a deaf child might encounter growing up in their local community. Staff are well trained and know what to do when they have concerns about a child. When these concerns arise, leaders act swiftly to address those concerns. Lessons help the pupils know what to do to keep themselves safe. 'Helping hands' help pupils identify five people to ask for help. This means pupils know what to do if they feel unsafe and feel confident that staff will help them if needed.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	103603
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10212000
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 12
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	60
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Caroline Lane
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Carter
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.longwill.bham.sch.uk">www.longwill.bham.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	28 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school do not use any registered or unregistered alternative provisions.
- The school offers provisions for nursery-aged children as part of the early years classes.

## Information about this inspection

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

- 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.
- During the inspection, inspectors completed deep dives on the following subjects: communication, reading, mathematics, and personal, social, health and economics education. In these subjects, they visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, and talked with pupils and staff about how these subjects were taught. Inspectors also looked at other subjects in less detail to check how they were planned and taught.

- A BSL interpreter accompanied inspectors on some of their visits to lessons and for some discussions with pupils and deaf staff.
- Inspectors asked pupils, staff, leaders and those responsible for governance about safeguarding arrangements. They scrutinised the employment checks on school staff and looked at other school records. They also found out about health and safety procedures and routines.
- Inspectors observed informal times to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors also spoke to a representative from the local authority and a representative of the Birmingham special schools' cooperative trust.
- During the inspection, the inspectors had formal meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject teachers, governors, teachers and pupils. They also talked informally with parents, carers, transport drivers and transport escorts, pupils and staff to gather general information about school life.

### **Inspection team**

Chris Pollitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Andrew Orgill

Ofsted Inspector

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