

Inspection of Brickhouse Primary School

Dudhill Road, Rowley Regis, West Midlands B65 8HS

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 January 2023

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, parents and staff are proud to be a part of this caring and inclusive school. The school community admires the headteacher's passion and pride for Brickhouse Primary. Staff work very well together to make a positive difference for the pupils that attend.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils rise to this challenge. Behaviour is calm and disruption to learning is rare. Relationships between pupils and adults are highly positive and respectful.

Pupils told us that they feel safe and that there are adults to help them. Pupils understand what bullying is and are confident that adults will resolve any issues. An annual 'health and safety week' makes pupils aware of the dangers they may face and teaches them how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Molly-Mae, the school dog, helps pupils and staff overcome fears or anxieties they may have.

Leaders are determined that pupils will enjoy rich experiences throughout their time at the school. The younger children get to experience a 'seaside day' when sand and donkeys come to Brickhouse. All pupils also get to watch a visiting theatre group twice yearly. Older pupils have the chance to attend the Young Voices concert.

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

Leaders have created a clear, ambitious and well-designed curriculum. They have set out the important information that pupils need to remember. In most subjects, leaders have made sure that pupils are learning the right things at the right time. In these subjects, pupils build their knowledge to help them achieve further. However, this is not the same for all subjects. In some, the important knowledge and skills required are not as clearly mapped out. This means that pupils do not build on their learning in order to know more and remember more over time.

Staff receive training across the curriculum, which helps them to have a clear understanding of the subjects they teach. Teachers use assessment well to make appropriate changes to the curriculum. Carefully thought out plans for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) means that teachers are able to support them effectively in class. Older pupils said they like the chance to 'think hard' or use 'one, two, three before me' before they ask for help. This encourages pupils to become independent. In some subjects, pupils do not have enough opportunities to extend their learning, so they do not achieve as much as they could.

Teachers make learning fun, which encourages children to become interested in their learning and work hard from the outset. The younger children use number rhymes and practical resources such as egg boxes to help develop their counting skills. Older pupils value the chance to achieve their handwriting pen for neat

handwriting. However, not all staff have high enough expectations for pupils' presentation, so at times work can be untidy.

Leaders have prioritised reading. They have provided high-quality resources to improve all pupils' reading. Children in Reception Year make an immediate start to learning to read. A range of well-chosen class books fuel pupils' love of reading. Pupils enjoy these and can remember the books that they have read. Pupils contribute to ideas for inviting book corners and enjoy the use of 'Charlotte's Web' and 'Harry Potter' to create reading reward systems. Leaders carry out regular checks to ensure that pupils who have fallen behind receive extra support when necessary to help them catch up.

Pupils are polite and friendly. Clear routines and expectations for behaviour start with the youngest children. The 'going for gold' behaviour system encourages pupils to work hard and behave well within class. Pupils move sensibly around the school; 'corridor monitors' oversee this and enjoy this role. Leaders' continued work to reduce the absence of some pupils is having some impact.

Personal development for pupils is at the heart of this school. Pupils enjoy the chance to apply for different leadership roles, for example 'Brickhouse voice' representatives, library and playground monitors. They participate in a variety of clubs including cooking, residential trips and eco-club. Pupils are eager to raise money for charity. They say that everyone is equal and welcome at their school.

Staff say that leaders are mindful of their workload and well-being; they feel valued members of the team. They say the school is like a family.

Leaders, including governors, make effective decisions to improve outcomes for pupils. They are constantly striving for improvement. Leaders provide speech and language training for staff. This means that they can help pupils make better progress. Leaders are clear that, as one said, 'These children don't have time to wait!' Governance is strong. Governors know the school's strengths and areas for development. They challenge school leaders effectively to ensure that pupils are safe and have the chance to succeed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

School leaders ensure that staff receive training regularly in order to help them to identify the problems that pupils may face. Staff know how to raise concerns about pupils' safety. Leaders follow up any concerns quickly and effectively. The school's pastoral team works effectively with pupils and families who may need extra help and support. Leaders work closely with outside agencies.

Leaders have suitable policies in place for recruitment and dealing with any allegations against staff. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in school and at

home. They learn about the risks they may face online. Pupils and parents are confident that that staff will help them sort out problems.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not defined the precise knowledge that they want pupils to learn. Consequently, pupils do not learn as well as they should and pupils' knowledge is not secure in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that they identify and sequence the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn in these subjects so that pupils can make the best possible progress.
- On some occasions, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to extend their learning. As a result of this, some pupils do not make as much progress as they could. Leaders should ensure that opportunities are planned to extend all pupils' learning to ensure that they achieve the best that they can.
- Staff do not have high enough expectations for handwriting and presentation of work. This means some pupils form letters incorrectly and work is sometimes poorly presented. Leaders should ensure that teachers have consistently high expectations for handwriting and presentation in all subjects and help pupils to reach these expectations.

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	103936
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10242146
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	232
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Karen Williamson
Headteacher	Paul Newby
Website	http://www.brickhouse.sandwell.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 July 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a breakfast club.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

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.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other leaders.
- Inspectors met with the chair of the governing board.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, computing and design technology. Inspection activities in these subjects included: lesson visits, discussion with staff and pupils, meeting with subject leaders, and work scrutiny. An inspector also observed pupils reading.

- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to safeguarding arrangements, behaviour and attendance. Inspectors also reviewed the school's evaluation of its own performance and the school's development plans.
- Inspectors talked to staff about their role in keeping pupils safe.
- Inspectors held informal and formal discussions with pupils and observed lunchtime and breaktime.
- Inspectors reviewed responses to Ofsted Parent View, including additional free-text comments. They also took account of responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors spoke to parents.

Inspection team

Donna O'Toole, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Rob Bourdon-Pierre

Ofsted Inspector

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